

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
PUBLIC PARKING AUTHORITY OF PITTSBURGH  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2018**

Having been duly advertised in accordance with the Sunshine Act No. 84 of 1986, a regular meeting of the Public Parking Authority of Pittsburgh was held at 10:05 a.m. on October 25, 2018, at 232 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222-1616. The following Board members were present at the start of the meeting: Jeff Cohen, Matt Barron, Cathy Qureshi and Erika Strassburger. Present from staff were: David Onorato, Chris Holt, Jo-Ann Williams, Janet Staab, James Smith, Bob Wilson, Tracy Sowinski, Patrick Osuch, Kathryn Van Why and Pat Konesky. Also present was Jason Wrona of Buchanan Ingersoll, Alicia Carberry of the City of Pittsburgh Mayor's Office and William Stewart of Strategic Communications.

**MINUTES**

Mr. Cohen asked for approval of the minutes from the September 18, 2018 meeting.

Upon motion by Ms. Strassburger and seconded by Ms. Qureshi, the minutes were approved as follows: Ms. Qureshi, yes; Mr. Barron, yes; Ms. Strassburger, 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 has arranged a flu shot clinic tomorrow for employees, adding that it is free to employees as part of our health care plan.

Mr. Onorato advised the Board that on October 11 and 12, the Authority hosted a team of nine individuals from the Baltimore Parking Authority, enabling them to observe our parking enforcement operations. He advised that in addition to a presentation, the guests were in the field with PPAP enforcement staff. He advised that they were very pleased and impressed with our operations.

Mr. Onorato updated the Board that the Shiloh Street Lot reopened on October 4, with all construction items completed.

Mr. Onorato advised the Board that the Mon Wharf was closed due to flooding for seven additional days in September, bringing the year's closures to 43 full and seven partial days in total.

Mr. Onorato reviewed both the monthly and quarterly reports and, in discussing the Finance Report, noted that meter revenues were down for the first time since the installation of pay-by-plate technology. He advised that the factors causing this drop include the construction in the Strip District and the timing for the payment of the meters taken out of service for the Mr. Rogers film production. He advised that garage revenues are in line with last year's numbers and are on-budget. He pointed out that the month's salary expense saw a large increase due to the retirement or resignation of three individuals and our need to pay them for their accumulated sick, vacation and personnel days. He advised that the small increase in supply costs was due to the purchase of meter batteries. He further noted that the security expenses saw an increase due to the new contract now in place.

Ms. Qureshi asked if the vacation and sick time are able to be accumulated over years.

Mr. Onorato advised that personal days are capped at 10 and are paid down every quarter, adding that vacation time must be used by the end of each calendar year and does not carry over.

Ms. Williams added that if an employee retires he or she is eligible to be paid for your accumulated sick leave up to 112 days. She advised that not all employees are entitled to sick leave.

Mr. Barron questioned the 25-percent jump in utilities and asked if there was an explanation.

Ms. Williams advised that last year the Authority received \$100,000 credit for being overbilled for water and said there is slight increase in water and steam heat, resulting from the timing of switching over from cooling to heating energy modes.

Mr. Cohen stated that he is all for bike lanes but lamented that there is no partnership with the Authority in a situation where we are losing revenue. He noted that he did address this via letters to Mayor Peduto and Chief of Staff Gilman suggesting that there be open discussion with the Parking Authority regarding bike line implementations before any decision is made so that we can address their possible effect on the Authority's business. He stated that the City expects the Authority give it \$29 to \$30 million per year without any corresponding reduction reflecting any revenue lost to bike lanes or other mandated changes. He said we should not be responsible for the payment amount if there is no partnership. He stated he while he does see bike usage in the bike lanes on Saturday and Sunday, he does not believe they are being utilized enough during the week to justify the loss in parking revenue. He noted that during wintertime in Pittsburgh, bike usage is limited and said he believes that the bike racks should be removed at the onset of bad weather and reinstalled in the spring when bicycle usage resumes. He stated that some type of partnership with the Parking Authority would enable us to return to more normal revenue levels, at least during those winter periods. He then asked if the project that was going to reduce our revenues by \$250,000 per year had ever materialized.

