

READING PARKING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Reading Parking Authority Board Meeting – August 15, 2023

1) Meeting Called to Order

The Reading Parking Authority's regular board meeting was called to order on August 15, 2023, at 5:03 p.m. by Timothy J. Profit, Chairman. It was held at the Reading Parking Authority, 430 S. 4th 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, Keith Eschleman, Vice-Chairman; Kerry Burford, Secretary; Carlos Rivera, Treasurer; and Patricia Vasquez, Assistant Secretary/Assistant Treasurer. *Mr. Rivera appeared at the beginning of the board meeting but excused himself from the meeting at 5:54 p.m.*

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

5) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Executive Session and Retention of Special Counsel

At 5:06 p.m., Mr. Profit announced an executive session to discuss a personnel matter. The executive session ended at 5:53 p.m. at which time the regular session of the meeting resumed.

Mr. Eschleman made a motion to amend the agenda to add the retention of special counsel. Second by Mr. Burford. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Eschleman made a motion to retain special counsel to investigate a personnel matter. Second by Mr. Burford. The motion passed unanimously.

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. Eschleman made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on July 11, 2023. Second by Mr. Burford. The motion passed unanimously.

7) Approval of Accounts Payable

Accounts payable in the total amount of \$826,831.22 were presented to the Board. Mr. Profit noted a payment of \$12,885.12 to Furniture Soup, Inc. It was confirmed that there is a resolution in place that permits the Authority's Executive Director and the Director of Finance to issue checks up to a maximum amount of \$10,000.00. Mr. Profit then requested that the Authority issue documentation to all of the board members in regard to the purchase from Furniture Soup before that payment is approved by the Board.

Ms. Vasquez suggested that the Board should change the maximum limit of the checks the Executive Director and the Director of Finance can issue. Mr. Profit said that reducing the limit to \$1,000.00 would be too low. By consensus, the Board agreed that the check limit should be reduced from \$10,000.00 to \$5,000.00 for new purchases. This would not apply to normal monthly payments like insurance and healthcare but would apply to new purchases by the Authority.

Mr. Eschleman made a motion to approve the proposed payables in the amount of \$813,946.10 without approval of the payment to Furniture Soup. Second by Mr. Burford. The motion passed unanimously.

8) General Solicitor Report

a) RAWA MOU

Mr. Boyer confirmed that the Board had previously approved a lease agreement with RAWA for the Authority's building at 613 Franklin St. Subsequently, RAWA approved the lease agreement but changed the lease start date from August 1, 2023 to September 1, 2023. Mr. Eschleman made a motion to amend the lease agreement with RAWA to change the start date from August 1 to September 1, 2023. Second by Mr. Burford. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Barnacle Purchase Order

A proposed 6-month lease agreement with Barnacle for 10 devices was presented to the Board. The cost would be \$2,500.00 per month with no charge for deployment. After discussion held, it was decided to table the proposed lease.

c) Convention Center Agreement – update

Mr. Boyer confirmed that the Board had by motion previously decided not to renew the Parking and Revenue Agreement with SMG, which operates the Santander Arena and the

Santander Performing Arts Center for the Berks County Convention Center Authority. The prior agreement expired on June 30, 2023. The Convention Center Authority asked the Parking Authority to reconsider this decision. After discussion held, the Board by consensus agreed to maintain its prior decision.

9) Executive Director Report

a) Omega Systems Addendum

Mr. Matz presented a proposed Addendum No. 2 from Omega Systems, the current IT provider for the Authority. The Addendum proposes additional security services such as managed phishing and security awareness training and quarterly phishing campaigns. The additional services will cost \$288.75 per month with an a setup fee of \$999.00. The term of the Addendum will run in conjunction with the Authority's current IT contract with Omega.

Mr. Matz said that the additional services will help protect the Authority from hacking and fraud. Mr. Profit mentioned a recent hack of an employee email that led to a fraudulent wire transfer. The Authority submitted the loss to its insurance carrier, which assigned outside counsel to review the hack. The Authority's insurance policy has a \$10,000.00 deductible. Mr. Matz said that an outside forensic firm was also assigned to review the matter. That firm confirmed that there was no disclosure of confidential information. Mr. Ganster said that another hack was recently attempted but foiled due to employee training.

