

READING PARKING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Reading Parking Authority Board Meeting – August 18, 2020

1) **Meeting Called to Order.**

The Reading Parking Authority's regular board meeting was called to order on August 18, 2020 at 5:46 p.m. by Frank Denbowski, Chairperson. It was held at the Reading Parking Authority, 613 Franklin Street, Reading, PA 19602, pursuant to notice published and posted according to law.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in conformity with CDC guidelines, some of the RPA Board members participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom. The physical meeting was closed to the public, but notice published and posted prior to the meeting provided members of the public with information to listen to and take part in the meeting. A recording of the meeting was made and is available on the Authority's website.

Individuals Present.

RPA Board Members:

Frank Denbowski, Chairperson

Timothy J. Profit, Vice-Chairperson

Julia Domena, Treasurer (*participated remotely*)

Nate Rivera, Secretary (*participated remotely*)

Daniel Laws, Assistant Secretary (*participated remotely*)

Others Present: Nathan L. Matz, RPA Executive Director; Michael McGrath, RPA Director of Finance; Kristen Stubblebine, RPA Office Manager; Mahlon J. Boyer, Esquire, General Solicitor; Bart Ganster, PEO Supervisor.

Members of Public: Jeremy Long, Reading Eagle (*participated remotely*) and Evelyn Morrison (*participated remotely*).

2) **Pledge of Allegiance.**

3) **Moment of Silence.**

4) Roll Call.

5) Public Comment.

Mr. Denbowski read the Authority's Public Participation guidelines before any public comment was made. Evelyn Morrison then addressed the Board. Ms. Morrison said that she submitted a right-to-know request to the Authority to obtain documents related to its 2019 bond issue. Those documents were provided to her based on her request. She noted concerns with the terms of the loan and the lack of any involvement by the City. In response, Mr. Profit said that none of the current Authority Board Members had taken part in the bond issue. It had been completed by the prior Authority Board. However, he said upon review of its terms, he had no concerns with the bond.

6) Approval of Minutes.

Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the July 21, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes. Second by Mr. Rivera. The motion passed unanimously.

7) Approval of Accounts Payable.

Mr. McGrath presented the accounts payable for August, which totaled the sum of \$543,081.74. Mr. McGrath said that the proposed payables include a payment to HUB for the retainage from the new gate system that had been installed by the Authority in 2019. He also noted that the payables included a payment to Nathan's Contracting for its ongoing work on the Authority's parking garages.

Mr. Laws made a motion to approve the Authority's accounts payable in the stated amount via the Authority's general fund. Second by Mr. Rivera. The motion passed unanimously.

8) General Solicitor Report.

a) Personnel Policy.

Mr. Boyer presented Resolution 2020-13 to the Board. The Resolution proposes the adoption of a Personnel Policy for the Authority. Among other things, the Personnel Policy establishes standards for a merit-based personnel system and establishes a personnel code. Mr. Denbowski said that the Policy was meant to remove politics from any appointments or promotions within the Authority. Hiring and promotions will be based on merit and qualifications. He noted that these policies were already in place at the Authority but would now be memorialized. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve Resolution 2020-13 to adopt a Personnel Policy for the Authority. Second by Mr. Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Herbein Audit.

Mr. Boyer discussed the retention of Herbein and Company to assist the City Auditor in performing an audit of the Authority's usage of City fuel cards. Herbein estimates that it will cost \$5,000.00 or less for it to perform the requested audit. Mr. Denbowski said that the audit is part of an effort to collaborate with the City and is part of a standard review by the City. Mr. Profit made a motion to retain Herbein at an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 to assist the City Auditor in performing the fuel card audit. Second by Mr. Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

9) Labor Solicitor Report.

No report.

10) Executive Director Report.

a) Thank You to the City.

Mr. Matz said that the City recently helped the Authority with a septic issue. The City responded quickly and did a great job. Mr. Matz expressed his gratitude for the City's help.

b) Award from Representative Caltagirone.

