

## READING PARKING AUTHORITY

### **Minutes of Reading Parking Authority Board Meeting – May 23, 2023**

1) Meeting Called to Order.

The Reading Parking Authority's regular board meeting was called to order on May 23, 2023, at 12:08 p.m. by Timothy J. Profit, Chairman. It was held at the Reading Parking Authority, 430 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Reading, PA 19602, pursuant to notice published and posted according to law.

2) Pledge of Allegiance.

3) Moment of Silence.

4) Roll Call.

A roll call to confirm all individuals present for the meeting was taken. The following individuals were present for the meeting:

*RPA Board Members:* Timothy J. Profit, Chairman; Daniel Laws, Vice-Chairman; Keith Eschleman, Treasurer; and Carlos Rivera, Assistant Secretary/Assistant Treasurer.

*Others Present:* Nathan L. Matz, Executive Director; Bart Ganster, Director of Operations; Kari Bollinger, Finance Director; Claudia Hurwitz, Executive Assistant; and Mahlon J. Boyer, Esquire, General Solicitor.

5) Public Comment.

Jordan Henning appeared before the Board. Mr. Boyer read the Authority's Public Participation Policy before Mr. Henning made any comments. Mr. Henning said that he works for an agency located at 645 Penn St. There are 3-4 parking spaces in front of the property that some people use to transport some of the agency's clients. He said that some of his coworkers have been ticketed for using these spaces to drop off/pick up clients.

Mr. Profit said that the Authority is addressing this concern. It is developing a system that will allow individuals to park for free for the first 10 minutes in paid zones.

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. Mr. Laws made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on April 18, 2023. Second by Mr. Eschleman. The motion passed unanimously.

7) Approval of Accounts Payable.

Accounts payable in the total amount of \$1,330,050.34 were presented to the Board. Mr. Laws made a motion to approve the proposed payables. Second by Mr. Eschleman. The motion passed unanimously.

8) General Solicitor Report.

a) Fulton Bank Loan Document Amendment

Mr. Boyer presented a 2023 Amendment to Loan Documents requested by Fulton Bank. The Amendment amends the Loan Agreement between the Authority and Fulton in regard to the bonds that were issued in 2019. At present, two of the term loans bear interest at a variable rate for a portion of their terms based on the LIBOR. Publication of the LIBOR is going to end. Therefore, Fulton has requested an amendment to the Loan Agreement to use the SOFR independent index for calculation of the variable interest rate rather than the LIBOR. No other changes to the Loan Agreement are affected by the 2023 Amendment to Loan Documents. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the 2023 Amendment to Loan Documents. Second by Mr. Eschleman. The motion passed unanimously.

b) GRCA Memorandum of Understanding

Mr. Boyer presented a proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Authority and the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance ("GRCA"). It mirrors prior agreements with the GRCA for the Penn Street Market. GRCA will make a weekly payment to the Authority and acknowledge the Authority as a partner of the Penn Street Market in exchange for the Authority providing certain services including the placement of cones to block specific parking spaces and access to an electric box. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding. Second by Mr. Eschleman. The motion passed unanimously.

c) 213 S. 11<sup>th</sup> St. Lease

Mr. Boyer presented a proposed lease between the Authority and the City. Pursuant to the lease, the Authority would use the City's 213 S. 11<sup>th</sup> Street property as a parking lot. The parking lot will accommodate roughly 70-80 vehicles. The Authority would have to make improvements to the property including repair of the sidewalks and the installation of lighting. Mr. Profit said that he is in favor of the lease but needs to know the costs the Authority will incur for the improvements. Mr. Ganster said that he had spoken to RAWA about the sidewalks. RAWA can help with the sidewalks and can provide recycled macadam for the lot. Mr. Matz suggested that the City help with the improvement costs, which he estimated at roughly \$20,000.00. Consideration of the lease was tabled pending the Authority's confirmation of costs and possible financial assistance from the City.

d) Parking stall ordinance

Mr. Boyer said that City Council is reviewing a new parking stall ordinance that will approve the installation of the parking stalls throughout the City. The installation of new parking stalls would occur upon resolution of the Authority or City Council. Mr. Profit said that there should be a 30-day grace period for blocks that receive new parking stalls. He also said that the Authority should focus on high-density/high violation areas for the installation of new parking stalls to provide needed relief to those areas.

