

**READING PARKING AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of Reading Parking Authority  
Board Meeting – April 19, 2021**

1) Meeting Called to Order.

The Reading Parking Authority’s regular board meeting was called to order on April 19, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. by Timothy J. Profit, 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:

Timothy J. Profit, Chairperson

Daniel Laws, Vice-Chairperson (*participated remotely*)

Julia Domena, Treasurer (*participated remotely*)

Maritza Colon, Secretary (*participated remotely*)

Keith Eschleman, Assistant Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

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

2) Pledge of Allegiance.

3) Moment of Silence.

4) Roll Call.

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

5) Public Comment.

Mr. Profit noted that the April meeting agenda incorrectly included two public comment sessions, one at the beginning of the meeting and another at the end. The Board had previously decided that there would only be one public comment session at the beginning of each board meeting. Mr. Laws made a motion to revise the April agenda to include only one public comment session at the beginning of the meeting. Second by Ms. Domena. The motion passed unanimously.

*\*\*\*There was no public comment during this part of the meeting. However, upon request, Ms. Evelyn Morrison addressed the Board after the completion of its regular business.*

Ms. Morrison said that the Authority needs to properly review the properties it is purchasing to confirm there are no outstanding debts or liens against the properties. Mr. Profit said that the Authority is going to obtain title insurance for the properties. The Authority is attempting to purchase and lease properties in the City to provide parking relief to City residents.

Ms. Morrison noted the Nathan Contracting Change Order approved by the Board. She asked why the initial bid did not include this work and asked who determined the scope of work for the project. Mr. Profit said that he dislikes change orders. However, he understands that there is concealed damage that is sometime encountered on a large project. It does not appear that there was any mistake made in the initial determination of the scope of work for the project.

6) Approval of Minutes.

Minutes from the previous regular meeting of the Authority's Board of Directors were circulated to the members of the Board prior to the meeting. There being no requested revisions, Mr. Laws made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 16, 2021. Second by Ms. Colon. The minutes were unanimously adopted.

7) Approval of Accounts Payable.

Mr. McGrath presented the accounts payable for April 2021, which totaled \$626,772.15. The proposed payables were sent to the members of the Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Laws made a motion to approve the proposed payables for April via the Authority's general fund. Second by Ms. Colon. The motion passed unanimously.

8) General Solicitor Report.

a) Public Participation Policy

Mr. Boyer presented Resolution 2021-4 to the Board. The Resolution revises the Authority's current public participation policy to limit the time for public comment to two minutes and to note that public comments shall be related to matters of concern, official action or deliberation under consideration by the Authority's Board of Directors as stated on its agenda. Mr. Eschleman made a motion to approve the Resolution. Second by Mr. Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Retirement Plans

Mr. Boyer confirmed that the Authority Board had previously approved the transfer of its employee retirement accounts to a new provider for multiple reasons, including more investment options for employees and the creation of a 457(b) Plan that permits employees to make voluntary contributions. Empower, which is the company that is handling the transfer of the retirement accounts, had requested specific Board resolutions to approve the closure of the current BB&T retirement account with a transfer of funds to the new plan and for approval of the new Authority pension plan and the 457(b) Plan. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the Resolutions. Second by Mr. Eschleman. The motion passed unanimously.

c) 641 McKnight St.

*\*\*\*At Mr. Boyer's suggestion, the Board agreed to discuss the potential purchase of 641 McKnight St. in executive session at the end of the meeting with a specific announcement that the Board would return from executive session for possible Board action. Mr. Profit announced an executive session at 6:36 p.m. with possible Board action to follow. The Board returned to public session at 6:48 p.m.*

Upon returning to public session, Mr. Eschleman made a motion to approve the Authority's purchase of 641 McKnight St. for the total amount of \$105,000.00. Second by Ms. Colon. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Profit said that he is proud of the Authority in moving forward with the purchase of this property in furtherance of the Authority's Citywide Parking Relief Program that is meant to relieve the parking issues faced by residents throughout the City. He hopes that the purchase of the McKnight St. property is the first of many to offer continued parking relief to residents.

d) 954 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St.

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Upon returning to public session, Mr. Eschleman made a motion to approve the Authority's purchase of 954 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St. Second by Mr. Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

9) Executive Director Report.

a) Construction update

Mr. Matz confirmed that Desman had issued a status report regarding the ongoing capital improvements project for the Authority's parking garages. That report was circulated to the Board Members prior to the meeting.