Mr. Matz said that the Authority had received a Spirit of Reading Award from State Representative Caltagirone. Mr. Denbowski said that the award was very nice and well received. He noted that Representative Caltagirone is going to retire soon and has been an integral part of the City. Mr. Denbowski expressed his gratitude for the work that Mr. Caltagirone has performed over several years.

c) Construction Update.

Mr. Matz confirmed that Desman, the Authority's Project Manager for the Capital Improvement Project for the parking garages, provided a report to the Board Members in regard to the ongoing repair and preventative maintenance work at the garages. Mr. Matz asked if the Board Members had any questions in regard to that report. None were posed. Mr. Denbowski said that Desman provided a good report that broke out the ongoing project updates per garage.

d) UPsafety Implementation.

Mr. Matz said that UPsafety went live for the Authority on August 1, 2020. There were a few transition issues but everything is working well. He complemented UPsafety in regard to its work.

e) Parkmobile Implementation.

Parkmobile went live on August 1, 2020. Parkmobile is a user-friendly application that is used to pay for parking. Mr. Matz confirmed that Parkmobile signs have been installed to confirm the use of Parkmobile to pay for parking. Mr. Ganster visited various businesses to provide them with information regarding Parkmobile.

f) Pension Investment Strategy.

The Authority had received information from BB&T regarding its Pension Investment Strategy. The Authority is reviewing that strategy.

g) Intergovernmental Agreement with RAWA.

Mr. Boyer discussed a proposed Agreement between the Reading Area Water Authority and the Reading Parking Authority. Pursuant to that Agreement, RAWA would continue to provide water to the Reading Parking Authority at no charge. In turn, the Parking Authority will continue its assistance with the issuance of no parking signs for RAWA. The Agreement also permits the Parking Authority to retain RAWA for certain work. The Parking Authority would pay RAWA at cost for any work that RAWA performed for the Parking Authority.

Mr. Denbowski said that the Parking Authority is continuing to work with its strategic partners. This is part of Mayor Moran's plan for the City. Cooperation among the governmental agencies is encouraged and Mr. Denbowski foresees more intergovernmental agreements like this one. He noted that the Authority is also working with DID, the Reading Redevelopment Authority and the Penn Street Market.

Mr. Matz confirmed that RAWA will assist the Parking Authority with matters the Parking Authority is unable to perform. Mr. Profit asked for an example of such work. Mr. Matz noted that RAWA had assisted with draining certain pits at a Parking Authority garage. Hiring an outside contractor to do the work would have cost the Parking Authority much more than it paid RAWA to do the work. Mr. Profit asked if the proposed Agreement with RAWA would require the Parking Authority to use RAWA for construction or other types of work. Mr. Boyer confirmed that there was no exclusivity in the contract and that the Parking Authority was free to use RAWA or other contractors and/or vendors at its discretion.

Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with RAWA subject to Solicitor review. Ms. Domena seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

h) Parking Agreement for 400 Madison.

Discussion was held in regard to a parking facilities agreement between the Authority and Madison 2020, LLC. Madison 2020 is planning to rent apartment units at 400

Washington Street. Pursuant to applicable zoning requirements, it needed to confirm the right to use 79 parking spaces at the Authority's Chiarelli Plaza Garage. The Authority and Madison agreed that 79 parking spaces would be reserved at Chiarelli Plaza for future leasing by Madison and/or its tenants for an annual fee of \$8,000.00. Future leasing of spaces by Madison and/or its tenants would be subject to the Authority's normal parking rates. A consensus of the Board had been reached in regard to this Agreement prior to the Board meeting. The Agreement was presented for ratification by the Board. Mr. Profit made a motion to ratify the Agreement. Seconded by Mr. Rivera. The motion passed unanimously.

i) Berks Art Council Mural Project.

Mr. Matz said that a press conference had been held prior to the Board Meeting at the South Penn Garage for the presentation of murals that were installed on the garage. The Berks Art Council had previously approached the Parking Authority in regard to the installation of the murals as part of a greater art project for the downtown corridor. Mr. Matz said it was a great project. There was good cooperation between the Authority and the Art Council. In the future, there is a plan to artistically paint the elevator windows at the South Penn Garage. Mr. Denbowski expressed appreciation to the Berks Art Council and the Parking Authority. He was impressed with the turnout for the press conference. He said there was good community support for the project.

j) Penn Street Market.

