

READING PARKING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Reading Parking Authority Board Meeting – August 28, 2019

I. Executive Session.

The Reading Parking Authority (“RPA”) Board of Directors met in executive session prior to the start of the regular board meeting to discuss personnel matters.

II. Meeting Called to Order.

The regular board meeting (“Meeting”) was called to order at 5:45 p.m. It was held at the Penn Room, Reading City Hall, 815 Washington Street, Reading, PA 19601.

III. Individuals Present for the Meeting.

RPA Board Members:

Linda Burns-Glover, Chairperson

Misael Marmolejos, Treasurer

Bill Murray, Secretary

Others Present: Lieutenant Nathan L. Matz, RPA Executive Director; Charles Younger, RPA Deputy Director; Michael McGrath, RPA Finance Manager; and Mahlon J. Boyer, Esquire, General Solicitor.

Members of Public: Jeremy Long, Reading Eagle; Mark Vergenes, Mirus Consultants and other members of the public as set forth on the attached Sign In Sheet.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance.

V. Moment of Silence.

VI. Public Comment.

A. Karina Almonte. Ms. Almonte addressed the Board. Her vehicle was booted while parked in the 4th & Cherry Garage. She was told that she had to pay \$458.00 by 9:00 a.m. on August 29, 2019, to avoid a tow of her vehicle. She is a single mother that has just returned to work. She requested to be placed back on a payment plan with the RPA. She had missed one payment and could no longer participate in the payment plan program. Lieutenant Matz said that he would discuss this matter with her after the meeting to reach a possible resolution.

B. Merelyn Janse. Ms. Janse addressed the Board. She asked if the current 10-day deadline, after which a violation increases, could be extended to 30 days. Mr. Murray noted that the increase is controlled by City Ordinance. He asked the RPA Administration to see if any change of the deadline is feasible. If so, the Board could consider a request to City Council to change the ordinance. Ms. Janse also noted that a PEO has been using loud music in his vehicle. She was asked to discuss this matter with Lieutenant Matz after the meeting.

C. Genry Uriby. Mr. Uriby addressed the Board. He lives on Popular Street. He said there is a problem there because there is no available parking. Residents are getting ticketed for parking in front of the Popular & Walnut Garage. Mr. Murray noted to Mr. Uriby that the parking in that area is controlled by City Ordinance. Mr. Murray asked the RPA Administration to review the matter. If anything is feasible to resolve the issue, the RPA Board would support an effort to change the City Ordinance.

D. Jamie Jones. Ms. Jones addressed the Board. Ms. Jones is also a citizen residing on Popular Street. She noted that there is no available parking for residents. There is only 20 minute parking. She requested consideration for residents to park in the Poplar & Walnut Garage. Mr. Murray said that the new gates installed by the RPA may allow a determination of reduced rates for citizens/residents to park in the parking garages. For example, residents could park in garages at a reduced rate for the time period of 6:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. He noted again that the RPA does not control parking in the area in question. It is a City issue. He also noted that the RPA intends to create new available spaces in the Popular & Walnut Garage by moving some of Berks County monthly permit holders to the Convention Center Garage.

VII. Approval of Meeting Minutes.

Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2019 RPA Regular Board Meeting. Second by Mr. Misael Marmolejos. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Approval of Accounts Payable.

Mr. Misael Marmolejos made a motion to approve the RPA accounts payable for August 2019 via the RPA's general fund in the total amount of \$365,202.31. Second by Mrs. Burns-Glover. Motion passed unanimously.

IX. Labor Solicitor Report. None.

X. Solicitor's Report.

Mr. Boyer presented a resolution that would permit the RPA to hire Mirus Consultants as a coach/mentor for the Executor Director of the RPA. The agreement itself has an initial three month term. It can be terminated thereafter by either party upon 10 days written notice.

The cost per month is \$4,000.00. Mirus Consultants will coach and mentor in all aspects of senior level parking operations and management of the RPA. Mr. Murray noted his support for the retention of Mirus Consultants. He thinks it is important to provide the Executive Director with individuals of high integrity and knowledge. Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover made a motion to approve the resolution. Second by Mr. Marmolejos. Motion passed unanimously.

The Solicitor presented a proposed Parking Facilities Agreement between the RPA and the Reading Symphony Orchestra (“RSO”). The agreement will provide parking for the RSO’s season ticketholders at the Popular & Walnut Garage. The Agreement calls for 450 parking spaces at Popular & Walnut at a discounted rate of \$4.00 for each space for eight specific events during the RSO’s 2019-2020 season. Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover made a motion to approve the agreement. Second by Mr. Marmolejos. Motion passed unanimously.

XI. Executive Director Report.

A. HUB gate update. Lieutenant Matz provided an update in regard to the installation of the new gate system for the RPA. By virtue of the new gate system, the RPA has located parking validation machines that were being used by private entities. The RPA was unaware of three of the machines that were in use. It is estimated that just one of the validation machines cost the RPA approximately \$100,000.00 in lost revenue.

Mr. Murray noted that the new gate system has helped to find these old validation machines because the machines no longer work with the new gates. Mr. Murray further noted there has been a discovery of approximately 250 monthly parking permits that were not being billed. The gates are a much needed investment. Mr. Murray thanked the patience of monthly permit holders during the transition to the new gate system. Mr. Murray asked how many new monthly permits have been issued. Mr. McGrath estimated that approximately 2,680 permits have been issued with only 92 permits yet to be picked up. He also said there are many more to handout.

