

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PUBLIC PARKING AUTHORITY OF PITTSBURGH
FRIDAY MARCH 18, 2022**

Having been duly advertised in accordance with the Sunshine Act No. 84 of 1986, a virtual meeting of the Public Parking Authority of Pittsburgh was held at 10:01 a.m. on March 18, 2022. The following Board members were present at the start of the meeting: Jeff Cohen, Matt Barron and Liz Fishback. Present from staff were David Onorato, Christopher Speers, Chris Holt, Jo-Ann Williams, Gwen Bolden, Mark DiNatale, David Perry, Tracy Sowinski, Karla Stanger, Scott McNaugher and Patricia Konesky. Also present were Jason Wrona of Buchanan, Ingersoll & Rooney; Bill Stewart of Strategic Communications; Brooke Williams; John Small and Alison Keating.

MINUTES

Mr. Cohen asked for approval of the minutes from the February 17, 2022 meeting.

Upon motion by Ms. Fishback and seconded by Mr. Barron, the minutes were approved as follows: Mr. Barron, yes; Ms. Fishback, yes; Mr. Cohen, yes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any public comment.
There were none.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Onorato advised that the Board held an Executive Session on February 25, 2022 to discuss personnel and real estate matters.

Mr. Onorato updated the Board that the negotiations with AFSCME were on-going and advised that the most recent meeting held was productive and he said believes that be a mutual agreement can be reached within the next week or two.

Mr. Onorato reminded the Board that the 2022 Street Cleaning Program will resume on April 1 and said that enforcement would also return on that date. He advised that the Authority has communicated the resumption by reaching out to City Council, affected community groups and by issuing a news release to all print and broadcast organizations as well.

Mr. Onorato updated the Board on the previously approved meter modem upgrade project and reported that the modems in all meters have been upgraded to 4G modems. He also said that our Flowbird vendor is currently upgrading the meter doors that will enable some units to feature a new color screen.

Mr. Onorato advised the Board that staff has provided answers to the questions regarding parking in the Oakland area raised during the previous Board meeting.

Mr. Onorato advised that Ms. Bolden has been working with Automotus, the company responsible for launching a pilot program for loading zone parking.

Mr. Onorato advised that the Authority's yearly financial audit is continuing and said that we anticipate presenting the final report to the Board next month.

Mr. Onorato advised that the Authority will be issuing two RFPs one for a PARCS consultant to replace the revenue control equipment in the five garages housing 15-year-old PSX equipment. He advised that the second RFP is for the development of an Authority website to replace the one the City IT Department told us it would no longer host. He advised that both of these contracts will be brought to the Board for approval prior to their being issued. He said he anticipates the website contract to be proposed at the May meeting and said the PARCS contract will be submitted after we receive and score the bids.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Finance Report, stating that revenues for February are \$2.9 million, up from \$1.9 million in 2021 and are moving closer to our 2019 total of \$4.5 million. He advised that year-to-date total of \$5.6 million compared to 2019's \$9.1 million for comparable 2019 period. He advised that both garage revenue and meter revenue are increasing, with the meter revenues moving closer to the 2019 numbers more rapidly than the garage results. He reported that we are continuing to monitor our expenses closely while revenues remain below normal.

Ms. Fishback asked if there are any trends in revenue, such as the weekends seeing more meter traffic than in the garages.

Mr. Onorato responded that the evening activity in the garages downtown has increased since the return of theater activity. He stated that we are seeing more weekday activity Tuesdays through Thursdays, as some people chose Mondays and Fridays as days to work from home.

Mr. Speers noted that we typically see a drop off in utilization on Mondays and Fridays, which we also experienced in 2019. He advised that Wood/Allies is averaging about 83 to 85 percent occupancy while garages like Ft. Duquesne and Sixth that serve larger employer locations are still in the mid-to-high-30-percent utilization. He advised that Forbes/Semple in the Oakland neighborhood continues to be our strongest performing garage and said we are starting to see an increase in companies returning to their in-office settings. He advised that now some businesses have returned, and sporting events are back, it appears that garage revenues will be over \$2 million in March, which he described as a welcomed trend.

Mr. Cohen asked if those numbers do not include Ninth and Penn Garage.

