

Parking Committee
37 Green Street, City Council Chambers
Approved Minutes
January 29, 2024

Attendees:

Brent Todd, City Councilor, Parking Committee Chair
Stacey Brown, City Councilor
Karen McNamara, City Councilor
Paula McLaughlin, City Councilor

Staff:

Tim Thompson, AICP, Assistant Director of Community Development
David Florence, Parking Division Supervisor

The meeting was called to order by Councilor Todd at 5:00 p.m.

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Councilor Todd skipped introductions since all committee members were returning from previous term. He indicated he will reach out to Mayor Champlin about assigning an ex-officio member to help prevent quorum issues and prevent tie votes.
2. **Selection of Chair:** Councilor Todd will remain the Chair per the appointment of Mayor Champlin.
3. **Overview of Agenda:** Councilor Todd provided an overview of the meeting agenda.
4. **Adoption of Minutes:** Councilor McNamara moved to adopt the meeting minutes of November 27, 2023. Councilor Brown seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

After adoption of the minutes, Councilor Todd noted the follow-up on Walker Street parking, citizen requests, and the core responsibilities of the committee. Mr. Thompson stated that he is visiting Walker Street after winter storms to document conditions so that the committee can follow up in the spring, and that follow up on citizen requests would be discussed under the work plan portion of the agenda.

5. **Citizen Requests and City Council Referrals:**

- a. **Council Referral - Safiya Wazir request for Social Worker parking passes:** Mr. Florence provided an overview of Ms. Wazir's request and background on the circumstances that led to it. Parking Division staff had a lengthy discussion with Ms. Wazir following a time zone violation ticket on Union Street. She is requesting that there be a permit or pass for social workers, because they are providing a service to local residents, so that they are not ticketed for parking violations. Mr. Florence stated that with a time zone violation, it is likely that the limit was exceeded by at least 30 minutes based on the enforcement techniques used by the City.

Councilor Todd asked if the time limits were not long enough in certain locations. Councilor Brown questioned if leases or permits could be done outside of garages, and stated she would follow-up with Ms. Wazir who was not in attendance. Councilor McNamara stated it should be the employers' responsibility to deal with parking costs and violations for social workers like Ms. Wazir. Councilor Todd agreed that the follow-up should be through the employer.

By consensus, the committee tabled further discussion of this item until the next Parking Committee meeting.

- b. **Request from Kristie Bean – Consideration of allowing limited parking on Chapel Street (On-Street Parking reduced in 2015 and eliminated as part of Narrow Streets Study in 2019):** Mr. Thompson provided an overview of Ms. Bean's request, the background information on the two prior

City Council actions, and provided a video of a drive along Chapel Street from North Main to North State, demonstrating the narrowness of the pavement and challenges with allowing parking on-street.

Councilor Todd questioned if the 1-way street recommendation from the 2019 Narrow Streets study had been followed up on. Mr. Thompson and Mr. Florence stated that the residents of the street did not want to pursue one-way traffic per an on-site meeting that took place during the study.

Councilor McNamara moved to reject the request given the amount of work and study that went into the Narrow Streets project. Councilor McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Pre-Paid Debit Cards Discussion:

Mr. Florence gave a history on the debit card program, which began as a method to provide a discount for using the cards in the old mechanical parking meters. There have historically been a good number of downtown users and from State of NH employees that work downtown (as an employer paid product for the employees that had to pay to park for work downtown). Unbeknownst to the City, the cards had an expiration date of December 31, 2023 built into them. The City has reached out to the State and downtown users informing them of the situation, and the City is purchasing a machine that will reprogram the cards to fix the expiration issue. Mr. Florence will coordinate with card users to get them reprogrammed. There is currently about \$80,000 on debit cards for downtown users, of which \$50,000 is for the State.

Given the move to kiosks and smart meters, coupled with the new legislative parking garage that should be completed in the next few years, staff is looking for direction on ending the program.

Councilor McNamara suggested that a 2-year window should provide enough time and notice to sunset the program. Councilor Todd agreed, saying that the debit card program is too clunky given the technology improvements that have been implemented in recent years, particularly the ability to use smartphone apps to pay for parking. The consensus of the committee was to sunset the program, and discuss more formally in the coming months.

7. Committee Work Plan and FY2025 Budget Discussion:

Mr. Thompson presented the current FY24 Budget, and asked if the committee members had any suggestions or direction that they were willing to offer. He also shared a copy of the FY22 Work Plan for the committee, and suggested that it would be staff's hope that the work plan could be updated for use in the coming term.

Councilor Brown stated that the maps on the parking website were out of date and needed to be updated. Councilor Todd mentioned continued discussion and follow up on the Concord High School area parking discussions, examining if enforcement/payment by license plate is feasible, and an examination of loading/unloading zones in the public rights-of-way.

Mr. Thompson expressed his desire to see a more formalized process for citizen requests be put into place, ensuring that there is a process for providing information to the committee, and to ensure notification of those making requests and impacted property owners. Councilor McNamara agreed a formalized process was needed, but did not want to go too far with notification, stating regular mail or even e-mail should be sufficient for notifying people.

Councilor Brown stated a desire to coordinate committees working on the topic of outdoor dining. Councilor Todd expressed his belief that the work plan should look at the future of the garages as well as future needs and uses of the downtown area. Mr. Thompson reminded the committee that there will be an RFP coming out soon to examine the future of the State Street Garage, and the potential impacts on parking system-wide.

The Committee will return to this topic at a future meeting to formalize priorities for the work plan.

- 8. Financials:** Parking Fund financial statements Year-To-Date (YTD) for Fiscal year 2024 through November 30, 2023.
- i. **Revenues:** Total revenues Year to Date were \$1,239,360.30 or 40% of budget. This figure was approximately \$ 403,148 less than revenues received in the prior fiscal year for the same period.
 - ii. **Expenditures:** Actual total expenditures for Year to Date were \$1,189,597.56 or 37% of budget. This figure was \$8,157.31 higher than the prior fiscal year for the same period.
 - iii. **Gain/Loss:** Through November 30, the Parking Fund has a positive net operating income of \$49,762.74.

9. Updates:

- a. **Ted Wing - intersection of White Street and Washington Street:** Mr. Thompson shared the responses received from Transportation Engineer Karen Hill regarding operation at the intersection and accident data. Staff does not recommend any further changes to the intersection.

Councilor Todd stated he did not need to see speed data for Washington Street, as it wouldn't address the concern or sight distance and visibility from White Street. Councilor McNamara commented that the situation at this intersection is not too dissimilar to other urban intersections in the City, and that prior parking space removals have brought the intersection into compliance with City guidelines. Councilor Brown concurred. Consensus of the committee was that no further action is necessary.

10. Other Business:

Members of the committee stated that constituents have been commenting about plowing during recent storms and the issues of parked vehicles. Mr. Thompson stated that no storm related parking ban was called for the 2 most recent storms. Mr. Florence stated that a downtown cleanup parking ban would be occurring on Tuesday evening.

Councilor Todd asked about reviewing fees associated with Parking. Mr. Thompson stated that he is not recommending any changes for FY25, and that he would like to have the study of the parking system/State Street Garage completed before any recommendations are made.

- 11. Review Future Meetings:** No meeting in February 2024. The next Parking Committee Meeting will be on March 25, 2024.

- 12. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 5:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Thompson, AICP, Assistant Director of Community Development