Mr. Matz said that unforeseen damage was discovered at the Reed & Court parking garage. Significant deterioration was discovered in some of the beams in the garage. A proposed change order for Nathan Contracting was given to the Board Members, which details the repairs needed and provides photographic evidence of the damage discovered. The discovered deterioration was so significant that certain levels of the garage were closed with shoring put in place.

Mr. Matz said that the damage may have occurred due to prior water infiltration and a previous failure in construction to properly caulk certain areas. Mr. Profit asked if the new work would include not only the repairs but maintenance to prevent future deterioration. Mr. Matz confirmed that new caulking will be put in place, which has a 5-year guaranty.

Mr. Matz asked the Board to approve the Nathan Contracting Change Order in the amount of \$199,577.00 to perform the necessary repairs to the Reed & Court beams. Mr. Profit said that there is little option under the circumstances but to approve the repairs. The deterioration is the result of a previous lack of maintenance. He emphasized the need for future preventative maintenance to prevent this from occurring again.

Mr. Profit noted the possible future need to change certain portions of the capital improvements project due to this change order. However, Mr. Matz confirmed that the overall contract had a \$1,000,000.00 contingency and the approval of the noted change order is the first use of that contingency. Mr. Matz also noted that there is an expectation of damage at the Chiarelli Plaza garage because it also has a concrete structure and due to its age.

Mr. Eschleman made a motion to approve the Nathan Contracting Change Order in the amount of \$199,577.00. Second by Mr. Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Monday.com

Mr. Matz presented a proposal from Monday.com, which is a software provider that provides project management software. Use of the software will permit the Authority to automate some of its current processes. This is especially needed for the issuance of no parking signs. Currently, there are 47 internal steps for the issuance of a no parking sign. The Authority wants to automate the process to save time and money. Use of the program will also allow for better customer service. Mr. McGrath described the program as a flow management system that will save time and reduce mistakes.

The Board had previously reached a consensus for the Authority's use of Monday.com. Upon the motion of Mr. Profit, the Board approval of the Monday.com proposal was ratified. Second by Ms. Colon. The motion passed unanimously.

c) Street Sweeping

Mr. Matz said that street sweeping has been a long-time problem. Residents are upset by the 4-hour window required for street sweeping. Mr. Profit agreed that the 4-hour timeframe is too large. Mr. Matz said that he is looking into a new system that could narrow the required time to 1-hour. It is an automated system. The software needed is being developed at this time. It is the first of its kind and will be a beta test. Mr. Matz anticipates that the software may be available for use before July 2021. Mr. Profit noted the need for street sweeping to keep the City clean and because of the negative effect on the sewer systems if the cleaning does not occur. Mr. McGrath said that the new software could provide better safety for employees because they can stay in their vehicles.

d) Payment Plans

Previously, anyone wishing to enter into a payment plan with the Authority had to have at least five outstanding violations. Now, the Authority has reduced the payment plan threshold to those who have at least three violations or over \$200.00 in unpaid violations. Mr. McGrath said that there is a cost to the Authority for the payment plans. Many of the plans go into default and the Authority has to pursue the funds. The minimum permitted plan is a payment of \$25.00 every two weeks. Payments can be made online or in person.

Discussion was held about reducing the payment plan offer to something less than three tickets and/or unpaid violations of greater than \$200.00. However, Mr. Matz noted that the three ticket/\$200.00 threshold is based on the current ordinance for immobilization or tow of vehicles. There is greater incentive for payment with a default at the ordinance levels. At this time, the Authority will continue forward with payment plans that are made available to those having three or more unpaid violations or unpaid violations of greater than \$200.00.

e) Downtown / Events

Frank Denbowski and Cindy Castner were introduced to the Board. They were appearing on behalf of the Mayor. Mr. Denbowski introduced Ms. Castner as the new Downtown Coordinator for the City. She currently works in the City's Department of Public Works. Mr. Denbowski said that the Authority is a major stakeholder in the City's downtown. He therefore wanted Ms. Castner to provide a report to the Authority Board.

Ms. Castner said that she was happy to speak to the Authority Board. She said that the Authority is important for the City's downtown. She hopes to have the guidance and cooperation of the Authority moving forward. She thanked the Authority for its assistance with the recent Reading Symphony Orchestra event. She appreciates the partnership. Mr. Profit said that the City and the Authority have a common goal to better the City.

Ms. Castner said that there are planned downtown events, which are COVID pending. There will be event planners to confirm social distancing and the use of masks. She hopes to introduce new events beyond the ones that DID had hosted. She hopes to have the Authority's help and wishes to work together with the Authority for the events and to better the downtown. Mr. Profit said that the Authority will do everything it can to help. Ms. Castner said that she might return to the Board in approximately 60-90 days to provide updates.