Mr. Matz reported that the Authority was able to accommodate the Penn Street Market on a portion of the surface lot at 500 Cherry St. The market has been very well attended. The Authority is receiving good compliments. The new location for the market is larger and allows for more social distancing. Mr. Denbowski noted that the City was unable to accommodate the Market on Penn St. due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

k) Reading School District Lease.

Discussion was held in regard to the Authority's limited use agreement with the Reading School District. The Authority had entered into an agreement with the School District lease to provide resident parking at certain of the School District parking lots for the City's ongoing street sweeping. The street sweeping had been put on hold due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. When it was restarted, there was a need for resident parking and the Authority and the School District partnered to provide parking at certain of the School District parking lots. Discussion was held in regard to the term of the Agreement and whether the Agreement was still in place. Mr. Denbowski recalled that the Agreement had been tied to the Governor's Emergency Order.

Mr. Denbowski noted the on-going need for resident parking and possible future partnerships with other businesses, churches or entities that have open lots that residents could use. Mr. Profit said that he would support such partnerships if it helps the residents with

parking. Mr. Rivera noted that the Authority has a responsibility to explore available options. The Authority needs to be sensitive to the parking situation in the City.

Mr. Matz said the Authority would assess the situation to provide possible assistance through partnerships or other means. Mr. Laws reaffirmed the need for ongoing parking options for City residents. Mr. Matz noted that the School District has parking throughout the City and noted the possible continuation of a relationship with the School District for resident parking.

Mr. Laws said there has been a positive reception to recent enforcement efforts on the south side of the City and especially in regard to dangerous intersections. Mr. Matz said that the Authority compiles complaints and Mr. Ganster investigates them for issues of public safety. Mr. Matz encourages public input for dangerous intersections and/or other dangerous matters that the Authority can assist with.

Mr. Matz said that Mr. Ganster is doing a very good job as the PEO Supervisor. Mr. Rivera agreed. He believes that the PEO's are treating people better and he sees a difference in employee actions. PEO's are talking to residents and explaining issued violations.

Mr. Matz said there were recent enforcement efforts in the area of Riverfront Credit Union. The City approached the Authority about issues there. Mr. Ganster and the Department of Public Works assessed the situation. Enforcement efforts were then conducted. There were numerous violations with education issued during the first weekend of enforcement. Now, there are almost no violations being issued in that area. It is not about enforcement but public safety.

l) RACC Meeting About Future Parking.

Mr. Matz said that there are ongoing meetings and discussions with RACC about a future parking agreement.

m) Reading Redevelopment Authority Meeting.

Mr. Matz confirmed that there are ongoing discussions and meetings with the Reading Redevelopment Authority in regard to a possible new lease with the Redevelopment Authority and/or the sale and purchase of certain properties.

n) Rose Street.

There was discussion in regard to ongoing concerns on Rose Street. Mr. Matz has received numerous complaints in regard to this area. The Authority is working to educate residents in regard to applicable rules and their need to follow them.

Mr. Matz also noted that there have been numerous complaints from the Mayor's office, City Council and other individuals in regard to double parking in the City. It is the

number one complaint received by the Authority. Mr. Matz said it is a safety issue especially for First Responders. The Authority is working with the Reading Police Department in regard to this matter. There will be a need to dedicate more resources to this issue. One or two PEO's may be assigned to resolving the double-parking problem. There will be a focus on education to confirm the safety issue that double-parking presents. The Authority is working on a new initiative in regard to double-parking that may be implemented in September.

Mr. Denbowski confirmed that the Reading Police Department does not have the necessary time in regard to the double-parking matter. Many of the officers are responding to calls and unable to assist with the issue. On the other hand, the Authority may have the capacity to help with the double-parking issue, which is important for neighborhoods. Mr. Laws asked if two PEO's will be enough and if there is any way to utilize street cameras. Mr. Rivera noted that most residents are already aware that double parking is not permitted. He suggested strong enforcement to stop this on-going problem.

