

# Lynchburg Parking Authority

## Minutes

City Manager's Office  
900 Church Street  
Lynchburg, VA 24504

Tuesday, June 9, 2009  
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

**Members Present:** Dennis Howard, Michael Gillette, Bert Dodson, Angela Hamilton, Ripley Owen, Terri Proffitt

**Staff Present:** Kim Payne, Norman Hale, Cheryl Foxx, Deborah Powell

**Not Present:** Tom Gerdy

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Howard  
Minutes from the April 14, 2009 and May 12, 2009 meetings were approved.

### **Review key recommendations from the Walker Parking Strategic Plan**

Norman Hale stated that the first order of business is to review key recommendations that were adopted by council and how we proceed is our goal. We are in the process of drafting an RFP for the meters to go on the street. The recommendation include a parking management system to issue parking tickets, parking permits and other parking activities. Are there any comments on the key recommendations? The first phase of the parking plan call for meters to be installed on Main Street and then to Church Street from the 1200 block to the 500 block.

Chairman Howard explained that this meeting is geared toward policy not implementation. Are we still bought in to all these things? Do we agree with the sequencing contained in this document? Do we still think meters make sense? The recommendation was meters on Main Street; does this still make sense?

Councilman Gillette stated that he thought we needed to move forward. The goal is that business owner/employees not use on-street parking all day.

**Q** - What about other parking lease agreements and management agreements? Have you gotten further along in feeling confident that once we put paid parking on the street and that really starts to create the pressure to get off the street that you will be able to manage the influx of customers that want to rent an off-street space.

**A** – Yes, we are far enough along to handle the influx of customers.

Norman stated that one of the other strategic options was increasing fines from \$10.00 to \$20.00

He went on to explain that when he was in Roanoke recently on the weekend every deck was open and they were charging for parking and they were busy. Norman's recommendation is to eliminate the hour free parking and implement the token program and that business owners could issue tokens for that first hour.

Dennis explained again that what we are trying to accomplish in this meeting is to view things from a policy standpoint, does the draft Parking Policy make sense so we can determine what the Parking Authority is going to look like in the future. It is not up to the Parking Authority to implement, only to set policy and make recommendations to council.

Are we still comfortable with the Walker Parking Strategic Plan? Is there anything in the recommendations that anyone disagrees with?

**Q** – There was a question about when the Parking Authority enters into leases and management agreements, as well as, on-street and off-street parking. We need to be sure that our charter will allow the Authority to have that power and whether we need to go to the state to change it and that what we are talking about is consistent with state law.

**A** - Enabling legislation only specifies that the Authority has authority over the off-street parking; it does not specify that it has authority over on-street parking.

**Q** – What about the issue of collecting funds?

**A** - We have not gotten to the point of understanding exactly how to set up the enterprise fund. Council members service on the Authority may be affected. If the Parking Authority ever gets to the point where it borrows money, Council members will probably need to step down.

Do we need to modify or remove items 7, 9 and 10? Are we going to serve as advisors to city council and give recommendations or do we act as an independent Authority? An Authority would work better because it would allow funds to be separated and when the Authority needed funding it would go to council. There are some things that need to be written in the City Code per City Manager Payne. Some sort of Memorandum of Understanding between council and the Authority. Major policy issues need to be discussed and the Authority can be used as a buffer. At some point there will need to be an ordinance. People need to be able to find this information. The Parking Authority is to be appointed by council and its Articles of Incorporation state that the seven members will be appointed by council.

A question that council will have to ask is “do want the Parking Authority to run like a business or do they want it composed of stakeholders with a clear bottom line”? Or do they want a mix? The fundamental goal is to invigorate downtown and make clear that profit is secondary to functionality. The Parking Authority’s Mission Statement must incorporate these broader values and this will require interaction with other city departments.

Questions that the Authority will need to answer as soon as possible. (1) Does this group embrace the idea of greater independence of the Authority; (2) more formalized relationship with city council; (3) establishment of the enterprise fund? These are the 3 major components. If so, when? July 1, 2010 would seem logical. Develop budget for enterprise fund. Authority would need to know how money is being allocated. Would Lynch’s Landing be affected? Not necessarily. Lynch’s Landing could be a sub-contractor. We would have to determine if Lynch’s Landing was best able to satisfy the mission of the PA. If the answer is yes, we should continue to work with Lynch’s Landing. If the answer is no, we should change the contract.

**Q** - Should the Authority have a representative from Community Planning?

**A** –The Authority should not have city staff as a voting member, but should have staff that can report to it through the city manager or just as a matter of practice.

**Q** - Can we come up with some sort of paper separation of the money now?

**A** – We are accounting for the funds right now. We are keeping track of where they are coming from and where they are going. We need 6 months of information. The request from the Authority is to please keep council extraordinarily aware of the intention to separate funds. Presently, we have \$110,000 revenue in parking fines. Parking enforcement staff will pay for themselves and the parking revenue streams should also take care of the parking manager’s salary. The Midtown Deck and the Holiday Inn Deck funds go into the general fund. The Majority of Lynch’s Landing revenue also goes into general fund. The Parking Authority will need to see what’s coming in to cover the parking manager’s salary. That’s why we are creating revenue streams (1) pay station

on mid-town, (2) pay station on Clay Street, (3) revenues from surface lots that we have management agreements with, and (4) Midtown Parking Deck and Holiday Inn Parking Deck.

There needs to be a general consensus to create the enterprise fund by July 1, 2010, formalize the independent Authority and a Memorandum of Understanding needs to be in place by January 1, 2010.

