

**READING PARKING AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of Reading Parking Authority  
Board Meeting – September 15, 2020**

1) Meeting Called to Order.

The Reading Parking Authority’s regular board meeting was called to order on September 15, 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; and Bart Ganster, PEO Supervisor.

Members of Public: Jeremy Long, Reading Eagle (*participated remotely*) and Evelyn Morrison (*participated remotely*). *Ms. Morrison’s attendance was later in the meeting during the second public comment portion of the meeting although she made no comment.*

2) Pledge of Allegiance.

3) Moment of Silence.

4) Roll Call.

Mr. Denbowski confirmed all individuals that were present for the meeting whether in person or remotely.

5) Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

6) Approval of Minutes.

Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the August 18, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes. Second by Mr. Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

7) Approval of Accounts Payable.

Mr. McGrath presented the accounts payable for September, which totaled \$104,780.09. Mr. McGrath said that multiple payments of \$15.00 noted on the check history report were in relation to refunds for individuals that returned parking permits to the Authority. He said that the remaining payables were normal.

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

8) General Solicitor Report.

a) RFP for Towing Contract.

The Authority's General Solicitor, Mahlon J. Boyer, Esquire, addressed the Board. He discussed the possible issuance of an RFP by the Authority for a towing contractor. At this time, the Authority relies on the City of Reading's towing contract. Mr. Boyer suggested that the Authority should have its own towing contract. Mr. Profit said that the Authority should have its own contract in the event of any default or other contract dispute. Mr. Denbowski agreed and said that the Authority should have its own towing contract. Mr. Laws noted his agreement with the issuance of an RFP for a towing contractor. Mr. Rivera also said that the Authority should have its own contract. Upon consensus of the Board, it was agreed that the Authority will issue an RFP for its own towing contractor.

b) John Gooch Contract.

Mr. Boyer said that this matter would be tabled.

c) Board Meeting Start Time.

Mr. Boyer said that there had been some discussion of changing the monthly Board Meeting start time. The possibility of Board Meetings in the morning had been discussed. Mr. Boyer said that the Authority's ByLaws would permit a change of the meeting start time. There would need to be an announcement made and formal notice of the new start time published and posted as required by law.

Mr. Denbowski then announced that Mr. Rivera was stepping down from the Authority Board. The September Board meeting would be Mr. Rivera's last meeting. He is stepping down from the Board due to a new appointment by Mayor Moran. Mr. Rivera noted his gratitude to the Board for its service and said that the Authority is in good hands with its current Board and administration. He said that the Authority should continue to act in the best interests of the City and its residents. Mr. Denbowski thanked Mr. Rivera for his service on the Board.

Mr. Profit said that the question of a new starting time should be tabled at this time. It can be discussed at the Board's proposed workshop on October 2, 2020. Mr. Denbowski said it is an issue worth discussing and could also possibly be discussed at the Board's January reorganization. Mr. Denbowski said that any start time for Board Meetings needs to take the Authority Board Members' personal schedules into account.

d) Redevelopment Authority – Agreement of Sale.

Mr. Boyer presented a proposed Agreement of Sale between the Reading Redevelopment Authority and the Parking Authority. The Agreement of Sale proposes the sale of six separate properties by the Redevelopment Authority to the Parking Authority. Two of the properties are surface parking lots that the Parking Authority currently leases from the Redevelopment Authority. Those lots are located at 644 Penn Street and 1019 Penn Street. The other four properties are small portions of property that abut the Parking Authority's garages. One of those properties is a courtyard and the others are portions of sidewalk.

Mr. Matz confirmed that the surface lot at 1019 Penn Street has approximately 54 parking spaces. It is a neighborhood surface lot. The property at 644 Penn Street, commonly known as the "State Lot" has approximately 39 parking spaces.

Mr. Boyer said that the sale price payable by the Parking Authority to the Redevelopment Authority for the noted properties is \$430,800.00. Closing will be on or before October 31, 2020. Mr. Denbowski said that the sale of these properties is a continuing part of Mayor Moran's plan for the City. He wants there to be continuing cooperation among the City's agencies and a move towards economic development. Mr. Denbowski said that it also makes sense for the Authority to own the properties since it already maintains them. It is also good to keep these properties in the hands of the public. Mr. Denbowski noted that the Parking Authority will continue leasing some parking lots from the Redevelopment Authority even with the noted purchase.

Mr. Matz confirmed that, prior to the Agreement of Sale, the Parking Authority had leased the noted properties from the Redevelopment Authority which was a recurring expense in the Parking Authority's operating budget. Purchasing the properties as a capital expense makes funds available for other day-to-day maintenance and enforcement costs of the Parking Authority. The sale of these parcels will allow the Redevelopment Authority to focus on its core mission of eliminating blight. The partnership between both authorities empowers each organization to concentrate efforts on their roles in revitalizing the downtown of Reading.