Mr. Speers confirmed that they do not.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Finance Report, which shows the increase from January to February but stated that by halfway through 2021, we were averaging \$2.9 to \$3 million and advised that we are hoping to get back to those levels later in the year. He advised that halfway through the month of March we are exceeding the February revenues pace and said we are looking to break the \$2 million mark for the month. He noted that the Mon Wharf's revenues decreased but attributed that to the closures due to flooding.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Finance Report, noting that its year-to-date portion shows revenues of \$3.3 million, reflecting the same trend as the Finance report discussed earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Enforcement Report, which shows that of approximately 13,000 tickets issued, meter violations totaled 50 percent of that number while residential permit parking violations accounting for 30 percent of those issued. He stated that combined total represents approximately 80-percent of the violations cited. He advised that with street cleaning resuming in April we should see an increase in the monthly number of tickets issued to the close of that enforcement activity in November. He said that warning tickets will be issued during the year's first cycle through each neighborhood.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Meter Revenue Report, noting that we moved closer to the 2019 numbers of \$1.6 million in February and is currently \$1.2 million in 2022. He noted that the enforcement staff continues to have openings and said we are working to fill those positions. He stated that even with limited staff we are performing well by focusing on high traffic locations. Mr. Onorato noted that lot lease numbers have continued to increase and are now at 339, but down from 455 in 2019.

Ms. Fishback asked the biggest hinderance in hiring coming out of the pandemic period.

Mr. Onorato stated that there are multiple reasons for the vacancies, and asked Mr. Perry to share some of the statistics he's found with the Board.

Mr. Perry advised the Board that the required relocation into the city is a factor, as are increased rates being offered by other employers. He stated that we are competing with companies like Amazon that are starting their new hires at \$18.00 per hour and Sheetz where supervisors start at an hourly rate of \$17.00 to \$18.00. He noted that when he does speak with potential hires, he does mention that the Authority offers an extremely generous benefit package but said that the paycheck factor is ultimately the decision driver. He advised that we can be competitive with the hourly wages but factors such as schedule can come into play as well. He noted that our recent efforts to attract both garage and enforcement officers are similar. He said that of the 55 garage applicants, 20 did not appear for scheduled interviews, 18 were not willing to relocate into the City, and the remaining 17 cited other reasons for declining. Regarding the hiring of officers, Mr. Perry said 18 of 51 applicants did not show up for their interview and 16 were not willing to relocate. He advised that wages are an issue we can control, and the relocation requirement is

perhaps possible to address. He said if the residency requirement would be lifted, we would be looking at more than 30 possible new hires in the two employment categories under discussion. He added that we should look closely at the hiring factors were capable of controlling.

Ms. Fishback asked that considering the budget constraints we are experiencing, what would need to occur to temporarily suspend the residency requirement. She asked if that was the Parking Authority Board's decision or a City administration decision.

Mr. Onorato responded that a temporary suspension would not work as we have to be mindful of the restrictions faced by current employees at the time of their hiring. He advised that a previous Board resolution established this requirement and said it resulted from a request made by the administration in place at the time.

Ms. Fishback asked if it was worth revisiting.

Mr. Onorato responded that this is a discussion that the Board can have at a later time, but likely in Executive Session.

Mr. Perry reported that the Board resolution requiring employees to live in the city occurred in the 1990s.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Parking Court Report, advising that revenues are increasing as Duncan continues to collect fines at an overall rate of 85 percent or better. He advised that fine revenues collected for the year to date were \$1.6 million compared to just over \$900,000 for the first two months of last year.

Mr. Barron advised that he saw an article this week that the Three Rivers Arts Festival is going to move to Eighth Street and Penn Avenue and he asked if that the site of our former garage there would be involved.

Mr. Onorato responded that we did correspond with the Cultural Trust and its legal team but were unable to work out an agreement because an event of that type on our land would violate our Trust agreement. He advised that the event would occur in the garage's service area but said we will not be opening up or removing the fence for our land to be used.