Mr. Denbowski also noted that he anticipated City Council's approval of the sale of the 423 Schuylkill Avenue property to the Authority. He anticipates that there will be more information regarding the downtown next month. There will be a clean-up schedule and landscape projects. He said there will be more to follow and he appreciates the cooperation of the Authority.

f) Parking Plan

Mr. Matz said that the Authority is working with the City on a comprehensive parking study. The City has awarded a contract to a company for the study. The study will indicate where there are current parking needs and where there are future parking needs. Mr. Profit asked if there is a deadline for the completion of the study. Mr. Matz confirmed that there is no deadline. Mr. Matz said that there will be months of field work involved in preparing the study. The company undertaking the study has already requested much information from the Authority, which the Authority is providing.

g) Loading Zones

Mr. Matz said that the Authority will begin charging for loading zones on May 1, 2021 under the recently passed City Ordinance. The Authority has undertaken much work to provide public notice to local businesses in regard to the charge for loading zones. The Authority has provided educational flyers and coupons to the businesses. There has also been notice via social media and door-to-door contact with the businesses.

h) Meter Expansion

Mr. Matz said that the Authority plans for enforcement of the newly installed parking meters on June 1, 2021. The Authority is undertaking an educational campaign beforehand. Notice is being provided in regard to the new meters and the enforcement of the meters. The new meters are being installed at this time.

10) Director of Finance Report & Administration Report

Mr. McGrath reported that the Authority's gross revenue for March 2021 was \$1,023,823.00. This was favorable to budget in the amount of \$355,992.00 and favorable to the prior year in the amount of \$484,275.00.

The Authority's operating expenses for March 2021 totaled \$643,005.00. This was unfavorable to budget in the amount of \$116,986.00 and unfavorable to the prior year in the amount

of \$187,577.00. Mr. McGrath said the expenses were unfavorable to 2020, in part, because of the new payments to the City that are accrued at \$125,000.00 per month. Including the Authority's current debt service, the Authority has a monthly fixed expense of \$325,000.00. Mr. Profit said that this is a large, fixed expense but the Authority's financing was needed to make necessary repairs to the parking garages.

Mr. McGrath said that the Authority's operating income for March 2021 was \$380,819.00. After interest expense and income, the Authority's net income for March 2021 was \$295,718.00. This was favorable to budget in the amount of \$237,883.00 and favorable to the prior year in the amount of \$295,462.00.

Year-to-date through March 2021, the Authority's gross revenue was \$2,273,578.00. This was favorable to budget in the amount of \$273,587.00 and favorable to the prior year in the amount of \$279,540.00. Mr. McGrath noted that March 2021 was the first month that the Authority began the issuance of the no-parking signs under the new ordinance and pricing structure.

Year-to-date through March 2021, the Authority's operating expenses were \$1,630,851.00. This was unfavorable to budget in the amount of \$38,547.00 and unfavorable to the prior year in the amount of \$246,789.00. Year-to-date, the Authority's operating income through March is \$642,727.00 with net income of \$398,947.00 after interest income and expense. Mr. McGrath noted that the Authority had decreased revenue in February due to multiple factors including the weather. March revenue increased with better weather and the sale of no-parking signs.

In reviewing the Authority's Cash Flow Statement, Mr. McGrath said that the Authority had unrestricted cash on January 1, 2021 in the amount of \$2,232,620.34. The Authority had a total outflow of cash in the amount of \$15,147.30 in March. The Authority had an unrestricted cash balance of \$2,217,473.04 as of March 31, 2021. The Authority had a restricted cash balance of \$14,975,617.81 as of March 31, 2021.

11) Director of Operations Report

Mr. Ganster submitted a written report to the Board prior to the board meeting. Mr. Ganster said that the Authority teamed up with Joe Rudden for another free essentials event at the 4<sup>th</sup> and Cherry garage. The Authority also assisted with the South Penn Spring Clean-Up. The Authority helped the City with the administration of COVID shots at the 6<sup>th</sup> and Cherry parking lot. The Authority also assisted the NAACP at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Washington for a second weekend for the distribution of COVID shots. Mr. Profit said that he is glad to hear the Authority is supporting the community.

12) HR Report.

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

13) 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.

14) Communications/Executive Support 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.

15) Board Member reports

None.

16) Old Business

None.

17) New Business

None.

18) Next Board Meeting

The Authority's next board meeting is scheduled for May 17, 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.

19) 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. Eschleman made a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting. Second by Ms. Domena. The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.