

City of Birmingham  
ADVISORY PARKING COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING

Birmingham City Hall Commission Room  
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan  
Wednesday, May 20, 2015

**MINUTES**

These are the minutes for the Advisory Parking Committee ("APC") regular meeting held on Wednesday, May 20, 2015. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lex Kuhne at 7:38 a.m.

**Present:** Chairman Lex Kuhne  
Julie Gheen (left at 9:20 a.m.)  
Anne Honhart  
Lisa Krueger  
Judith Paskewicz  
Vice-Chairperson Susan Peabody

**Absent:** James Eshaki  
Steven Kalczynski  
Al Vaitas

**SP+ Parking:** Catherine Burch  
Josh Gunn  
Jason O'Dell

**Principal Shopping District:** Richard Astrein  
Bob Benkert  
John Heiney

**Administration:** Austin Fletcher, Asst. City Engineer  
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer  
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

Mr. O'Meara introduced Mr. Austin Fletcher, new Asst. City Engineer, and Ms. Burch introduced Mr. Dave Lombardi from SP+ Parking.

**RECOGNITION OF GUESTS** (none)

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 15, 2015

**Motion by Ms. Paskewicz  
Seconded by Ms. Honhart to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of  
April 15, 2015 as presented.**

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Paskewicz, Honhart, Kuhne, Gheen Krueger, Peabody

Nays: None

Absent: Esshaki

REMOTE LOT CARPOOLING INITIATIVE

Mr. O'Meara discussed ways to provide more parking capacity for employees wishing to work in Downtown Birmingham. One possibility can be to rent space in under-utilized parking lots that are near Downtown. Tentative agreements have been reached with four local churches to lease their parking space for around \$10,000/year. Initially, the idea included the use of a shuttle service funded through the parking system. However, the bids that were received turned out to be cost prohibitive.

Rather than have the City provide a shuttle, another means that could be implemented would be to work with key employers who are currently buying a lot of permits or have plans to hire more employees. Each of the members of an employee group would be given a working parking pass for the Chester St. Structure. People would arrive at the lots, park their car, and be driven, four to a car, to the Chester St. Structure by another employee. They would have to collaborate to get a ride back to the church lot when it is time to go home. At the end of the work day SP+ parking staff would check each employee group. If an employee group has 100 passes issued, no more than 25 should have been activated in any one day. If more than 25 were activated, the employer would be charged \$5 per day for each pass used in excess of 25. Each employee could be issued a cardboard hanging tag to be displayed on their rearview mirror when parked in the remote lot.

This may be a workable solution, and as a result the City has stopped selling permits at the Chester St. Structure so that space will open up. There wouldn't be an issue with evening or Saturday workers parking in the Structure.

Chairman Kuhne estimated this plan would add an extra 45 minutes to people's work day. Therefore it may be a non-starter because there might not be enough upside for people to commit to it.

Mr. O'Meara indicated staff plans to start by talking to employers with big work forces. If there are not enough numbers the City would not commit to all four churches. Ms. Burch did not think SP+ would have a problem with enforcement. Chairman Kuhne summed up by saying Mr. O'Meara can find out if anyone is interested and if so, they will go from there.

### PARKING TICKET FINE REVIEW

Mr. O'Meara advised that on April 27, 2015 the City Commission approved the APC's recommendation to proceed with a monthly rate change in the Parking System. During the APC discussion on this topic, it was mentioned that review of other categories should also be considered. The one mentioned at that time was the fine for parking at an expired meter. Information on this topic has been gathered by staff.

The fine for parking at an expired meter is currently \$10 per infraction. Comparing Birmingham's fine to other neighboring cities, the \$10 rate is being charged most frequently. If eight or more tickets are issued to the same vehicle within a calendar year, the fine jumps to \$30 per infraction.

Given the large number of local cities that are charging \$10 per infraction, raising the fine at this time may reinforce the impression that parking is in short supply or is not user friendly in Birmingham.

Other areas where the APC may wish to research rates would be the hourly rate at the parking meters and the hourly rate in the parking structures. These have not changed for most locations since 1997.

Chairman Kuhne said he would not be adverse to raising the rate to \$20 for parking meter infractions because people are able to park free for two hours in the structures. Additionally, there is a ten minute grace period.

Mr. Astrein thought this committee and the PSD should get into agreement before this matter goes before the City Commission. There has been no interest on the part of the PSD members to increase the daily transient rate in the structures.