9) Executive Director Report

a) Ordinance changes

Mr. Matz said that City Council approved the parking expansion on Avenues A&B, Grape St. and N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street. He thanked City Council for their partnership in creating new on-street parking. Mr. Profit asked how long it would take to implement the new parking. Mr. Matz said that official PennDOT approval will be required although the PennDOT engineer has already approved the proposed parking.

Mr. Matz said that the Authority is going to reintroduce its prior suggested zoning changes to the City. This will include a discussion of temporary parking lots.

b) Amnesty Program

Mr. Matz said that the Authority has collected \$26,817.00 through the Amnesty Program. The Amnesty Program is going to end on June 10, 2023. The Authority spent roughly \$12,000.00 to promote the program. The Board discussed an extension of the program for 30 days. Mr. Profit said that there is no need to promote the program due to the low use and high advertising cost. Mr. Rivera made a motion to extend the Amnesty Program for 30 days. Second Mr. Laws. Upon a vote taken, Mr. Rivera, Mr. Laws and Mr. Profit voted “yes” to pass the motion. Mr. Eschleman voted “no”. The motion passed.

c) Paystation Proposal

Mr. Matz presented proposals from T2 and Butts Ticket Systems for the purchase of kiosks that would be used in place of parking meters. Mr. Matz confirmed that kiosks reduce labor and are more secure. The kiosks would allow the Authority to offer free parking for the first 10 minutes. The Authority would need to purchase 73 kiosks to remove and replace the current parking meters. There are currently 725 meters that are approximately 30 years old. The estimated cost for the kiosks is roughly \$600,000.00.

The City Administration may advocate for the City to pay one-half of the cost for the kiosks. Mr. Profit said that the Authority would install the kiosks to offer the first 10 minutes of parking for free to help the downtown. He suggested that the Authority install kiosks on Penn St. only as a pilot program to confirm the technology will work. He said that the Authority can ask for financial assistance from the City for the kiosks if the Authority confirms the system will work. Mr. Matz noted that each vehicle will only get one free 10-minute parking session per day.

Mr. Laws made a motion to permit the purchase by the Authority of 20 kiosks at a cost not to exceed \$175,000.00 from T2 for a pilot program that allows parking for free for the first 10 minutes. The pilot program will run for 60 days. Second by Mr. Rivera. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Matz said the Authority will likely receive the kiosks by the end of June with installation to occur in July. The pilot program would run from August through September. He also confirmed that there will be no transaction fee for the first 10 minutes of free parking and that the kiosks will interface with the current billing system. Ms. Bollinger said that that the new kiosks will help the Authority gather parking data more efficiently.

d) Velocity update

Mr. Matz confirmed that the new pay upon exit for gateless parking is working. The installation of the gateless system at the remaining parking garages is going to move forward.

e) WiseSight State Lot Data

WiseSight has provided the Authority with parking data from the State Lot for the months of March and April, which includes event parking. The data confirms that roughly half of all parking sessions went unpaid. Those parking for less than 10 minutes accounted for a large part of the parking sessions. The missed revenue for each month was roughly \$50,000.00 without consideration of the 10 minute grace period.

f) WiseSight Proposals

Mr. Matz said that he wants to deploy the WiseSight system in other areas. It would help the Authority reduce lost revenue. The system requires overhead cameras with a power source. The Authority can choose to pay WiseSight a flat monthly fee or a portion of each citation issued if the system is fully deployed. Depending on location, the Authority may choose to use WiseSight or CivicSmart. CivicSmart is solar and camera based. WiseSight is proposing a solar pilot of its system at the 925 Cherry St. lot.

