

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PUBLIC PARKING AUTHORITY OF PITTSBURGH
WEDNESDAY MAY 19, 2021**

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 9:04 a.m. on May 19, 2021. The following Board members were present at the start of the meeting: Jeff Cohen, Matt Barron, Karina Rick and Liz Fishback. Present from staff were David Onorato, Mark DiNatale, Jo-Ann Williams, Chris Holt, Gwen Bolden, David Perry, Scott McNaugher, Tracy Sowinski and Pat Konesky. Also present were Jason Wrona of Buchanan, Ingersoll & Rooney; Kinsey Casey of the City of Pittsburgh; Bill Stewart of Strategic Communications and Curt Paulette representing himself.

MINUTES

Mr. Cohen asked for approval of the minutes from the April 15, 2021 meeting.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any public comments.

There were none.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Onorato advised the Board that the Authority is working to add some additional pay-by-phone vendors to our system, giving the public more options to pay for the metered parking. He advised that the Mayor's office issued a news release reporting the additions and said we are getting close to announcing when the apps will be available.

Mr. Onorato advised the Board that the City of Pittsburgh and the PDP have shut down

Ft. Duquesne Blvd. for five months to support businesses downtown by making the space available for promotional events. He stated that since the PDP's board meeting conflicted with ours today, he would report later on that organization's plan and program schedule

Mr. Onorato advised that he is looking to resume in-person Board meetings in the next couple of months and asked the Board for its concerns and opinions. He stated he would anticipate returning to in-person meetings no later than September. He said that his thought was to give members enough time to adjust their schedules as they have been working remotely and may soon be returning to on-site activity in their primary employment situations.

Mr. Cohen asked the Board for its opinion regarding a return to in-person Board meetings. Ms. Fishback stated that September is fine with her but stated that she is also agreeable if the Board decides on an earlier or later date.

Mr. Barron stated that he is returning to his office in September and feels that it would be good to resume in-person meetings, at that time. He added that if the rest of the Board prefers to do an earlier resumption, he would support that position as well.

Ms. Ricks stated that she believes that the City will begin phasing in employees returning to the office beginning in July and stated she was ready to meet in person when the Board elects to do so.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Finance Report, which shows the January, February and March revenue numbers broken out by the largest service categories. He noted that revenues have increased each month, with the largest gain being from February to March followed by a minor increase from March to April. He stated that April 2020 revenues were \$.9 million compared to \$2.4 million in April 2021, an indication of some increase in activity. He stated that, at the Board's request, the revenues from 2019 were kept in the report as a benchmark and, applying that measure, it shows that revenues are down about 50 percent from where they were in 2019. Mr. Onorato advised that the Authority has recently seen an increase in calls regarding reactivation of garage leases with employees and companies returning to their office settings. He stated that he was made aware that PNC is offering a voluntary June return date in anticipation of a full return in the fall. He stated that PNC's plans will have a direct effect on the number of leases at our First Avenue Garage, adding that the return of Highmark and several large businesses will increase customer volume in facilities servicing their respective locations. He said Mellon Bank announced commitment of a September return may be advanced because of a reduction in pandemic cases. Mr. Onorato noted that revenues to date in are slightly ahead of the pace recorded for 2021's first four months. for the month of May to date.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Facilities Report, which he said shows significant increases from the 2020 reporting periods but said we still have a long way to go to return to pre-pandemic occupancy and revenues. He noted that the year-to-date report reflects full operations for the first three months of 2020 versus 2021 and, in that regard, provides equal quarterly comparisons. He said the year-to-year ratios would be altered considerably by the start of the pandemic. Mr. Onorato stated that the Forbes-Semple garage returned to more of a normal utilization quicker

than others, a development he attributed to the hospital and university operations located in its service area.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Enforcement and Meter Report, which shows the ticket issuance by violation type. He said, comparing April to March in 2021, every ticket category except overtime parking experienced an increase. He also advised that while prior to the pandemic the average monthly ticket total was approximately 20 to 22,000, this month's total was just 12,000. He stated that despite that variance, the trend is moving in the right direction.

Mr. Cohen stated that he wouldn't be surprised if the amount of tickets issued decreased with the addition of the new mobile apps, which make payment easier for the parker.