Mr. Cohen stated that with the possible adoption of ticketing by mail, the Authority's technology is going to have to evolve to enable us to enforce differently than we do not. He said we should be developing that strategy now. He said he continues to be surprised that we issue as many tickets as we do given the convenience of the app and its capacity to avoid receiving a ticket.

Mr. Onorato addressed that point by reporting that all four payment apps contain the capacity to inform parkers that their paid-for time is expiring. He advised that we also have been working on a ticket-by-mail program that we are hoping to bring to the Board in the next few months for its consideration. He advised that since there were hurdles to implementing this program on streets that are public rights of way our plan is to pilot it in some of our surface lots not subject to third-party approval. He advised that we are currently working with our vendors to develop the

ticket-by-mail service. He said our hope is that this pilot proves successful to introduce it to the City, initially for street-cleaning enforcement program because every car parked during cleaning already represents a parking violation. He stated that this program would significantly reduce the manpower required for enforcement and said he advised that we would bring any proposed change to the Board for approval before its adoption.

RESOLUTION NO. 9 OF MARCH 2022, “A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO AMEND THE COMPOSITION OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE, was read by Mr. Cohen and considered by the Board.

Mr. Onorato advised the Board that a resolution was presented that authorized the formation of an Audit Committee to be comprised of two Board members and the Director of Finance. He advised that since there has been some reorganization to the Authority’s structure, we want to amend the resolution to state that it includes the two Board members and either the Director of Finance and/or the Chief Financial Officer at the discretion of the Executive Director. He stated that it makes sense to amend this now to give us greater flexibility going forward. He advised that the Audit Committee normally meets with the Auditors twice, once before the Audit and then after the draft is completed, and prior to recommending the completed Audit to the Board. He advised that the current Audit Committee’s members are Mr. Barron and Ms. Fishback and said that the pre-meeting for this year’s process has already occurred and noted that the Committee and auditors will meet again prior to the Audit’s schedule presentation to the Board at its April meeting.

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any questions or comments.

There were none.

Upon motion by Mr. Barron and seconded by Ms. Fishback, Resolution No.9 of 2022 was approved as follows: Mr. Barron, yes; Ms. Fishback, yes; Mr. Cohen, yes.

RESOLUTION NO. 10 OF MARCH 2022, “A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PURCHASE SERVER INFRASTRUCTURE FROM DELL TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT, was read by Mr. Cohen and considered by the Board.

Mr. Onorato advised that our current servers have reached the end of their useful life, describing them as the heartbeat that keeps everything running, from our office computers to the meters and garage operations, including credit card operations. He advised that we did account for this upgrade in our capital budget and said we are seeking authorization to purchase the required

equipment at a not-to-exceed price \$350,000 from Dell Technologies. He said the purchase would employ the Co-Stars contract.

Mr. McNaugher advised that the eight current servers are each over six years old and noted that the VM software we use cannot be upgraded, underscoring the importance of the purchase.

Mr. Cohen asked if our operation could function using the Cloud rather than purchasing hardware. He recommended that in the future we should look into the cost of using Cloud service.

Mr. McNaugher responded that we previously looked into moving to Cloud-based services but found that it would be significantly more expensive than it would be to host it ourselves. He noted that we are not a huge operation in terms of infrastructure but said a service cost of approximately \$25,000 a month makes it practical to purchase the hardware and use it for at least five years. He also advised that the cost of the hardware has gone down since we last did the analysis and it is hard to predict how long this hardware would last, but that we anticipate it lasting approximately five years. He advised that we certainly would look at all options in the future, as the technology capacity continue to change.

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any questions or comments.

There were none.

Upon motion by Ms. Fishback and seconded by Mr. Barron, Resolution No. 10 of 2022 was approved as follows: Mr. Barron, yes; Ms. Fishback, yes; Mr. Cohen, yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Cohen thanked all for their flexibility in rescheduling today's meeting.

Mr. Cohen thanked Mr. Barron and Ms. Fishback for serving on the Audit Committee.

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any new or old business matters to discuss.

There were none.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m. with all Board members in approval.

APPROVED TO CONTENT

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Jeff Cohen

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Chairman

**ACCEPTED FOR FILING IN THE AUTHORITY'S BOOK OF
MINUTES**

DocuSigned by:

Liz Fishback

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Approval
