

READING PARKING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Reading Parking Authority Board Meeting – June 18, 2025

1) Meeting Called to Order

The Reading Parking Authority's regular board meeting was called to order on June 18, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. by Nelson Espinal, 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: Nelson Espinal, Chairman; Kerry Burford, Secretary/Assistant Treasurer; and Devon Guistwite.

Others Present: Rafael Batista, Executive Director; Josue Vega, Finance Director; John Brown, Director of Human Resources; Nellie Martir, Operations Manager; Jesse Metheny, Finance Operations Manager; Janice Nieves, Communications Specialist; Vanessa Ortiz, Head of Supervisors; Ryan Phillips, IT Systems Coordinator and Mahlon J. Boyer, Esquire, General Solicitor.

5) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6) Approval of Board Meeting Minutes – May 28, 2025

Mr. Espinal made a motion to approve the May 28, 2025 regular board meeting minutes. Second by Mr. Guistwite. The motion passed unanimously.

7) General Solicitor

a) Towing Bids

Mr. Burford made a motion to reject all bids submitted in response to the Authority's RFP for towing services. Second by Mr. Espinal. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Amendment to Berks County Parking Agreement

Mr. Boyer said that Berks County had requested the installation of a paystation in the Courthouse. A Second Amendment to the parking agreement between the Authority and the County was prepared as a result. However, the County's solicitor contacted Mr. Boyer and said that the County is not moving forward with the paystation at this time.

c) UGI

Mr. Boyer said that the matter regarding UGI would need to be discussed in executive session due to potential litigation.

8) Executive Director Report

Mr. Batista said that the Board had previously approved security cameras in two parking garages at a cost of \$150,000.00 per garage. However, Mr. Phillips was able to find a camera system that can be used in all of the parking garages for a total amount of \$75,000.00. Mr. Espinal asked if the quality was the same. Mr. Batista said that camera quality is good. The cost-savings comes in large part from the installation of the cameras. Rather than use a 3rd party vendor for the installation, the Authority is going to perform the installation itself. It is estimated that it will take three weeks per garage to install the cameras. Mr. Phillips said that the cameras are manufactured in the United States. Mr. Burford made a motion to keep the prior approval of \$300,000.00 for the security cameras in place with that expenditure now open to an installation of cameras at all of the parking garages rather than only two of them. Second by Mr. Guistwite. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Batista said that he cancelled the planned to trip to the parking convention because the cost is too high.

a) Amnesty Program Relaunch

Mr. Batista said that Amnesty Program ran from March 3, 2025 through May 31, 2025. The Authority collected \$169,510.55, which was roughly \$13,000.00 less than last year. There were less people that took advantage of the Program this year compared to last year. Even so, Mr. Batista confirmed that the Program works well and is good for the community. Therefore, the Authority would like to relaunch the Program in September. It would run through November. It would be open to all outstanding tickets. Mr. Burford made a motion to approve the relaunch of the Program in September. Second by Mr. Guistwite. The motion passed unanimously.

b) New Position Request

Mr. Batista said that the Authority wants to add a new management level position for collections, help with accounting and the appeal hearing process. This person will review appeals immediately to determine if the issued citation was valid or should be dismissed. Individuals that want a hearing to appeal a citation that is determined to be valid will need to pay the fine up front to get a hearing. At this time, roughly 70% of all issued citations are appealed. This position will be full-time with a salary of \$42,000 - \$45,000. This will reduce the costs incurred by the Authority for the hearing officer. Mr. Espinal made a motion to approve the new position. Second by Mr. Guistwite. The motion passed unanimously.

c) “Back to School” Event Request

State Representative Guzman and Mayor Moran are hosting a Back to School Kick-Off event on August 15, 2025. It will be held in the courtyard at 644 Penn Street. Free backpacks with school supplies will be provided. Mr. Batista said that the Authority would like to spend up to \$500.00 to provide snacks and drinks for the event. Mr. Espinal made a motion to approve the expenditure. Second by Mr. Burford. The motion passed unanimously.

9) Director of Finance Report

a) Financial Statements – May 2025

The Authority’s May Financial Statements were presented to the Board prior to the meeting. The Authority’s financials are positive. Year-to-date, the Authority is in a good position. Mr. Vega confirmed that the audit of the Authority’s 2024 financial statements is ongoing. The auditor recently requested more information from the Authority, which was provided.

b) Approval of Accounts Payable

Mr. Espinal made a motion to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$565,942.56. Second by Mr. Guistwite. The motion passed unanimously.

10) Director of Human Resources Report

Mr. Brown said that the Authority is meeting weekly with its negotiation team in regard to the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Union. A list of requested changes is being developed. Priority requests will be presented.

11) Operations & Departmental Report

Ms. Martir submitted a report to the Board prior to the meeting.

12) Board Member Reports

There were no board member reports.

13) Old Business

The Authority has a year-to-year lease agreement with the City for the property at 213 S. 11th Street. The Authority needs a long-term lease before it invests money for capital improvements at the property. Mr. Espinal said that he would speak to the Mayor about this.

14) New Business

None.

15) Next Board Meeting

The next regular board meeting will be held on July 16, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. at the Reading Parking Authority, 430 S. 4th Street, Reading, PA 19602.

16) Adjourn

There being no further business of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m. An executive session to discuss potential and pending litigation was announced with no return to public session.