

READING PARKING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Reading Parking Authority Board Meeting – July 24, 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 pending litigation and a personnel matter.

II. Meeting Called to Order.

The regular board meeting (“Meeting”) was called to order at 5:48 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

Lawrence Miller, Vice Chairperson

Bill Murray, Secretary

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

Members of Public: Jeremy Long, Reading Eagle; Ed DeTullio, Desman; Mark Vergenes, Mirus Consultants; Max Weikel, AFSCME; Yasmine Colon, AFSCME; Nate Rivera; Evelyn Morrison; Sheila Perez; Fabio Favre; Raquel Reyes; and Manny Molina.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance.

V. Moment of Silence.

VI. Public Comment.

A. Sheila Perez.

Ms. Perez addressed the Board. She raised a concern regarding the tow of a vehicle that had been double-parked. She also raised a concern regarding her son whose car has been towed twice. She stated that there is a parking deficit in the City that is worsened by residential multi-

unit apartments that are permitted in the City. Ms. Perez also offered a concern regarding front desk employees at the RPA.

Mr. Murray acknowledged the concerns raised by Ms. Perez and also recommended that she contact Public Works in regard to some of the matters she raised.

B. Evelyn Morrison.

Ms. Morrison commented that the City intends to extend the Act 47 status for three years, but she wants the City to be removed from Act 47 before then. According to her, citizens of the City are looking for an alternative plan. She plans to meet with the Department of Community and Economic Development in Harrisburg, PA to discuss options. She is going to explore the idea of a receivership for the City. She wants the RPA to be under the control of the City.

Mr. Murray responded and said that he would accept Ms. Morrison's invitation to go to Harrisburg to meet with the Department of Community and Economic Development. He said there is a challenge with the City taking control of the RPA. The City would have to pay the debt of the RPA. This could be accomplished if planned correctly but the current Act 47 coordinator would have to provide assistance.

Mr. Lawrence Miller said that the primary obstacle to Ms. Morrison's plan is the source of the funds needed. Ms. Morrison suggested that the Department of Community and Economic Development would provide loans if the City was in receivership.

C. Nate Rivera. Mr. Rivera said there has been much transition in the RPA in the past three years. He suggested a lack of communication between the RPA leadership and its employees. He also said that RPA employees need better growth opportunities within the organization.

VII. Approval of Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Lawrence Miller made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2019 RPA Regular Board Meeting and the minutes of the July 17, 2019 Special Meeting of the Board. Second by Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Approval of Accounts Payable.

Mr. Lawrence Miller made a motion to approve the RPA accounts payable for July 2019 via the RPA's general fund in the total amount of \$188,328.85. Second by Mrs. Burns-Glover. Motion passed unanimously.

IX. Labor Solicitor Report. None.

X. Solicitor's Report.

Mr. Boyer presented a Severance and Release Agreement for approval by the Board in regard to an RPA employee. Mr. Lawrence Miller made a motion to approve the Agreement. Second by Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover. Motion passed unanimously.

XI. Executive Director Report.

Mr. Murray commented that the RPA Board and the prior Executive Director have parted ways. The RPA intends to create a long term contract with the Reading Police Department for the management of the RPA. There are currently negotiations with the City Administration, the Reading Police Department and the FOP regarding this management. This will permit an opportunity to restructure the RPA and will create further input from representatives of the citizens of the City. The RPA, the Administration of the City, the FOP, and the Police Department agree that this will make a positive change and they are working together in regard to this management of the RPA.

City of Reading Police Lieutenant Nathan Matz confirmed that he has been assigned by the Chief of the Reading Police Department to act as an interim Executive Director at the RPA. Lieutenant Matz has been with the Reading Police Department for 13 years. He has a Political Science degree. He currently works in the City and has real estate holdings in the City. Lieutenant Matz commented that he wants to see the City thrive.

A. HUB Gate Update.

Mr. Mark A. Vergenes of Mirus Consultants addressed the Board regarding the current RPA installation of a new parking access and revenue control system. Installation of the new gate system has been completed at the following garages: South Penn Garage; Convention Center/Double Tree Garage; Reed & Court; Second & Washington; and Front & Washington (completing now). Mr. Vergenes confirmed that a complete installation at a garage means that the system is operational, has been tested and there are vehicles traveling in and out of the garage using the newly installed system.

The next garages that will receive the installation of the new gate system are as follows: Chiarelli Plaza Garage; 4th & Cherry Garage; Poplar & Walnut; and the 7th & Washington lot. The order of the remaining installation was changed due to the new assignment of proxy cards to monthly permit holders.

Mr. Murray asked when substantial completion of the entire project will be reached. Mr. Vergenes said that substantial completion should be reached mid-to-late August. Overall, Mr. Vergenes said that the project is moving along nicely.

Mr. Vergenes discussed with the Board some open action items regarding the gate installation. The RPA currently has a cloud based server through Omega. There are current discussions to create a redundancy. At present, if the cloud based server shuts down, the gates at the garages will go up because there is no communication between the server and the gates.

Under the old gate system, there was a mag stripe on the parking tickets that was read at the gate. Under the new system, there is a barcode on the tickets. The barcode makes it easier and faster for users of the gate. However, the gate has to communicate with the RPA server to permit the use of the barcode.

Current discussions concern the possible installation of a modem or a constant internet connection from Comcast between the gates and the server. Omega intends to walk the various garage locations to further explore options for constant gate communication. Omega is going to review the garage electrical systems to confirm the RPA has an uninterrupted power source for all of the gate equipment.