Mr. Profit said that wire transfers were previously approved in writing by email. Now, wire transfers have to be approved by voice authorization. Mr. Matz as executive director has to approve all wire transfers verbally. Ms. Vasquez asked if a new policy has been put in place for wire transfers. Mr. Matz confirmed that a new Standard Operating Procedure was developed and disseminated to the Board for their review. Ms. Bollinger confirmed that she has worked with Fulton Bank to change the past procedures and to put stronger safety measures in place.

Mr. Eschleman made a motion to approve Addendum No. 2. Second by Mr. Burford. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Fulton Bank Fraud Protection Services

This matter was tabled for future discussion.

c) City of Reading Update

Mr. Matz said that the painting of parking stall lines is moving forward in Oakbrook. He also confirmed the expansion of parking on Brookline Plaza. One side of the street will be converted to angled parking. An additional 34 parking spaces will be created. The cost to add these spaces is low and mostly involves a survey of the area and work by Authority employees. The Reading Housing Authority is in favor of the angled parking.

Mr. Matz also said that workgroup meetings with the City are continuing. Some of the topics under discussion include changes to parking at 400-500 Penn Street and zoning amendments.

The Authority is moving forward with an Experience Downtown Reading program. It will have multiple phases. The Authority is trying to leverage its resources to help downtown businesses.

Discussion was held in regard to the parking stall line painting. The painted lines are affecting existing painted curbs in some areas. Mr. Matz said that the paint on the curbs will need to be fixed. Mr. Profit and Ms. Vasquez both offered their support in favor of the Authority fixing the curbs, especially for handicap parking. Mr. Matz also said that the Authority has to scale back some of the ongoing work on the parking stalls to focus on some sidewalk repairs.

d) IMAX

Mr. Matz said that the Authority's contract with the IMAX movie theatre dates back to 2007. The contract allows the IMAX to reduce parking reserved for it by 20% annually. IMAX has proposed an offer to amend the contract for a lower, fixed ongoing payment with no ability to reduce the amount of the reserved parking. Mr. Profit said that the IMAX offer is bad, far too low, and that no counter should be made by the Authority. He said that IMAX should make a better offer for the Board's consideration.

e) Amnesty Program

Mr. Matz said that 1,744 individuals took advantage of the amnesty program. Roughly \$188,000.00 was collected through the program. The program ended on August 10, 2023.

f) T2 Update

All pay stations have been installed on Penn St. and are functioning. The Authority is moving forward with the Free 10 on Penn pilot program, which offers the first 10 minutes of parking for free on Penn Street. Mr. Profit noted that the ultimate goal is 10 minutes of free parking at all metered zones. Information to use the pay stations for the free parking will be in English and Spanish. Ms. Vazquez noted her support for issuing this information so individuals understand how to use the system.

g) Wisesight Proposals

Mr. Matz presented 3 proposals from Wisesight. The proposals are for the parking lots at 213 S. 11th Street; 7th & Washington Street and 1200 N. 10th Street. Each proposal carries a 3 year term. Wisesight will provide camera enforcement at the noted lots. Mr. Matz said that the use of the Wisesight system is part of the Authority's strategic plan to provide better service and safety. He also said that the Authority will maintain full control over the system and enforcement.

Mr. Matz confirmed that the parking lot at 7th & Washington is one of the Authority's most profitable lots. The Authority will pay \$1,535.00 per month for the Wisesight system at 7th &

Washington. Mr. Eschleman made a motion to approve the Wiselight contract for the 7th & Washington parking lot. After discussion held, the motion was modified to include the approval of the contract as long as Authority enforcement is only used for parking violations and does not include enforcement for other matters like expired vehicle registrations or inspections. Second by Mr. Burford. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion about the 1200 N. 10th Street parking lot was held. It has 9 parking spaces. Mr. Boyer confirmed that zoning approval has been given but the design is still under review by the City. The anticipated monthly rent for one space will be \$50.00. The proposed monthly payment to Wiselight will be \$7.00 per parking violation with a minimum payment of \$199.00 per month. Mr. Profit said that it does not make sense to increase costs at the lot with use of the Wiselight system. Ms. Vasquez also noted her concern with the number of people served versus the cost to do so. Mr. Profit asked Mr. Matz to contact Wiselight to discuss a lowered cost for this lot in light of the other agreements the Authority has with Wiselight.

