

Parking Committee
37 Green Street, City Council Chambers
Approved Minutes
March 25, 2024

Attendees:

Brent Todd, City Councilor, Parking Committee Chair
Stacey Brown, City Councilor (*arrived at 5:05 p.m.*)
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 5:02 p.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Overview of Agenda: Councilor Todd provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

3. Adoption of Minutes: Councilor McNamara moved to adopt the meeting minutes of January 29, 2024. Councilor McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Citizen Requests and City Council Referrals:

- a. **Continued Discussion - Council Referral - Safiya Wazir request for Social Worker parking passes:** Mr. Thompson referred to the January 29, 2024 minutes for summary of what was discussed initially on the request. Councilor Brown gave an overview of what prompted the request.

Ms. Wazir introduced herself to the Committee as a local social worker and that she utilized the Concord Public Library often for supervised visits with children and families as a subcontractor for NH Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). In other communities, she has access to free parking where her meetings take place, but no such free-parking exists for her for her Concord meetings. Given she typically has very young children with her for the meetings, Ms. Wazir needs to park in close proximity to the Library, for 2 hours at a time minimum. While she is reimbursed for parking fees, she stated that using the mobile app made it difficult to get receipts for processing with her employer.

Councilor McNamara asked if 4 hours per week for parking is generally how many hours she spends in Concord. Ms. Wazir stated yes, and reiterated that she is reimbursed for parking fees but not parking tickets by her employer. Councilor McNamara shared several options for free (time-limited rather than metered) parking relatively nearby (Spring Street, Centre Street, Storrs Street). Ms. Wazir responded that she does not believe those are realistic options given the distance she would need to take the young children from the parking location to the Library, particularly in inclement weather.

Councilor Brown asked if other social workers utilize the Library, and Ms. Wazir responded in the affirmative. Councilor Todd asked how many tickets she had received. Ms. Wazir responded just one, that it was for a seasonal restriction for parking, and that she did not see the sign. Councilor Todd asked if her meetings were generally at the same location, to which Ms. Wazir stated that generally the Public Library is the preferred location. Councilor Brown asked if the days she needed meeting space were the same each week, and Ms. Wazir noted that generally her meetings were Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Councilor Todd provided an overview of the City's parking program, stating that permits are only utilized in the City's parking garages, and that on-street parking was either metered, time-limited, or free, depending on location. He stated that even if the City has a "free parking" lot, it would be a first

come first served type of situation, not altogether different from where Ms. Wazir would have to park in other communities. The Committee offered suggestions of parking along Park Street, Capitol Street, or School Street, since, at least for the time being, there are fewer on-street parking spaces occupied given the relocation of the NH Department of Justice. The metered spaces in the City owned lots off Prince Street were also mentioned as nearby possibilities for proximity to the Library.

Discussion ensued regarding the ability of the mobile app to produce necessary receipts for Ms. Wazir to utilize for reimbursement, and the inability of the app to charge for parking in increments other than 1 hour at a time. Mr. Florence explained that changing the increments is technically possible, but would come at an unknown cost to the City through the vendor. He and Mr. Thompson reminded the Committee that exploration of additional mobile vendors is part of the Committee's work plan, and that exploring different time increments can be made part of that process. Mr. Florence offered to assist Ms. Wazir with navigating the mobile app to help with her situation regarding reimbursements.

Councilor Todd reiterated the Committee would be looking at various options and changes in the future, but that a permit for Ms. Wazir's specific situation was not possible. Ms. Wazir thanked the Committee for their time, and stated she would return if she had any additional concerns or requests.

5. Committee Work Plan Discussion:

Mr. Thompson provided his proposal to formalize the agenda request process, summarized below:

- **Referrals from City Council**
 - *Referral sent to Committee/Staff*
 - *Staff to contact person(s) requesting committee action*
 - *Information to be provided to the staff for the Committee's consideration:*
 - *Narrative summarizing the requested action and justification for action requested*
 - *Supporting photos, documentation, etc.*
 - *Staff schedules item for the Committee*
 - *Notification*
 - *As necessary, staff will notify surrounding property owners by 1st Class US Mail of the request and scheduled meeting date/time.*
 - *Staff will prepare packet of materials (including staff report as necessary) for Committee in advance of the scheduled meeting*
 - *Committee Consideration*
 - *Action/Report to City Council*
- **Agenda Requests brought directly to staff or the Committee**
 - *Staff to inform person(s) requesting committee action of the process needed to request to be acted on.*
 - *Information to be provided to the staff for the Committee's consideration:*
 - *Narrative summarizing the requested action and justification for action requested*
 - *Supporting photos, documentation, etc.*
 - *Staff schedules item for the Committee*
 - *Notification*
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Consensus of the Committee was that this process should be adopted, posted on the website, and made available to members of the public that seek placement on a future agenda.

Councilor McNamara moved to adopt the policy for placing items on future Parking Committee agendas. Councilor Brown seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Committee reviewed the May 2023 Outdoor Dining regulations in anticipation of the upcoming outdoor dining season. Discussion centered around the number of establishments that encumber parking spaces, and moving forward what policy direction should be recommended to the City Council as the City moves further away from the COVID-19 pandemic situation that resulted in the surge in outdoor dining locally. Mr. Thompson stated that only 3-4 establishments have taken the parking space encumbrance approach, and it is not yet known if those restaurants will do the same in 2024. He will report back to the Committee as applications are received.

Councilor McNamara mentioned that Portsmouth seems to be following Concord's lead with the regulation of public space for outdoor dining. Councilor Brown inquired about food trucks outside of down town and what requirements might be. Councilor Todd indicated that outside of public spaces, food trucks would need to be licensed and follow the applicable regulations for wherever they are going to be located for an event.

6. **Financials:** Parking Fund financial statements Year-To-Date (YTD) for Fiscal Year 2024 through February 29, 2024.
- i. **Revenues:** Total revenues Year to Date were \$2,054,001.74 or 67% of budget. This figure was approximately \$269,060 less than revenues received in the prior fiscal year for the same period.
 - ii. **Expenditures:** Actual total expenditures for Year to Date were \$2,306,235.14 or 72% of budget. This figure was \$77,714.66 higher than the prior fiscal year for the same period.
 - iii. **Gain/Loss:** Through February 29, the Parking Fund has a negative net operating income of \$252,233.40.

Councilor Todd inquired about finance charges (revenue) and what they were comprised of. Mr. Florence explained that these were late fees paid by permit holders and parking lessees.

7. **Updates:**

a. **School District Staff / CHS Area Parking**

No updates to report.

Lease to Permit Transition for School Street and Storrs Street Garages

Mr. Thompson indicated that the City and Capital Commons, LLC had come to a temporary lease extension agreement for the Storrs Street Garage, and that he hoped to have a tentative agreement on conversion of their leases to permits in the coming months. Additionally, a draft lease to permit agreement had been sent to Capital Plaza Associates regarding their leases at the School Street Garage, and that he was awaiting comments before moving forward on a final draft. There are several parts of the original development agreement that make the negotiation of the conversion to permits more complicated than Storrs Street Garage.

NH Legislative Parking Garage

No updates to report.

8. Other Business

None discussed.

- 9. Review Future Meetings:** The next Parking Committee Meeting will be on April 29, 2024. The meetings for May and June will be determined at a later date, as agenda requests are known, budget process meeting demands are better understood, and staffing conflicts are determined.
- 10. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m. by unanimous vote on a motion made by Councilor McNamara and seconded by Councilor McLaughlin.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Thompson, AICP, Assistant Director of Community Development