Mr. Onorato agreed with Mr. Cohen and stated that he believes that the pandemic helped increase app usage because the ability to employ touchless payments was seen as a form of virus protection by many customers.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Meter Revenue Report, which shows April's revenues for 2019, 2020 and 2021, noting that we are seeing the revenues increasing but are still approximately 50 percent less than of 2019's monthly base. He advised that total revenues for April were just over \$1 million so there is still widespread availability of additional garage and on-street parking.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Parking Court Report, stating that the fine revenues are slightly more 50 percent higher than April 2020's total but down approximately 50 percent from the 2019 benchmark total. He stated that, year to date, collected fine revenue is \$2.1 million.

Mr. Onorato advised that all the reports indicate that revenues are returning at a slow pace and stated that the Authority's budget is based on projections of these month-to-month increases. He said we are on-target to reach those revised budgeted goals.

Mr. Cohen asked if the Authority should consider some type of amnesty program, perhaps a pandemic-related thank you, to incentivize people to pay their outstanding tickets.

Mr. Onorato responded that the Authority has about an 83-percent collection rate on outstanding tickets, which is high for the industry. He advised that the Parking Court just this week issued approximately 2500 second notices to those vehicles that are boot-eligible and said Parking Court usually sees an increase in the amount of ticket payments following these mailings.

RESOLUTION NO. 7 OF MAY 2021, "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH FLOWBIRD (FORMALLY CALE) TO UPGRADE THE DOORS AND INTERNAL MECHANISMS ON APPROXIMATELY 50 PERCENT OF MULTI-SPACE METERS, was read by Mr. Cohen and considered by the Board.

Mr. Onorato noted that the meters are going on seven to eight years old, a lengthy period for the effective life of their computer mechanisms. He said because of their condition, combined with a need for new modems as the existing models will no longer be supported by AT&T, we are recommending upgrading both components at the same time. He advised that the new meters would have color touchscreens and noted that this is a sole-source purchase that is described by the memo attached to the resolution. He advised that we currently have a contract in effect with Flowbird stating that no other company can supply the doors to the existing meters that are not compatible with our software system. He also reported that the pandemic triggered a rise in the preference for touchless transactions so we are looking to discontinue payments by coin in any zone with an hourly rate of \$3.00 or higher. He advised that first-quarter 2021's coin usage in downtown was less than one percent, which he stated is understandable because except for two located near the County Jail, no downtown meters currently accept coins as payment. He also reported that while meters in Oakland do accommodate coins, less than seven percent of approximately \$135,000 in transactions there involved that payment mode. He reported that Parkmobile noted that its clients with our same type of meter are in the same position as we are with regard to having the need to upgrade the modems. He advised also that we are planning to arrange for Flowbird to upgrade half of the Authority's meter doors by year end and to upgrade the modems of the other half to keep the Authority in compliance with equipment requirements.

Mr. Barron stated that he believes that it does make sense to move away from coins at the higher-priced meters as most people are not carrying a full dollar's worth of quarters, but he asked that City Council be notified of this change and any response received be recorded.

Mr. Onorato responded that we will certainly reach out to City Council and, where practical, to any area businesses that will be affected.

Ms. Ricks stated that this may fall in line with what the City has been trying to accomplish in trying to get a universal payment card that could be used across different mobility modes and asked if this change might be applicable for that purpose as well.

Mr. Onorato stated he believes that these meters will accommodate the purchase of access to Port Authority transit services as well. He stated that he will verify this ability prior to our proceeding with the order.

Ms. Ricks stated that if the meters are able to do this it may be a reason to keep their coin-acceptance capacity in place. She said it could be beneficial to have a conversation with the Port Authority and the City, believing that this could be a path to purchasing payment consistency across several platforms. Ms. Ricks stated she would be glad to reach out to the Port Authority to initiate contact between the two entities. She stated that this is a great investment and said she is very supportive of the Authority's upgrading of its meters to employ the latest technology available.

Mr. Barron noted that his could be very positive for the Port Authority as he believes that it does not have many reloading stations for customers. He said and having the meters available to reload funds would be a huge advance for the organization and its transit patrons.

Ms. Ricks said she wanted to verify that this order and purchase is for only 50 percent of the Authority's meters and that there will be an identical resolution to purchase the remaining 50 percent.

Mr. Onorato responded that this was correct and said that he anticipated the remaining 50 percent would be accounted for in the 2022 budget unless the City works out something different before the end of this year, in which case a resolution would be brought back to the Board.