Mr. Matz also said that the Parking Authority is continuing in an effort for Citywide parking relief. As owner of the noted properties, the Parking Authority is positioning itself to make substantial changes as part of its new strategic goals that will be announced shortly and will ultimately improve parking options throughout the City. The Parking Authority has plans underway for enhancements that will support downtown revitalization and provide relief for parking congestion caused by Citywide population density.

Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the Agreement of Sale. Second by Mr. Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

9) Labor Solicitor Report.

No report.

10) Executive Director Report.

a) Construction Update.

Mr. Matz presented a proposed Change Order for the ongoing capital improvement project to the Authority's parking garages. The Warko Group that is working on the South Penn garage discovered an issue with deteriorated decking. The decking is collapsing. The approximate cost for the work proposed in the Change Order is \$10,000.00. As part of this work, Warko will remove and replace an existing roof drain, a deteriorated metal roof deck in the elevator penthouse and other items needed to repair the decking and for future prevention of deterioration. Mr. Denbowski noted that the Change Order needs Board approval. Mr. Profit emphasized that the Board will review all Change Orders on the project for approval. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the Change Order from Warko Group. Second by Mr. Rivera. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Matz said that construction is otherwise proceeding as planned. He also said that the structural repairs are under budget because certain plans for work have become unnecessary. Mr. Profit asked how much is being saved. Mr. Matz said that approximately \$21,000.00 has been saved. Mr. Profit said that even with the approved Change Order, the project remains under budget.

b) Street Parking Pilot Program / UCS Collaboration.

Discussion was held in regard to a possible pilot program with the City. Mr. Denbowski said that Ms. Domena had raised an issue regarding available parking at the last Board Meeting. Residents are not parking properly or are taking steps to use multiple spaces on one block. Ms. Domena noted there are some residents that own multiple vehicles and those vehicles are strategically moved. This is causing disputes among residents. Mr. Denbowski agreed and said some residents are taking intentional acts to reserve spaces for parking at night. The Authority wants to maximize the available parking on residential blocks.

Therefore, the pilot program is suggesting a temporary, 90-day program that would provide painted lines for specific parking spaces on 12 blocks in the City. The pilot program would test whether the painted lines help with parking issues and to create new available parking. The program will be in cooperation with the Department of Public Works. There will also be cooperation with United Community Services/Youth Build to provide labor for the project. The labor will be at no cost. It is anticipated that the City and the Authority will share any costs for the purchase of paint for the noted lines.

Mr. Denbowski said that the Authority is trying to be proactive to handle parking challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic has made parking more difficult. He noted appreciation to UCS for its no-cost labor for the program. Ms. Domena emphasized that the lines will help. West Reading uses a similar system with vehicle owners being cited if they are over the painted lines. Mr. Denbowski thanked Ms. Domena for bringing this issue to the attention of the Parking Authority and the Board. Mr. Boyer said that the Authority is ready to move forward with this program but is awaiting approval by the City.

c) Parking Workshop.

Discussion was held among the Board as to a start time for the planned parking workshop on October 2, 2020. It was decided that the workshop would start at 9:00 a.m. Mr. Denbowski asked Mr. Boyer if the workshop is permitted because all of the Board members will be present. Mr. Boyer said that the meeting may occur despite the presence of a quorum because there will be no action items, no decisions made and no discussion of the Authority's business. It is a workshop for informational purposes only.

d) Art Installation Proposal.

Discussion was held in regard to the painting of windows on parking garage elevator shafts in conjunction with Berks Arts. Berks Arts has submitted a proposal to the Parking Authority for the design and creation of perforated window clings. The window clings would be installed on the lower level elevator shaft windows of multiple Authority parking garages. The clings will be made to the size of each window. The art will be commissioned by local artists. The artwork will be selected by the Authority. The estimated cost for the project is approximately \$14,000. Funding to support the project may be available through the Berks

Alliance. Berks Arts would assist the Authority with a funding request. A match of 1:1 is recommended.

Mr. Profit asked how long the art installation would last. There needs to be assurance of longevity to avoid reoccurring costs. The Authority has considered tinting and should consider the cost of that also. The Authority should avoid peeling/bubbling issues caused by the sun. There may also be an issue with paint on the windows that causes the windows to crack when it heats up. Mr. Profit suggested a tinting proposal before confirming any decision on the Berks Arts proposal. However, he noted a preference for the art work. Mr. Denbowski said the matter should be tabled until more information is gathered. Mr. Denbowski said that he likes the concept but needs more detail. Mr. Laws agreed and said that more information is needed before a decision can be made.