## TRAFFIC CONTROL EQUIPMENT PURCHASE STUDY

Mr. O'Meara reported that three of the City's five parking structures were automated in 2009. The system was structured to encourage more payment by credit or debit card, making the ultimate cost of the transaction cheaper for the system. In 2011, the cashiers at the other two parking structures were also eliminated.

As the machines age, the City is spending large sums on maintenance. Such costs are unfortunate, given that this money could be spent on newer, more reliable equipment rather than attempting to repair the old.

Since there is a lot of trouble and expense that goes into handling cash every day, staff is now recommending a pilot which would not allow the customer to pay with cash anymore at the Chester St. Structure. The assumption is that if it will work at Chester they hope that it might work system-wide as the culture gets more and more cashless.

Mr. O'Dell noted their repair costs almost tripled during the last fiscal year and he doesn't anticipate this fiscal year will be any different from last. Much of the equipment is beginning to fail and it is costing a lot of money to repair.

At the request of the City Engineering Dept., SP+ obtained quotes from three different manufacturers of parking revenue control equipment. These included Tiba, Amano-McGann, and Skidata. Tiba lacks a local service provider at this time and for that reason it cannot be considered as a viable option. Amano-McGann and Skidata have both provided competitive quotes and each would provide a good option for the City.

The City has seen great success in using Parkmobile technology with the on-street meters. Whichever equipment is picked, they will be able to use Parkmobile in the garages.

Mr. O'Dell went on to show a PowerPoint that illustrated the options offered by the two different manufacturer's equipment. The Skidata system, while more expensive, does provide some features and capabilities that the Amano system lacks. While the Amano system has very little track record to point to, Skidata has been installed in thousands of locations worldwide. Its track record and reputation as an industry leader have been tried and tested. Due to the limited experience with the Amano equipment and the increased functionality provided by the Skidata equipment, it is the opinion of SP+ Skidata is the best choice for the City at this time. Mr. Lombardi added it is SP+ feeling that Amano has rushed to the market and their new equipment is a little more problematic than SP+ had hoped for.

Mr. O'Dell said if the cashless pilot at Chester works they can use it in the other structures and it will save a minimum of \$30 thousand/structure that they put it in. In addition to being cashless, the customer must identify themselves by a credit card or smart phone when they drive in. At the first installation they would definitely have an ambassador at the entrance and exit to inform the community of all of the different options that are available.

Chairman Kuhne observed they can attend a Senior Men's Club luncheon at the Community House to give a presentation on credit card payment.

**Motion by Ms. Peabody**

**Seconded by Ms. Gheen to recommend to the City Commission that the Birmingham Parking System move to implement the installation of Skidata brand traffic control equipment at its parking structures. Further, to authorize Phase I of this transition at the Chester St. Parking Structure, installing Skidata equipment throughout that will require all customers to pay daily fees without cash, at a total estimated cost of \$168,027.**

**Motion carried, 6-0.**

VOICE VOTE:

Yeas: Peabody, Gheen, Honhart, Krueger, Kuhne, Paskewicz

Nays: None

Absent: Eshaki

PARKING SYSTEM CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Mr. Fletcher provided the following updates:

*Peabody St. and Chester St. Structures*

The work is approximately sixty percent (60%) complete. The current primary focus of the work is related to the stairwells and masonry. The City Commission has approved issuing some free parking permits" to the existing Peabody St. permit holders for other parking facilities in the City.

*Chester St. Structure Street Repairs*

The City has hired FDM Contracting to complete the planned street related improvements around the Structure. It is anticipated that this work will begin sometime in August due to the current construction inside of the Chester St. Structure.

*Peabody St. Structure Elevator Rehabilitation*

The City is currently in the process of preparing bidding documents (60% complete) to replace the majority of the operating mechanism for this elevator. Work is anticipated to occur this Fall.

*Park St. Structure Asphalt Resealing*

The sealcoating work that was postponed from last year due to weather conditions is anticipated to occur in the next four (4) to six (6) weeks.

*Parking Lot #11*

The parking lot has been paved and striped. Signing and parking blocks are scheduled to be installed in the next couple of weeks. The City is currently working with DTE to have additional lighting installed and the lot should be available and permits issued starting June 1, 2015.

Mr. O'Meara said in answer to an inquiry that a little over one hundred spaces will be closed at one time in the Peabody St. Structure. The first 50 people will have their choice of either the Park St. or Pierce St. Structures. The rest will have to go where it hasn't filled up yet.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS (not discussed)

MEETING OPEN FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

The Parking Development Committee will soon have its first meeting. The chairman agreed to call Ms. Gheen and if she cannot attend, he will.

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING

June 17, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Paul O'Meara  
City Engineer