Discussion about the parking lot at 213 S. 11th Street was held. Mr. Ganster confirmed that the light poles have been installed. Excavation at the lot starts tomorrow. The parking lot should be ready for use by the middle of the month. There will be RV's and trailers parked on the lot in addition to vehicles. The proposed payment to Wiselight for this parking lot is \$990.50 per month.

Mr. Profit said that \$990.50/month should be the cost for both 1200 N. 10th Street and 213 S. 11th Street. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the Wiselight proposals for 1200 N. 10th Street and 213 S. 11th Street if the total cost for both is \$990.50 per month. Second by Mr. Eschleman. The motion passed unanimously.

h) Sensen.AI

Mr. Matz presented a Proof of Concept, Solution Proposal from Sensen.ai. The proposal concerns a pilot program that would allow the Authority to undertake parking monitoring, automated enforcement and certain audits. Mr. Matz said that the technology could be placed on street sweepers, which would eliminate the need to have separate Authority enforcement vehicles with the sweepers. Authority employees would be reassigned within the Authority. The system can perform other functions like sign audits to show missing or obstructed street signs.

The City's managing director has reviewed the program and supports it although City approval would be needed for the street sweeper placement. Mr. Profit said that Board approval of the program is premature. The City will need to confirm its support and the system's data collection is concerning. Ms. Vasquez noted her concern with the Authority undertaking City issues and the potential increased liability. The Authority could become aware of defects and then held responsible if the defects are not resolved.

The proposed Sensen.ai program was tabled for further review and consideration at a later date.

i) Citywide Parking Relief (CPR)

Mr. Matz presented an appraisal report for 113 Mulberry Street. The Reading Housing Authority owns the property. The property can accommodate 20 parking spaces. The property is already fenced with curb cuts and it is ready for use. The appraisal report confirms the fair market value of the property at \$36,000.00. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the Parking Authority's purchase of the 113 Mulberry Street property from the Housing Authority for \$36,000.00. Second by Mr. Burford. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Matz said that the parking lot at 1200 N. 10th Street is being redesigned. The sidewalk and curbing will be removed in favor of macadam. Wheel stops will be used for vehicle parking. The walking area on the lot will be painted. The redesign should save the Authority roughly \$50,000.00 in total project costs.

Mr. Matz also said that the material for stairs at the 625 McKnight St. property will be changed and the stairs will be placed in the alley. The changes will save the Authority roughly \$30,000.00 in total project costs. Mr. Boyer was asked to contact the City about a blanket easement in favor of the Authority over the adjoining alley to maintain it and to keep the parking lot and surrounding area in good condition.

j) RHA Update

Covered in Section 9(i) above.

k) Body Camera Proposal

The Board was presented with two body camera proposals from Axon Enterprise. Both proposals are for 5-year agreements. One proposal is for 25 cameras. The other one is for 30 cameras. Authority employees will be required to keep the cameras on during work except for bathroom breaks, lunch and scheduled breaks. The Authority will be able to confirm when the cameras are in operation or turned off. Mr. Profit said that the cameras are meant to mitigate assaults on employees. Ms. Vazquez said that the Authority needs to educate the public and let them know the cameras are being used. She also asked if there is an issue with the employee's union regarding the cameras. Mr. Ganster confirmed that the union has approved the usage of the body cameras. It is a safety issue. A Standard Operating Procedure for use of the cameras by employees will be put in place. Mr. Profit made a motion to approve the proposal for 30 body cameras. Second by Mr. Eschleman. The motion passed unanimously.

10) Director of Finance Report

The Financial Statements of the Authority as of July 31, 2023 were circulated to the Board prior to the board meeting. Mr. Profit asked why the computer expense and medical insurance was high. Ms. Bollinger said that a discovery of 2022 payments that should have been coded as prepayments was made during the Authority's ongoing audit. Code entries had to be corrected. Ms. Bollinger was also asked to confirm why there was a drop in permit revenue at the Convention Center Garage. She will investigate this and report back to the Board at the next board meeting.

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 September 19, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. at the Reading Parking Authority, 430 S. 4th Street, Reading, PA 19602.

19) Executive Session

An executive session to discuss personnel matters and potential litigation was announced with no action to be taken upon its conclusion.

20) Adjourn

There being no further business of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.