Mr. Lawrence Miller asked what would happen if the Comcast internet stops working. Mr. Vergenes confirmed that the gates will go up. Mr. Miller suggested a review of standard outages to determine lost revenue from the outage versus the cost of assured internet.

Mr. Vergenes said that there is going to be an installation of JMS software. This will allow RPA management to see the gate activity from their laptops and mobile devices.

Mr. McGrath has been working to issue/collect leases and information for RPA monthly permit holders. Mr. McGrath said that it has been a significant task to obtain the permits thus far. Roughly 3,500 permits have been obtained with approximately 3,000 left to go. Mr. McGrath said that this is the one chance the RPA has to confirm the individuals that have access cards for the garages. It is the goal of the RPA to maintain this information. Mr. McGrath suggested that the new gates will quickly pay for themselves due to the better recordkeeping and the control over the permit holders.

Mr. James Frank confirmed that the gate installation is moving along well. He suggested the use of generators in all of the garages to maintain the gates. This would be part of the planned capital improvement project for the RPA's parking garages.

B. Desman Update.

Mr. Ed DeTullio from Desman addressed the Board. Mr. DeTullio confirmed that there was a bid opening in June 2019 for the planned capital improvement project for the parking garages. There were no bids received for the mechanical construction part of the project. It was necessary to rebid this portion of the project. Two bids were received for the general construction part of the project. However, both contractors failed to meet the bid submission requirements stated in the bid package. It was therefore necessary to also rebid the general construction portion of the project.

Subsequently, after the rebid occurred, bids were received for the general construction and the mechanical construction parts of the project in July 2019. There were two bids received for the general construction portion of the contract. Both contractors met the bid submission requirements. The low bidder was Carl Walker Construction. Three bids were received for the mechanical construction portion of the contract. One bidder failed to meet the requirements of the bid proposal form. Of the remaining bids, M&M Facilities Services was the low bidder.

Mr. DeTullio recommended that the RPA move forward with Cark Walker Construction and M&M Facilities Services as the low bidders for the project. Both are good contractors in his opinion.

Discussion was held in regard to the award of the bids for the project. Hirneisen Electrical & Vision Mechanical had properly submitted bids in the June 2019 bid submission process and they were the low bidders for the electrical and plumbing portions of the project.

Mr. Boyer asked how long the RPA has to issue an intent to award the contracts to Hirneisen Electrical & Vision Mechanical. Mr. DeTullio confirmed that the first bids for the project were received on June 5 and were open for 60 days. The second bids for the project were received on July 10 and are also open for 60 days. Mr. Boyer suggested that the time period for the approval of all contracts for the project should run concurrently from July 10. Mr. DeTullio said that he would speak to Hirneisen Electrical & Vision Mechanical to see if they would extend the bid option timeframe.

Mr. Murray commented that the Board is currently dissatisfied with the financing options that have been provided thus far. However, he also confirmed that the RPA is committed to moving forward with the capital improvement project and that financing will continue to be sought.

XII. Deputy Director Report.

A. 600 block, North 8th Street. Mr. Charles Younger confirmed that Reading City Council approved an ordinance on July 8, 2019 for the removal of the residential parking for the 600 Block of North 8th Street.

XIII. Finance Manager Report.

A. June Financials. Mr. McGrath discussed the financial statements for the RPA for the period ending June 30, 2019. Revenues are up compared to budget. Expenses are down compared to budget. The RPA is undergoing a positive trend. Mr. McGrath noted there will be a loss of revenue during the gate installation process. However, this lost revenue will be made up when the gates are fully operational. Mr. McGrath confirmed that the expenses of the RPA are roughly \$200,000.00 under budget. He noted that the RPA is controlling expenses. Mr. McGrath reviewed the revenue generated by each parking garage. He said that the monthly permits are an important source of revenue at Poplar & Walnut. In contrast, daily parking revenue is the biggest generator of revenue at Reed & Court. Poplar & Walnut provides the highest revenue of any of the garages.

B. Bond Issue Update. Mr. McGrath said there is a need for more time to continue discussions with RBC regarding financing for the RPA. Mr. McGrath is hopeful that RBC will be able to provide better results.

XIV. Board Member Reports.

A. Linda Burns-Glover.

Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover said that she worked in the City in the 1970's and 1980's. At that time, the City, the RPA and the Reading Police Department acted as one cooperative unit. There was traffic court at that time. She thanked representatives of AFSCME for being present at the Board Meeting.

B. Lawrence Miller. None

C. Bill Murray.

Mr. Murray addressed the AFSCME representatives. He said he was glad they were in attendance for the board meeting. They are always welcome. He is hoping for a new opportunity to work with AFSCME going forward. Mr. Murray noted that the prior hiring freeze issued by the RPA Board is no longer required. The hiring freeze has been rescinded. However, the Board will continue to be involved in the hiring of management level positions for the RPA. He welcomed Lieutenant Matz to the RPA and confirmed that the Board is ready to support him.

Lieutenant Matz commented that he has been on the job as the Executive Director of the RPA for approximately four days. He is moving forward in his position and is hopeful with new ideas and solutions for the RPA.

XV. Old Business. None.

XVI. New Business. None.

XVII. Motion to Adjourn.

Mrs. Linda Burns-Glover made a motion to adjourn at 6:57 p.m. Second by Mr. Lawrence Miller. Motion passed unanimously.

The RPA's next regular Board Meeting will be on Wednesday, August 28, 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.