Ms. Ricks asked if the Authority anticipated any issues or problems since only half of the inventory will be updated and if there is a specific geographic deployment plan for the first batch.

Mr. Onorato responded that he does not anticipate any issues of that type and said he is going to request that the meters not included in the first wave have the modems changed before delivery so that there are no service interruptions. He advised that the meters currently in use are smaller in size and have black and white screens. He reported the new meters will have a larger color screens operable by touch, so keypads will no longer be required. He also noted that these new meters are ADA compliant.

Mr. DiNatale suggested that if we are going to talk to the Port Authority, he believes we should ask it to contribute to the increase in costs resulting from its involvement.

Mr. Cohen stated that he agreed but stated that it often takes considerable time to process capital purchases and said he wanted to know if we can proceed with the purchase without Port Authority input. He also asked the cost per unit.

Mr. Onorato responded that the cost depends on the type of machine purchased, noting that models vary in price from \$2,400 to \$2,700. He added that the units will not provide paper receipts but will allow patrons to enter a phone number for a receipt in text form. He stated that he has not received a firm price as yet but said the ones we have are educated estimates. He noted that the resolution's cost total is a not-to-exceed one of \$1.4 million and said if the unit cost is lower than our estimates, we can increase the number of units we order and still remain below the Board-approved amount.

Ms. Ricks stated that as long as we are making this investment it is worthwhile to reach out to Port Authority to see if there can be some partnership from a financial perspective to make it better for everyone involved. She stated that it would be prudent for the Board to go ahead and approve the resolution and trust Mr. Onorato and his team to follow through on any partnership possibilities.

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. 7 of 2021 was approved as follows: Mr. Barron, yes; Ms. Ricks, yes; Ms. Fishback, yes; Mr. Cohen, yes.

RESOLUTION NO. 8 OF MAY 2021, “A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO AWARD A CONTRACT TO FIRE FIGHTER SALES & SERVICE COMPANY FOR THE UPGRADES TO THE FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM AT THE WOOD ALLIES PARKING GARAGE, was read by Mr. Cohen and considered by the Board.

Mr. Onorato advised that this resolution addresses a safety and compliance issue at the Wood-Allies Garage, specifically the sprinkler systems on the eighth and ninth levels of the garage that was code-compliant when the garage was built. He advised that the Authority issued an RFP and received two bids, the lowest from Fire Fighter Sales & Services in the amount of \$132,400 and a second from Preferred Fire Protection in the amount of \$195,000. Mr. Onorato advised that the eighth and ninth levels are both 18,500 square feet in size and their total of 37,000 square feet contains 282 sprinkler heads that will all be replaced together with 4,000 lineal feet of associated piping. He noted that Fire Fighter Sales & Services recently completed work at the Mellon Square Garage to the Authority’s satisfaction, adding that the firm is a minority vendor.

Mr. Cohen asked when the sprinkler heads were last replaced.

Mr. Holt advised that the original equipment has been in place since 1985 and, over the last of a 10-year span, we have had to replace some of the sprinkler heads and lines.

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. 8 of 2021 was approved as follows: Mr. Barron, yes; Ms. Ricks, yes; Ms. Fishback, yes; Mr. Cohen, yes.

NEW BUSINESS

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

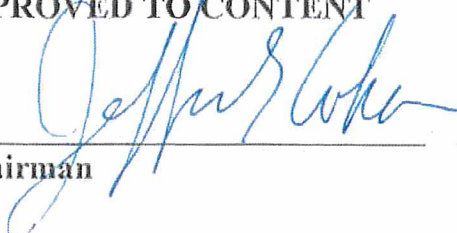
Mr. Cohen mentioned the recent mayoral election results, stating that change is a product of the democratic process, is always interesting and said he hopes that as the new Mayor takes office, he does his due diligence and gives the process adequate time before making wholesale changes. He said there are lots of good, hard-working and dedicated people working in the current administration.

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

There were none.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:44 a.m. with all Board members in approval.

APPROVED TO CONTENT



Chairman

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

Approval

The meeting was adjourned at 9:44 a.m. with all Board members in approval.

APPROVED TO CONTENT

Chairman

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

Approval

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink is written over a horizontal line. The signature consists of several loops and flourishes, including a large 'X' shape on the left and a large 'Q' or 'O' shape on the right.