Mr. Onorato responded that the project Mr. Cohen was referring to the installation of the bike lanes on Third Avenue. He said that it did occur, noting that 2017 revenues from those four meters and 23 spaces was \$225,000.

Mr. Cohen stated that it is his opinion that it is bad business to take revenue away from your number one contributor and said he doesn't see the trend changing. He asked Ms. Strassburger her opinion as a council member.

Ms. Strassburger stated that she does not have any say in other council members' districts but she would have a say in her district.

Ms. Qureshi asked if the Authority was committed to a certain amount of money that the Authority is required to pay the City and asked if it was based on our total revenue.

Mr. Onorato responded that the Co-Op places the number at \$25 million but the City's understanding is that it is \$27 million. He advised that the meter revenue is based on a formula that includes the PILOT payment and taxes based on garage revenues.

Ms. Qureshi asked if what we pay the City is based on gross revenues and that if revenues are down, the payment also will go down and therefore we rise and fall together.

Mr. Cohen stated that he agrees with Ms. Qureshi's analogy but when the City expects a certain amount and we are required to oblige, that results in a very fine line.

Mr. Onorato added that he routinely addresses the subject of reduced revenues due to bike lane installation in his weekly meetings with the Mayor's Office and does give them specific dollar amounts associated with each project.

Mr. Barron stated that he thought we were subtracting those losses from our payment to the City and asked what the communication involves when they are proposing removal of spaces for bike lanes.

Mr. Onorato responded that a dialogue on such matters existed at one time, but lately the Authority has not been included in the initial conversations. He said, regarding Third Avenue specifically, we had no input into the decision making.

Mr. Barron stated that he is in support of bike lane installations and believes that there are many benefits beyond the financial impact to the Parking Authority but stated that he would like to see us included at the table when those conversations occur. He said this would make all parties involved aware of what the tradeoffs are and, while that would not necessarily lead to different decisions, that everyone should be made aware of the impact of decisions being reached. He offered to communicate that with the Mayor's office on behalf of the Board.

Ms. Strassburger agreed with Mr. Barron and stated that she is in favor of bike lanes for a whole list of reasons and she would like to see the Parking Authority at the table to advise how meters and revenues may be affected mid-year by the installation of bike lanes. She said that contrary to what has happened in the past, the City's Department of Mobility and Infrastructure is embarking on a city-wide bike lane plan and recommends that the Parking Authority be at the table for those discussions at the beginning rather than after the plan is implemented.

Mr. Barron stated that the draft plan is in its early stages and the Parking Authority should review it to advise them if we see things that we might have a significant impact on our business. He stated that this plan has already been submitted to the public and said he believes that there is about one month left to submit comments.

Mr. Onorato advised that he will reach out to Karina Ricks regarding this draft.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Facility Reports, comparing September's revenues from year to year that show the same trend as the Finance Report. He noted the Mon Wharf is down due to the unusual high amount of days closed due to flooding and Ninth and Penn revenue is down due to the closure of the roof and the loss of some leases related to the projected closure of the garage. He advised that Ft. Duquesne and Sixth and Forbes Semple both show increases due to closures in 2017 for construction.

Mr. Onorato noted that Mellon Square revenues are trending back up, noting that there was a loss of parkers due to the opening of garages in the surrounding area.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Enforcement Report, stating that tickets are slightly up from 2017 with the majority being issued for meter violations followed by street-cleaning violations.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Street Meter revenues, noting a decrease in all three categories and stating that this is directly resulting from the loss of meters in the Strip District area. He stated that in 2017 the meters in that area collected approximately \$225,000.

Ms. Qureshi inquired if we know where all of those vehicles are parking now.

Mr. Onorato advised that we have not seen any increase in vehicles parking at Grant Street Transportation Center and said he believes that they may be going out further from the Strip District.

Mr. Barron asked if we were at capacity at Grant Street.

Mr. Onorato responded that we have anywhere from 30 to 35 percent availability of capacity depending on the days involved. He noted that our rates here are still a little high compared to other parking facilities in the Strip District as we consider it a downtown garage.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Parking Court Report quarterly report, stating that the City's share of revenues is \$5.4 million through September.

