

READING PARKING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Reading Parking Authority Board Meeting – January 26, 2021

1) **Meeting Called to Order.**

The Reading Parking Authority's regular board meeting was called to order on January 26, 2021, at 5:34 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 (*participated remotely*)

Timothy J. Profit, Vice-Chairperson

Daniel Laws, Secretary (*participated remotely*)

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

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

2) **Pledge of Allegiance.**

3) **Moment of Silence for Danny Giandomenico.**

4) Reorganization.

Frank Denbowski began by noting that it has been his honor and privilege to serve as the Authority's Chairperson since January 2020. He said this would be his last meeting as Chairperson and as a member of the Authority's Board of Directors. Keith Eshelman, a retired Reading firefighter, and life-long resident of the City of Reading, is going to be appointed to the Board in place of Mr. Denbowski. However, Mr. Denbowski said he looks forward to continuing to work with the Authority and the Board in his on-going role as the Mayor's Chief of Staff.

Mr. Denbowski then turned over conduct of the meeting to the Solicitor, Mahlon J. Boyer for purposes of reorganizing the Board and for the engagement of professionals and consultants. Mr. Boyer asked for nominations for officers of the Authority Board for 2021. Mr. Denbowski made a motion to elect the following Board Members to the following offices: Chairperson – Timothy J. Profit; Vice Chairperson – Daniel Laws; Secretary – Frank Denbowski; Treasurer – Julia Domena; Assistant Treasurer/Secretary – Maritza Colon. No other nominations were made, and the Solicitor called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the Board Members of the Authority were unanimously elected to the noted offices.

Mr. Profit then made a motion to engage the following consultants and professions for 2021: Solicitor - Bingaman Hess; Consulting Engineer – McCarthy Engineering; Auditor – Herbein & Company; and Human Resources Consultant – Paragon Consulting Group. No other nominations were made, and the Solicitor called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Boyer then returned conduct of the meeting to Chairperson, Timothy J. Profit.

5) Executive Session.

At 5:40 p.m., Mr. Profit announced that an executive session to discuss threatened litigation was going to be held. The execution session ended at 5:45 p.m. and the regular board meeting resumed.

6) Roll Call.

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

7) Public Comment.

Ms. Stubblebine read the Authority's Public Participation Policy prior to the start of the public comment portion of the meeting.

Evelyn Morrison addressed the Board. Ms. Morrison noted a few topics of concern in regard to the Authority. She also thanked Mr. Denbowski for his service on the Authority's Board of Directors. Mr. Profit said that the Authority wants to be transparent and always wants to hear the concerns of the public.

8) Approval of Minutes.

Minutes from the Authority's prior board meeting were sent to the members of the Board prior to the meeting. There being no requested revisions, Mr. Laws made a motion to approve the December 15, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes. Second by Mr. Denbowski. The motion passed unanimously.

9) Approval of Accounts Payable.

Mr. McGrath presented the accounts payable for January, which total \$935,126.19. The proposed payables were sent to the members of the Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Laws made a motion to approve the Authority's accounts payable for January via the Authority's general fund. Second by Mr. Denbowski. The motion passed unanimously.

10) General Solicitor Report.

a) City Agreements

i) Cooperation Agreement

Mr. Boyer presented an Amended Cooperation Agreement to the Board. The agreement is between the Authority and the City of Reading. The City has already approved the agreement. The agreement continues the enforcement of on-street parking by the Authority for the City. The Authority will also continue to enforce and collect revenue from parking meters. The agreement calls for a yearly contribution of \$1,761,000.00 by the Authority to the City.

Mr. Denbowski said that the Amended Cooperation Agreement provides a comprehensive overhaul of the Cooperation Agreement between the Authority and the City that dates back to 2001. He said that it took approximately 1 ½ years to negotiate the new agreement. He said the new agreement is very thorough and it will assist the City in its Act 47 exit plan. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the Amended Cooperation Agreement. Second by Mr. Denbowski. The motion passed unanimously.

ii) Parking Facilities Agreement

Mr. Boyer presented a proposed Parking Facilities Agreement between the Authority and the City of Reading. He said that the City has already approved the agreement. The City will lease 250 parking spaces from the Authority at its Popular and Walnut garage. The City will pay \$87.00 per space. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the agreement. Second by Mr. Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Financial Procedure Policy

Discussion of a proposed Financial Procedure Policy was tabled because Ms. Domena and Ms. Colon were not present.

c) Fuel Card Audit

Mr. Boyer confirmed that Herbein & Company had prepared an audit of the Authority's use of City fuel cards from January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. The audit was conducted in conjunction with the City. Mr. Laws made a motion to accept the Fuel Card Audit Report. Second by Mr. Denbowski. The motion passed unanimously.

d) Corporate Sponsorship / Naming Rights Policy

Mr. Boyer presented Resolution No. 2021-2, which calls for the adoption of a Corporate Sponsorship/Naming Rights Policy for the Authority. Mr. Boyer noted that the policy will create a specific procedure for the naming of Authority facilities. The policy includes an application and review process and the criteria that must be met for the naming of a facility. It also permits the naming of facility property such as bricks and park benches. The policy is meant to create a procedure should anyone approach the Authority about a corporate sponsorship or in regard to the naming of an Authority facility. Mr. Laws made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2021-2 to adopt a Corporate Sponsorship/Naming Rights Policy. Second by Mr. Denbowski. The motion passed unanimously.

