

**PARKING ADVISORY PANEL MEETING
-DRAFT MINUTES-**

The PARKING ADVISORY PANEL (PAP) met on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at 3:30 p.m. as a virtual Zoom meeting.

The meeting was opened by the Chair, Joan Fenton. The meeting was opened with Danny Yoder, Jamelle Bouie, Mike Rodi, Michael Cusano, Kirby Hutto and Jake Mooney in attendance. City staff in attendance were Sgt Lee Gibson (CPD), Cpl Hoy (CPD), Rick Siebert and Chris Engel.

The Panel approved the draft minutes from their last meeting on July 19, 2022, without any changes, by a unanimous vote.

Fenton asked Siebert to briefly cover the current operations of the new Jefferson St Lot. He did so, saying the lot is now signed and ready for business. He went on to say it is anticipated that the city will begin charging for parking effective October 1 at \$100.00 per month, and currently 8 people have shown some interest. Reef parking will be doing the actual contracting with customers and billing for the Lot just as they do for other monthly parking.

In the interest of Sgt. Gibson's time, the agenda item regarding parking enforcement was taken up next. Gibson began with an introduction of himself as the City's Traffic Sergeant and an additional guest, Corporal Hoy as the direct supervisor of the CSO parking enforcement effort. Siebert indicated that he had distributed the monthly parking ticket report. He went on to say that the report showed a dramatic increase in the enforcement of the area in the second half of the month and that increased enforcement was also reflect in revenue from the W. 2nd St Lot. Gibson affirmed that extra effort had been added to parking enforcement based on a meeting with Siebert where he passed on the communities' concerns. Gibson went on to raise the issue of the accuracy of the city parking enforcement app in recognizing ParkMobile payments. Gibson explained that this had resulted in a large number of complaints and ticket appeals. He explained that this may also be an issue with Woodard's use of the app for payment on his two private lots downtown. Siebert indicated he was aware of the issue and it had been raised with city IT. He said part of the issue is that the individual who originally wrote the app is no longer with the city and that had hampered IT staff's ability to resolve the issue. Siebert indicated he would certainly renew his efforts to coordinate with IT to resolve the payment accuracy question.

Fenton suggested folks downtown have felt that there was a lack of enforcement in the area of the Mall and that this had only changed when the community had suggested the addition of contract enforcement. Gibson said that may be a reasonably accurate perception. Because of the technology issue that had been discussed and the number of citation appeals it had generated the police had concentrated their parking enforcement resources on other areas of the city. When they became aware of the community concern they had again concentrated more on the downtown. But, he said we do still need to get to the bottom of the technology issue.

Kirby Hutto said that may be understandable in terms of enforcing the parking lot but asked what is the cause of reduced citations for violating the two hours parking restriction on-street? Gibson said there is an enforcement CSO that is working on-street enforcement who is very productive. He said he had been deployed to the UVA area but had recently been redeployed back to downtown. Hoy said that the CSO's are currently understaffed and that they are trying to hire

more folks. Hutto asked, would not adding contract enforcement help solve the issue of being understaffed? Gibson suggested that if the city just outsourced every job where the city was understaffed it would effectively core out the city labor force over time. He suggested a better approach is to simply devote the resources to hiring and training more city employees. He went on to say progress is being made by the police on that front. Gibson also expressed concern that the ticket compliant and appeals process would be unchanged with contracting. Hutto, Gibson and Siebert continued to exchange perspectives on the previously identified advantages and disadvantages on outsourcing. The multi-tasking of CSOs was discussed in detail as well as the issue of who might be responsible for towing, if contractors were added.

Fenton brought the conversation back to the issue of consistency of enforcement in the downtown area to encourage voluntary compliance by the public with the parking regulations. Gibson said there are differing duties by individual CSOs but the police are now concentrating on making enforcement more consistent. Hoy said parking enforcement sometimes feels like a game of whack a mole. Siebert said the Panel now has a tool to monitor enforcement through the ticket reports and suggested Cpl Hoy join the Panel on a regular basis in the future.

Fenton moved on to the next agenda item. Siebert said the monthly parking utilization graphs are fairly self-explanatory. He said the garages are getting busier but very slowly and there is still lots of empty spaces. Fenton asked how this was affecting the FY23 budget. Siebert said the FY23 budget had been very conservative but based on current and predicted performance the fund would make budget by yearend.

Hutto asked a general question about what is happening with major employers in terms of bringing people back into the office. Engel said it seems more folks are being encouraged to come back into the office there is no solid news on that issue. Jake, as an S&P employee, said they are being encouraged to come back in more but right now most folks are not coming in more than one day a week. Hutto asked about where the city stands on the issue as an employer. Engel indicated that city hall will be reopening in the first week of October and the city is currently working on a hybrid work policy that is being implemented on a department by department basis.

The next item on the agenda was parking garage renovations. Siebert said Public Works is planning the renovations of the Market St Garage to begin next Spring. He said the renovations to Water St are being managed by Parking and it has contracted for the renovations to begin Oct 7 and be completed with 150 days. Fenton asked how this might affect weekend and special event parking. Siebert said there is sufficient parking capacity available at Water St to make it reasonably easy to coordinate with the contractor to ensure there is no really negative impact on parkers in general and especially weekend and special event parkers.

Fenton asked if anyone had any new business. Mooney returned to the Jefferson St Lot. He asked if the \$100 rate was lower or higher than surrounding parking. Siebert said the 7th St reserved parking was \$150 per month. Mooney then asked how many folks had been signed up for the lot thus far. Siebert said they had received eight inquiries. Siebert went on to say that he was not currently making a major marketing effort for the lot. He indicated that the lot could be in play in a city county agreement on parking based on the city's failure to build the new 7th St Garage, and he did not want to fill the lot up and then have to remove parkers to meet the new agreement. Although he also said he is not aware that the lot was specifically planned to be part

of that revised agreement. Siebert did think, however, that the agreement would be finalized and presented to Council before the end of the year.

Fenton asked for public comment. Rory Stolzenberg asked who the parkers were who seemed to be interested in parking on the new lot. Siebert said he thought the eight who expressed an interest had been parking on the lot before it was sold. Mooney joined back into the discussion with follow up asking if Siebert could provide any insight what any final city/county parking agreement might include. Siebert said, "no." Mooney then asked who was doing the actual negotiating of the agreement. Engel indicated it was the senior leadership of the city and county but not the Council members themselves. Rodi asked a question regarding what, if anything, was happening to the pick up and drop off spaces on-street created in response to covid. Engel indicated that signs for about half the originally created spaces had been removed. He said that he was not aware of any plans for the rest of the spaces but he would have his staff look into what, if any, business felt they were still necessary.

Before adjourning, it was decided that the next meeting would be on Nov 15th.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.