Ms. Qureshi asked how we arrive at that share number.

Mr. Onorato advised that it is based on revenues less the expenses, in this case the \$7.1 million minus \$1.5 million in expenses. He advised that the City agreed to allow us to take the operating costs out of Parking Court.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Quarterly Occupancy and Utilization Reports, noting that if we remove Mon Wharf and Second Avenue lots we have 11 structured facilities and, of those,

eight are above the 90-93 percent industry average utilization rate on a daily basis, which indicates the level that rates should be. He noted that Second Avenue is not a structure but said we have a reduced number of spaces there due to construction work on the Tenth Street Bridge. He said the construction company working there is using 80 to 100 spaces beneath the bridge.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Quarterly Net Revenue Report, recording transaction activity, which shows increases in the last three months in day, evening and weekend transactions.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Quarterly Housing Lease Report, which shows an increase of leases this year, with most of them located at Mellon Square and Grant Street. He noted that there is a discount on the Downtown Housing Leases, which are priced at is market rate minus the City's parking tax.

Mr. Onorato discussed the Quarterly Revenue Report, that breaks down meter revenue by payment mode and said it shows coin usage at eight percent, credit cards at 48 percent and pay-by-phone at 43 per cent. He added that the phone transactions on average were 30 cents higher per payment than other meter transactions.

Ms. Qureshi stated that so much money comes in and out of this organization that she would to see someone in the Authority be assigned to oversee the Minority and Business participation. She said she believes that this is very important and should be looked at because of its importance to the Authority.

Mr. Holt asked if this was some sort of outreach program that she would like to institute.

Ms. Qureshi stated that she is not exactly sure but said she does know that the Authority has money and jobs that we could really make an impact on Minority Women and Veteran businesses in town. She stated that she believes that it would be difficult for someone that is already on staff to take on these additional responsibilities nut would like to see if this is something that can developed into the budget as a separate position.

Mr. Cohen asked if there is any firms that could help the Authority accomplish that goal.

Mr. Holt responded that he believes there may be firms that do that type of work and said we could reach out to them. He also advised that at our pre-bid and pre-proposal meetings we stress the importance of minority participation and we do include that documentation in the RFP.

Ms. Cohen suggested that the Authority develop a list of minority vendors by category and reach out to those companies when the opportunity presents itself. He asked if the Authority was permitted to reach out to minority vendors on its own.

Mr. Onorato responded that the County does produce such a list and said we refer bidders to the appropriate parties there. He noted that representatives of minority firms do attend our pre-bid meetings in order to have the opportunity to communicate with the vendors bidding on projects in hopes of working with them.

Mr. Wrona added that the Authority could release a general email with a link to our proposal page.

Ms. Strassburger added that she is pleased to hear that the Authority communicates with the EORC. She stated it might be beneficial for the Authority staff to receive training on the process and believes that a conference of this type occurs yearly.

Mr. Holt responded that we do participate at this event every year and will continue to do so.

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any questions.

There were none.

**RESOLUTION NO. 43 OF OCTOBER 2018, "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING FREE PARKING FOR TRANSIENT CUSTOMERS ON SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2018 AT ALL AUTHORITY-OWNED NEIGHBORHOOD METERED LOTS AND ON-STREET METERS,** was read by Mr. Cohen and considered by the Board.

Mr. Onorato advised the Board that the Authority has offered free parking on Small Business Saturday for that past few years which helps to support small businesses by encouraging people to shop and dine at local businesses. He advised that meters will be free both on street and in our lots.

Ms. Qureshi asked if the Authority was participating or offering free parking on Black Friday.

Mr. Onorato responded that we are still in talks with the City Administration regarding this program.

Mr. Barron stated that he would like to go on record stating that he does not like the holiday free parking program but would vote for it in support of the City. He explained that he does not believe the program makes a difference to businesses and feels that the Authority is throwing money away by participating. He stated he does not have as much of a problem with offering one day, Small Business Saturday, but does not support offering free parking on numerous days prior to Christmas.