Mr. Matz confirmed that he had submitted a September 2020 Executive Director Report to the Board, which details his ongoing work and the multiple projects being undertaken by the Authority. He asked the Board if there were any questions regarding his report and none were posed.

Mr. Denbowski asked about the current status of the RACC parking agreement. Mr. Matz confirmed that the prior agreement with RACC has expired. RACC is not updating the agreement and says that it does not have a current need for parking spaces at the Front and Washington parking garage. Mr. Denbowski said that the garage had been built for RACC's usage. There is no large current use of the garage but there may be use of the garage with economic growth. Mr. McGrath said that the gates at the Front and Washington garage are down. They had been left up in the past. This has triggered contact from certain users of the garage that now need to obtain monthly permits for use of the garage.

Mr. Matz presented a proposed design plan for the new Authority offices that will be located at the South Penn garage. Mr. Matz said that the project is moving along in its design. There will be a future, large conference/training room. Mr. Denbowski said that the Authority will now be able to have its own in-person Board meetings.

Mr. Matz said that Larry Cohen had submitted a report regarding his work for the Authority, which was provided to the Board. Mr. Matz asked if the Board had any questions regarding that report and none were posed.

11) Director of Finance Report

Mr. McGrath said that he was happy to report a strong August for the Authority. It was the strongest month for the Authority since the start of COVID-19. Mr. McGrath said that the revenue for August was better than 2019 and over budget for 2020. The total revenue for August was \$719,481.00, which was \$14,586.00 more than last year and \$46,356.00 favorable to budget. Meter/kiosk revenue increased. The Authority is now using ParkMobile for meter/kiosk payments. There have been over 7,000 transactions via ParkMobile since it went

live on August 1, 2020. Mr. Denbowski also noted the better monitoring of no parking signs by the Authority and increased revenue as a result.

Mr. McGrath said that expenses for August were consistent with the past few months. Expenses were \$439,238.00. This is \$236,603.00 less than 2019. Expenses were favorable to budget in the amount of \$50,520.00. Professional and temp service fees were down compared to last year. The reduction of temp service fees is tied to the Authority's hiring of permanent employees to fill certain positions.

Year-to-date, the total revenue of the Authority is \$4,724,598.00, which is \$481,382.00 less than last year and \$660,402.00 unfavorable to budget. The August revenue was helpful. Year-to-date revenue is down but not as much. Year-to-date, expenses are favorable compared to the prior year in the amount of \$425,086.00 and favorable to budget in the amount of \$449,321.00. Year-to-date, the net income of the Authority is \$957,062.00. This is \$217,985.00 better than last year and \$93,441.00 over budget.

In regard to cashflow, the Authority had \$1,498,245.71 unrestricted cash as of January 1, 2020. Year-to-date, there has been an inflow of cash in the amount of \$885,432.72. The Authority has an unrestricted cash balance as of August 31, 2020 in the amount of \$2,383,678.43.

12) HR Report.

a) Diversity/Inclusion Committee.

Ms. Danielle Reardon addressed the Board. She said there will be a statement regarding diversity/inclusion included in the Authority's employee handbook. Ms. Reardon noted that the diversity committee is waiting for a space to meet. The committee was waiting for use of meeting space at City Hall but it is unavailable due to COVID restrictions. There will be approximately 8-10 members on the committee. Mr. Profit said the committee could meet at his Boardroom. Mr. Matz said that he wanted a community member for the committee. He found someone that can provide an outside perspective who is not affiliated with the Authority. Ms. Reardon said that this individual is a great fit with good experience.

Ms. Reardon also addressed a prior Federal consent decree that had been issued to the Authority in 2013 and which expired in 2016. Ms. Reardon reviewed that prior consent decree and confirmed that the Authority is in compliance with it. Mr. Denbowski said that the Authority had already been taking part in all of the federal consent decree requirements and continues to do so even though the consent decree has expired.

b) Update on Employee Handbook Revisions.

Ms. Reardon said the Authority's handbook has been completely revised. She is meeting with the Authority's handbook committee for review and approval of the revised

handbook. The handbook will be ready for presentation to the Board at its October Board Meeting.

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.

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.

There were no Board Member reports.

17) Old Business.

None.

18) New Business.

None.

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 October 20, 2020, beginning at 5:30 p.m. and will be a hybrid of in-person attendance and via Zoom in keeping with CDC guidelines for public meetings due to COVID-19 restrictions. 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 Ms. Domena. The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.