Mr. Vergenes said that Wells Fargo was one of the entities that was using an old validation machine. However, the new gates have forced businesses to give up the old technology. The businesses are now working with the RPA and looking for a new plan.

Mr. Murray said that the new gates have essentially allowed the RPA to conduct an audit of who is and who is not paying for parking. The new gates will make a difference of several hundred thousands of dollars in revenue per year. The new gates and revenue will make a big difference for the RPA.

Lieutenant Matz noted that he and the RPA are having good conversations with large and small businesses in regard to parking rates and to solve any issues that may arise with the new gate system.

Mr. Murray noted that there has been good progress in the last five weeks, since Lieutenant Matz became the Executive Director. He has a good feeling about the direction of

the RPA. He sees an RPA Administration willing to work with people. He has been waiting for progress like this. He specifically stated that Lieutenant Matz has “come in and turned the lights on” and issues are coming to light. Sensitive issues are being addressed in respectful ways. The Board cannot be happier with the current Executive Director.

Mrs. Burns-Glover noted that the RPA is finally making sense and there is now a better understanding of the RPA Operations.

Mr. Vergenes provided a status report in regard to the installation of the new gates. He estimates that the new gate system will be installed and operating at all of the RPA’s facilities in September 2019. Substantial completion will be reached at that point, which will trigger a payment of 40% of the total project cost to HUB. It is likely that payment for the substantial completion will be requested at the next Board Meeting in September. HUB is continuing to work at the 7th & Washington lot to complete the installation of the new gates there. The Front & Washington Garage is completing now. Popular & Walnut Garage went live Tuesday.

The cost of fiber optics is being reviewed. Mr. Vergenes estimates that it will take approximately 6 to 10 months to install fiber. Mr. Murray noted that the installation of fiber optics will allow a video feed from the garages to a central server. Mr. Vergenes said there is available technology that can read a vehicle’s license plate from a camera to determine if there are any violations for the vehicle. Lieutenant Matz noted, at present, that some cameras work in the parking garages but others do not. Mr. Murray said that there is a needed upgrade of cameras at the garages. Cameras can help with safety.

Training schedules regarding the new gates are being scheduled with RPA staff. Training of the RPA staff to maintain the gates will avoid repair costs paid to HUB. Mr. Vergenes is working with Jim Frank to train the RPA staff. Signage is being installed throughout the garages, stairwells and elevators, advising the public to take their tickets with them and confirming that cash is no longer accepted at the gates.

B. Desman update. Mr. Boyer said that there is no update at this time in regard to Desman. There is no action to be taken at this time.

XII. Deputy Director Report.

Mr. Younger provided a report on Right-to-Know Requests submitted to the RPA. His report shows 20 Right-to-Know Requests submitted to the RPA from March 2018 through August 2019. Two requests were denied for a lack of specificity. He noted that the RPA may not ask for the purpose of the request. It must either deny the request or comply with the request. There are certain exceptions that sometimes apply when replying to a request.

XIII. Finance Manager Report.

A. July Financials.

Mr. McGrath said that the total year-to-date revenue for the RPA as of July 2019 was \$4,480,508.00, which is approximately \$13,000.00 over budget. Mr. McGrath noted a decrease in the parking facility revenue for July due to the installation of the new gates. Year-to-date, expenses are approximately \$256,000.00 under budget. The RPA is trending positively, which has been true for approximately seven months. Mr. McGrath said that one of the key drivers after the installation of the gates will be a reduction of the RPA's account receivables.

The RPA's cash flow is trending upward. The RPA's capital expenditures are reducing the cash, but it is still positive. Mr. McGrath discussed the monthly garage revenue, which is itemized in his report according to each garage. He noted the RPA's attempts to reduce any loss of revenue due to the installation of the new gates. Mr. McGrath also provided an itemization of group permits by garage. The largest number of monthly permit holders are at the Popular & Walnut Garage. Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover asked if the gates have been installed there. Mr. McGrath confirmed that the gates went live at Popular & Walnut.

B. Bond Issue Update. No report.

XIV. Board Member Reports.

A. Linda Burns-Glover. Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover thanked Mr. Boyer for his report and in regard to the Mirus Consultants and RSO Agreements. She said that Lieutenant Matz is doing a great and remarkable job. She thanked him for what he has discovered and for helping to avoid any loss of revenue. She also thanked Mr. McGrath for providing an excellent financial report.

B. Misael Marmolejos. He thanked Lieutenant Matz for doing a great job as Executive Director. He thanked him for doing so in such a short time. He is happy to see everyone working together.

C. Bill Murray. Mr. Murray wanted to echo what had already been said by the other Board Members. He also requested authorization for the RPA to obtain an appraisal of the State Lot. The appraisal will assist the RPA in determining a proposal to the Reading Redevelopment Authority for the purchase of the State Lot. Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover made a motion to approve the retention of an appraiser. Mr. Marmolejos seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

XV. Executive Session. The Board announced its intention to conduct an executive session in regard to a personnel matter. It was stated that no action would be taken after the executive session. Following the executive session, the meeting was called back to order.

XVI. Old Business. None.

XVII. New Business. None.

XVIII. Motion to Adjourn.

Mr. Misael Marmejos made a motion to adjourn at 7:02 p.m. Second by Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover. Motion passed unanimously.

The RPA's next regular Board Meeting will be on Wednesday, September 25, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. at Reading City Hall, Penn Room, 815 Washington Street, Reading, PA 19601. An executive session will take place at 5:00 p.m., prior to the meeting.