11) Director of Finance Report

Mr. McGrath said that the Authority's revenue has been consistently lower than 2019, which is attributed to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Authority's gross revenue for July was \$590,194.00. This was \$82,931.00 under budget. However, Mr. McGrath said that the revenue from no parking signs was over budget and significantly higher than 2019. The Authority's expenses for July were \$523,828.00. Notably, there was a higher computer expense. Professional fees were higher and related to the Herbein audit of the Authority's 2019 financials. The Authority had \$66,366.00 in operating income in July.

Year-to-date, the Authority's gross revenue is unfavorable to budget in the amount of \$706,780.00. However, its year-to-date expenses are favorable to budget in the amount of \$320,195.00. Year-to-date, the Authority's net income is \$665,592.00.

In regard to cash flow, the Authority had unrestricted cash in January of \$1,498,245.71. As of July 31, the Authority had unrestricted cash in the amount of \$2,020,916.29. The cash flow statement reflects a \$215,000.00 transfer from the Authority's project fund. Transfers like this will continue during the Authority's capital improvement project.

Mr. Denbowski noted the loss of revenue at the Chiarelli Plaza. Mr. McGrath said that this was attributed to the loss of iLead Charter School and the Reading Eagle. Mr. Denbowski suggested that the losses may be offset by the tenants from the planned Madison apartments as well as Alvernia University.

Mr. Matz expressed his gratitude to the Authority team for its transition to Parkmobile and UPSafety.

12) HR Report.

No report.

13) Maintenance Supervisor Report.

James Frank submitted a monthly report that was provided to all of the Board Members prior to the Board Meeting. The Board posed no questions.

14) PEO Supervisor Report.

Bart Ganster submitted a monthly report that was provided to all of the Board Members prior to the Board Meeting. The Board posed no questions. Mr. Ganster said that the Authority is assisting with the 2020 Census. Census forms are available at the Authority office due to its foot traffic.

15) Office Administration Report.

Kristen Stubblebine and Cindy Sanzo submitted a monthly report that was provided to all of the Board Members prior to the Board Meeting. The Board posed no questions.

16) Board Member Report.

It was noted that efforts are ongoing with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. There is ongoing preparation work. The Committee will meet soon.

17) Old Business.

None.

18) New Business.

a) Parking 101 Workshop.

Mr. Denbowski said that the Board is continuing to work on the Parking 101 Workshop. It will take approximately three to four hours. Strategic planning will be part of that workshop.

b) Striped Lines for Parking Spaces on City Streets.

Ms. Domena said that there are ongoing issues with parking in residential areas. She said that some individuals strategically move vehicles and take up numerous spaces on a block. She asked if lines could be placed on the street to denote specific areas for vehicles to park. She said that lines for parking spaces are needed.

Mr. Denbowski said that he had spoken to the Department of Public Works in regard to this issue. It does not have the necessary personnel to work on the line painting. Mr. Denbowski discussed the possible use of United Community Services for the line painting. The

Authority would help with enforcement if vehicles were not parked within the lines, as required. Mr. Denbowski suggested that two to four additional parking spaces could be made available on each block if there were lines painted for spaces.

Mr. Matz said that he also spoke to the Department of Public Works. He suggested the possible inclusion of the line painting in future RFP's for repaving of streets. The City could include line painting in those projects. Mr. Denbowski expressed support for that idea. Mr. Matz suggested the possible payment for the painting of lines by the RPA. The members of the Board expressed support for that idea. Mr. Matz said that he would explore the cost for doing so. Mr. Laws said that Mr. Matz should focus on the greatest areas of need.

19) Public Comment.

There was no public comment regarding any matters or topics discussed by the Board.

20) Next Board Meeting.

Mr. Denbowski announced that the Authority's next Board meeting is scheduled for September 15, 2020, beginning at 5:30 p.m. and will be via Zoom. An executive session will be held and will start immediately after the conclusion of the public meeting.

21) Adjourn.

Mr. Denbowski announced that an executive session was going to be held to discuss personnel matters and pending litigation with no board action to be taken upon the conclusion of the executive session.

There being no further business of the Board, Mr. Profit made a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting. Second by Mr. Rivera. The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.