WiseSight submitted proposed Field Trial Agreements for 925 Cherry St., 625 McKnight St. and the 000 block of N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Each Field Trial Agreement proposes a 90-day field trial of the WiseSight system. WiseSight will remove each system at no cost if the Authority does not keep the system in place upon the conclusion of the Field Trial.

- Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the flat rate Field Trial Agreement for the 000 block of N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Second by Mr. Laws. The motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Laws made a motion to approve the Field Trial Agreement for the 625 McKnight St. parking lot. Second by Mr. Rivera. The motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Eschleman made a motion to approve the Field Trial Agreement for 925 Cherry St. parking lot. Second by Mr. Rivera. The motion passed unanimously.

g) Debt Collection

The Authority has approximately \$23,000,000.00 in unpaid/outstanding violations. The Authority is advocating for a change of current state law to allow the suspension of vehicle registrations if a vehicle owner exceeds a certain number of outstanding violations. At present, only Philadelphia can do this.

h) Events

Mr. Matz said that the event season is winding down. The Authority is trying to use on-duty staff for events without the use of overtime.

i) On-street parking expansion

The Authority is working with McCarthy Engineering to increase the available on-street parking in the 400 and 500 blocks of Penn St. and continues to explore the expansion of new on-street parking. City Council approved parking expansion on 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Street and the 500 block of Cherry St. Combined, this created 76 new on-street parking spaces.

j) Parking Work Group update

The Authority met with the City on May 11, 2023 to discuss multiple topics including the Authority's outstanding, unpaid violations, a hybrid enforcement system and zoning amendments. Minutes from the Parking Work Group meeting were attached to Mr. Matz's Executive Director Report.

k) Loading Zones – Timed Zones

Mr. Matz confirmed that City ordinance does not currently provide for pick up zones. The Department of Public Works controls signage. The Authority Board can set the duration of the loading zones. There was general consensus that the current ordinance should be simplified to include only timed zones with specific timing restrictions. Mr. Rivera said that enforcement of timed zoning zones is necessary. Otherwise, people take advantage of the zones and park there beyond the restricted times.

l) Police Proposal

Mr. Matz said that the Reading Police Department ("RPD") does not have handheld devices like the Authority's Parking Enforcement Officers. The current devices used by the Authority provide specific evidence of violations including photographic evidence. Mr. Matz said that multiple RPD issued violations are dismissed either because the officers do not appear for the civil appeals or there is no specific evidence of the issued violations. The handheld devices would also assist the RPD with confirming evidence for issued tows. Mr. Matz presented two proposals

to purchase 20 handheld devices for the RPD. Each proposal includes a 3-year data plan and warranty. By consensus, the Board agreed that the proposals should be presented to the City for its purchase of the devices for the RPD.

m) Citywide Parking Relief (CPR)

Updates regarding the CPR program were included in Mr. Matz's Executive Director Report that was submitted to the Board.

10) Director of Finance Report

Ms. Bollinger submitted a Finance Report to the Board prior to the board meeting. The Board posed no questions in regard to the report.

11) Director of Operations Report

An Operations Report was submitted to the Authority's Board of Directors prior to the meeting. The Board posed no questions in regard to the report.

12) HR Report

An HR Report was submitted to the Authority's Board of Directors prior to the meeting. The Board posed no questions in regard to the report.

13) Office Administration Report

An Office Administration Report was submitted to the Authority's Board of Directors prior to the meeting. The Board posed no questions in regard to the report.

14) Communications & Special Projects Report

A Communications and Special Projects Report was submitted to the Authority's Board of Directors prior to the meeting. The Board posed no questions in regard to the report.

15) Board Member Reports

None.

16) Old Business

None.

17) New Business

None.

18) Next Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be held on June 20, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. at the Reading Parking Authority, 430 S. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Reading, PA 19602.

19) Executive Session

*Mr. Profit announced that an executive session was going to be held in regard to personnel matters, pending litigation and to consider the purchase or lease of real property. It was confirmed that no action would be taken upon the conclusion of the executive session.*

20) Adjourn

There being no further business of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:04 p.m.