The Authority's interpretation is that 9 and 10 are merely implementation mechanisms and don't need to be specified. Number 7 of the key recommendation from the Carl Walker Strategic Parking Plan covers the authority. It recommended that recommendations 9 and 10 be removed from the Parking Authority work plan.

Modify work plan and bring draft back to the committee.

**Q** – What would it take to clean up this document for council to vote on?

**A** – Council has already voted and has accepted this plan. When we report back to council we need to say that this is a refinement of the plan and that this is our strategic plan from the Walker Plan and here is our approach. This group would have to adopt it. We have the independence for off-street, not for on-street.

Kim's recommendation for the Parking Authority strategic approach from the Walker Plan is to eliminate 9 and 10; modify the work plan and bring it back to the committee for adoption; bring forward the Memorandum of Understanding; and our goal for the kick-off of the enterprise fund is July, 2010. A report to city council as to where we're going should be made in late summer/fall of 2009.

A motion was made that the Parking Authority publish a document as outlined by the City Manager that describes where we want to be by July 1, 2010 in terms of the independent nature of the Parking Authority and the segregation of funding into the enterprise fund including everything that City Manager Payne just reviewed above. The motion was seconded and the Motion passed.

### **Parking Policy Draft**

Goal - consolidate facilities, address issues, mission and goals and overview on first page. Consistent with work plan.

**Q** - How do you envision this policy?

**A** – This becomes the City's Parking Policy. Some of it is policy and some management. This is how we should operate the parking program and it is the Authority's policy. Some items may have to be formalized by city ordinance. Again, the Parking Authority has the power to do much of the off-street parking program but will have to go to council for the on-street program. The Authority will have to make the connection.

Norman said that the Parking Authority, as an independent agent, is in charge of managing the parking program and that board members have the ability to change policy. Whether the hours of operation is going to be a part of the policy or whether it is going to be left up to management based on demands and needs. Those are the types of things that really need to be clearly defined. It also needs to be determined if the operational hours are going to be a part of the parking policy.

This document should describe how we operate and envision that the policy will mature and evolve as the organization changes. This document should be available to the public on the City's internet site as well as other places. Changing rates is completely the Authority's decision.

Parking enforcement personnel are retiring July 1, 2009. We are advertising for new personnel who will also be ambassadors. Police will retain their authority over on-street parking. Our vision is that parking control personnel will be the primary enforcement control downtown. We will have active pay stations from 7:00 am – 5:00 pm. We expect the primary source of enforcement to be the parking control personnel not the Police. We are actively recruiting right now, there are 42 applicants. Norman explained that well trained people will bring a lot to the table. You will see a difference in having people out on the streets. Parking control personnel will be able to show citizens how pay stations work, answer questions, monitor decks, enforce after 4:00 pm. We are developing a plan for training the parking patrol staff. These two employees will be supervised by the parking manager.

**Q** – Are we getting the hand held devices by July?

**A** – No. We are trying to obtain a total system that will be on-street/off-street system and all the components. We are in the process of trying to make sure that we have all stakeholders on city staff that will be affected in the discussion. We need to make sure we don't miss anything. Deborah Powell, from Procurement, is helping us with this. Meters have to connect to the finance system. There are lots of variables. Where does information flow? IT's responsibility in maintaining a system? How does it all flow? An RFP will be issued ASAP and proposals will be received from firms to both replace the pay station on the parking deck and be our preferred provider for all the pay stations. All this is happening this summer.

Should we offer reserve parking permits on the Midtown Parking Deck? If so, what should rate be? Recommendation is \$65.00/mth, but could go as high as \$75.00. Capacity is there to do this. There are 10-12 people that would be willing to pay \$65.00 - \$75.00.

Kim's recommendation is to start with a small number of reserve spaces at a very high rate and see what the market does. We must have the flexibility to move people around when needed and with the parking permit agreement we have that flexibility. That is why we moved from lease to permit.

Clay Street Deck – we are moving forward with purchasing a pay station for the 2<sup>nd</sup> level. Adding the pay station would complete the plan for the Clay Street Parking Deck. The revenue will be split with Holy Cross. The City's lease agreement with Holy Cross calls for making 50 spaces available at all times. Holy Cross owns the land that the deck sits on and would forgo all but 5 spaces. There may be time that Holy Cross would ask for 50 spaces. Our lease says that Holy Cross will give us a 24-hour notice to make these spaces available.

We've talked about using the surface lot at the James River Conference Center, but we would have to provide shuttle service.

Norman has been in preliminary discussion with Circuit Court judges about what we can do with their lot. We could make it more efficient but there are several outstanding issues. Mr. Hale has been given permission to do a study only.

Having free parking in off street decks is very difficult. The Manufacturer does not recommend this because it will add difficulty to the implementation process in that the machines would have to be reprogrammed which is extremely costly. The program would cost \$15,000 and there are other ways to handle free parking.

**Q** - Do you need free parking off-street if you have free parking on-street? There is a connection between the two.

Policy will be revised for Clay Street deck. No action required.

Holiday Inn Deck – We have a franchise agreement to operate the deck. Holiday Inn is collecting monthly accounts and paying the city on a monthly basis. It's not being used at maximum

capacity. If Holiday Inn generates more revenue, we get more revenue. We believe that they are losing money, thereby, the city is losing money. No action required.

Policy will not be approved in today's meeting.

Kim- mentioned that other things that we are working on are construction parking, renting dumpsters, residential parking permits. We are trying to consolidate these things.

July 14 meeting has been cancelled.  
Next Meeting: August 11 at 5:30 p.m.

Adjourned at 5:50 p.m.