Mr. Cohen added that from conversations last week, stated he shares Mr. Barron's view.

Mr. Barron stated if it was making an enormous difference with Small Businesses he would have no problem, but he has never seen evidence that shows it does.

Ms. Strassburger stated that if there was some education done with the business owners themselves to prevent and prohibit their employees from taking most of the free spots, it could make a difference. She noted that in the past the free parking did not occur until later in the day and helped to prevent this occurrence but said she is not sure what the Authority could do implement that.

Ms. Qureshi asked how the Authority advertises this this program.

Mr. Onorato stated that the meters are programmed to display that parking is free and said each district promotes it as well.

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any questions.

There were none.

Upon motion by Ms. Qureshi and seconded by Mr. Barron, Resolution No. 43 of 2018 was approved as follows: Ms. Qureshi, yes; Mr. Barron, yes; Ms. Strassburger, yes; Mr. Cohen, yes.

**RESOLUTION NO. 44 OF OCTOBER 2018, "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO APPROVE A CHANGE ORDER TO ALLEGHENY CITY ELECTRIC, INCORPORATED FOR LED LIGHTING TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES TO VARIOUS AUTHORITY-OWNED FACILITIES,** was read by Mr. Cohen and considered by the Board.

Mr. Onorato advised that this is the lighting upgrades that is currently on-going at our garages and is approximately 80-percent complete. He advised that the Authority decided to add to the current scope of work by including the JCC Lot in this upgrade, adding that the work involves lighting under the deck and outside of the facility. He stated that the Authority initiated the change order in the amount of \$49,790 for the JCC upgrade, which is about one percent of the change order. He advised that the other portion is to address an unforeseen condition at the Shadyside Garage where the conduit and wiring behind the steel beams and steel structure need replaced. He said the condition was not identified at the beginning of the project and addressing it amounted to that \$22,030 portion of the change order or approximately one-half of percent of the project cost.

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any questions.

There were none.

Upon motion by Mr. Barron and seconded by Ms. Strassburger, Resolution No. 44 of 2018 was approved as follows: Ms. Qureshi, yes; Mr. Barron, yes; Ms. Strassburger, yes; Mr. Cohen, yes.

**RESOLUTION NO. 45 OF OCTOBER 2018, "A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING MAYOR PEDUTO'S TREE PROTECTION EXECUTIVE ORDER,** was read by Mr. Cohen and considered by the Board.

Mr. Onorato advised that the Mayor issued an Executive Order for all departments and Authorities to develop a policy on tree protection and said we believe the step to be beneficial

across the board. He advised that we have 32 neighborhood surface lots throughout the city and said they all have trees and water mitigation issues

Mr. Barron asked if Mr. Onorato had any idea on the timeline of when the manual will be completed.

Ms. Carberry of the Mayor's Office responded that she believes it will be next year.

Ms. Strassburger asked Ms. Carberry if any other Authorities have adopted this policy.

Ms. Carberry responded that with today's action the Parking Authority would be the first organization to adopt and support the Mayor's order.

Mr. Holt added that the Authority did complete pruning in about 17 of its lots and said that we did reach out and coordinate this effort with the City's tree protection task force.

Mr. Barron asked if the Authority has a list of projects in the 2019 Capital Budget that may be impacted by new policies that may be ordered and implemented. He asked if the budget should be increased due to these types of Executive Orders.

Mr. Onorato responded that the Authority has money in the Capital Budget for lot maintenance and this type of work would fall into that category and said he feels that we have budgeted appropriately and does not need increased.

Mr. Smith added that in the Authority was proactive in the past years with our water mitigation plan and we are currently ahead of the curve.

Mr. Cohen asked if there were any questions.

There were none.

Upon motion by Ms. Strassburger and seconded by Ms. Qureshi, Resolution No. 44 of 2018 was approved as follows: Ms. Qureshi, yes; Mr. Barron, yes; Ms. Strassburger, yes; Mr. Cohen, yes.

## **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Cohen asked if there was any new or old business for discussion.

There were none.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday November 15, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.



The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 am with all Board Members in approval.

**APPROVED TO CONTENT**



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**Chairman**

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



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**Approval**