11) Labor Solicitor Report.

No report.

12) Executive Director Report.

a) Construction Update

Mr. Matz reported that work at the South Penn garage is complete. The contractor is demobilizing from the garage and is conducting its clean-up. The shoring for the South Penn structure has been removed. Work at the 4th and Cherry garage is complete. Some leaks were identified and repaired at the Convention Center garage. Work at the Reed & Court garage has begun.

b) Citywide Parking relief (CPR) update

Mr. Matz provided an update in regard to the Authority's plan to provide City-wide parking relief. He said that the Authority is reviewing the lease and/or purchase of certain City properties to relieve parking congestion. The Authority is also exploring a partnership with private entities to use their parking lots for resident parking. Mr. Profit said that non-profits could benefit from the Authority's purchase or lease of their lots. Mr. Profit said he is aware of the City's parking challenges and he wants the Authority to provide more available spaces for legal parking.

c) Ordinance Updates

Mr. Matz said that the Authority has been working with the City for roughly sixteen months to enact revised parking ordinances. Mr. Matz said that the Authority is moving through the

process in a responsible manner. The Authority is providing education to the public in regard to the ordinance changes before enforcement begins. The Authority is meeting with community organizations to explain the basis of the ordinance changes and the expected rollout of those changes.

Mr. Matz noted the recent passage of an ordinance that permits meter enforcement on a Saturday. The Authority is providing notice of this change to the public, including the use of signs and advertising. Mr. Profit said that the Authority needs to make sure that all signs providing public notice of the new ordinances remain in place.

d) No parking signs

Mr. Matz confirmed that a price increase for no parking signs has been approved by City Council but will not take effect until March.

13) Director of Finance Report & Administration Report

Mr. McGrath reported that the Authority's gross revenue for December 2020 was \$627,248.00. This is unfavorable to budget in the amount of \$45,877.00. He noted that revenue decreases were caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Authority experienced decreased revenue for its parking facilities and for event parking.

Mr. McGrath said that the Authority's expenses for December 2020 totaled \$620,587.00. This was unfavorable to budget in the amount of \$130,829.00. Mr. McGrath noted two months of health insurance payments paid in December to ensure that the January payment was on time and the year-end funding of the Authority's pension plan as contributing factors to the unfavorable variance for expenses.

Mr. McGrath reported that the Authority's total amount of gross revenue for 2020 was \$7,452,600.00. This was favorable compared to 2019 in the amount of \$256,110.00 but unfavorable to budget in the amount of \$624,900.00. Again, Mr. McGrath noted that the unfavorable variance to budget was based on decreased revenues experienced in the Authority's facilities and in regard to event parking, which was caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Authority's expenses for 2020 totaled \$5,945,525.00, which was unfavorable to 2019 in the amount of \$256,288.00 and unfavorable to budget in the amount of \$68,426.00. Mr. McGrath noted the cost of temp services as one factor in the unfavorable variance to budget. Mr. McGrath suggested that the Authority should move toward more permanent employees.

After consideration of the Authority's interest expense, Mr. McGrath said that the Authority had net income for 2020 in the amount of \$552,832.00, which was \$274,401.00 better than 2019 but unfavorable to budget in the amount of \$742,599.00.

Mr. McGrath said that the Authority had unrestricted cash on January 1, 2020 in the amount of \$1,498,245.71. The Authority had a total inflow of cash in the amount of \$1,167,499.65 in 2020, which created an unrestricted cash balance of \$2,665,745.36 on December 31, 2020.

Mr. Profit made a motion to accept Mr. McGrath's financial report. Second by Mr. Denbowski. The motion passed unanimously.

14) Director of Operations Report

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Bart Ganster submitted a written report to the Board. He also addressed the Board. Mr. Ganster said that he has reached out to the Reading School District to determine if the Authority and the School District can create a partnership to help citizens with parking congestion. Residents would park at School District parking lots. Mr. Ganster also said that the restructuring of the Authority's maintenance department is continuing forward. Also, the Authority is going to have a central location for inventory. The Authority is going to hire an inventory specialist. He also said that the Authority partnered with Penn State Health to provide parking on Walnut Street for COVID testing.

15) HR Report.

Ms. Danielle Reardon said that some personnel matters would be discussed in executive session.

16) 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. Mr. Ganster said that the Safety Committee is performing diligent work to prevent accidents from occurring. Monthly meetings for employee safety are held. He also said that the Authority's maintenance department will no longer use two-way radios but instead will use cell phones. This will create more accountability with the employees.

17) Office Administration Report.

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

18) Communications and Training Report.

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

19) Board Member Report.

No report.

20) Old Business.

None.

21) New Business.

None.

22) Public Comment.

Ms. Morrison addressed the Board. She believes that the Authority's losses are not just related to the COVID-19 pandemic. She said that there should be no discrimination at the Authority and that there should be an anti-fraud policy. Mr. Profit said that discrimination will not be tolerated.

23) Next Board Meeting.

Mr. Profit announced that the Authority's next board meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2021, 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.

24) Adjourn.

Mr. Profit 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. Denbowski made a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting. Second by Mr. Laws. The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m.