



Parking Advisory Committee

Date: October 27, 2021

Time: 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation

Minutes

In Attendance: Ali Carter, Daniel Amstutz, Adam Chapdelaine, Leland Stein, Phyllis Marshall, Mike Rademacher, Melissa Laube, Corey Rateau, Julia Mirak, Richard Fraiman.

1. Greetings and introductions, ground rules for online meetings.

Daniel Amstutz explained that the Committee was holding a virtual meeting as allowed by state law to continue to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Governor Baker had signed an Executive Order in response to the COVID-19 pandemic allowing virtual meetings, which suspended the usual Open Meeting Law requirement that a quorum of committee members be physically present in order to hold an official committee meeting. The provisions of this Executive Order have been extended by the Legislature. Amstutz confirmed the committee members in attendance for the meeting.

2. Approval of the minutes for the September 29, 2021 meeting.

Meeting minutes were approved.

3. Public Comment Period.

Ali Carter explained that Richard Fraiman is on the Economic Recovery Task Force and is the owner of the Capitol Theatre and would like to make comments about parking in East Arlington on Mass Ave. Fraiman said he understands there have been some plans or studies on parking in East Arlington. His patrons have been receiving parking tickets for parking too long because the time limit is only two hours. This is not enough, and it should be increased to four hours like in Arlington Center. They are deterred from coming back because of this. Carter noted the goal of the time limits are to discourage people from parking all day and create turnover, and asked Fraiman if he would prefer metered parking and clearer consistency. Fraiman said it would be preferable than the current situation. He would rather have meters in East Arlington since

that what people have come to expect. Many movies are two hours or longer which is not enough time for people to have dinner and stay to watch a movie. It is not fair to have different rules for East Arlington compared to the Center. Carter and Amstutz thanked Fraiman for his comments.

4. Broadway Plaza Construction Update.

Mike Rademacher said that Verizon is still working to splice their fiber optic cable from the old duct to the new duct. This needs to be completed before the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) can begin their work. Verizon should complete their work in another week, weather depending. Then the MWRA will come in right after and start fencing off the area. About 2/3 of the Plaza will have fencing around it and access to the stores will be maintained. Although the MWRA will be delayed, Rademacher does not know if it will affect the final restoration schedule for the Plaza in the spring. Carter noted the work will take place in four phases; currently they still believe the MWRA work will be completed in April for the restoration of the Plaza immediately afterward.

5. Treasurer's Office updates: parking meter revenues and Parking Benefits District (PBD) financial information.

Phyllis Marshall said she has updated her financial report through the end of September except for a few items that have been updated with October numbers. She is projected that there will be about \$343,000 in revenues for this fiscal year. It assumes that there will be free parking on Saturdays for the holidays as well as other impacts to the revenue numbers. The expenses have been updated. The share of funding to parking enforcement and administration has already been taken out of the current budget. Negotiations are ongoing regarding the lease of spaces from the church, but it is assumed to be the same cost.

Julia Mirak asked about the different vendors for the parking meters. Marshall explained that Reef is the company that collects the coins, and IPS provides parts, software, and servicing, and also the credit card system for the meters. Mirak clarified that we have already spent almost all the funds budgeted for IPS this fiscal year. Marshall confirmed this and noted she is trying to find a different vendor for meter parts because of issues they are having with IPS. The Treasurer's Office has spent a lot money on parts this year which they did not expect. If meters are still working they may not need to pay much more to IPS. However, they are likely to have to pay more than the \$42,400 budgeted for this year. Amstutz asked about the difference between the IPS credit card fee and the Elavon credit card fee. Marshall said there is a charge from Elavon for allowing people to use credit cards and also a smaller fee from IPS.

The IPS credit card fee has to do with the wireless link and connection through the meter software. Carter noted the credit card fee through PaybyPhone is paid by the user, not the Town.

Mirak asked about identifying projects to fund with the additional money generated by through the PBD, and when that needs to happen. [Editor's Note: Adam Chapdelaine entered the meeting at this time.] Amstutz noted that decision usually needs to happen in January in advance of Town Meeting. Chapdelaine explained that the request to spend the funds needs to be sent to the Finance Committee on February 1 each year. Mirak asked about the process for deciding on projects to identify for recommendation. Chapdelaine noted that the expectation pre-pandemic was that there would be about \$150,000-\$200,000 per year to direct towards projects with the PBD funds. Given the current revenues coming out of the pandemic, it doesn't look like that much will be available, although there is a significant amount of funds unallocated at this time. Committee members should come back to the next couple of meetings with ideas for how to spend the PBD money and have meetings in November and December. Chapdelaine asked if Rademacher has any additional work to charge against the PBD for the Center sidewalk work or other items such as Broadway Plaza. Rademacher said he expects to be covered for these expenses. Mirak suggested that the green spaces in the Russell Common Parking Lot could be cleaned up quite a bit and asked if this could be a project. The islands on Mystic Street could also use some work. Chapdelaine agreed this could be a potential project. There was a question about whether the Arlington Garden Club has some responsibility to maintain some areas. Rademacher said many of these areas fall on the Town to maintain and have been challenging this year for a number of reasons. The Garden Club can find sponsors for these areas sometimes. Melissa Laube said she could find this information as a member of the Club. It was noted that the Chamber of Commerce could assist with finding sponsors and it would need to be located within the Arlington Center PBD. Carter agreed that the Russell Common Lot landscaping needs significant work. Addressing the sidewalks on Mass Ave west of Mystic/Pleasant St is also an important project. There was also discussion about the café seating on Broadway Plaza, which must be provided by the businesses. There may also be more to do on the Plaza after it is completed.

Chapdelaine noted that assuming \$200,000 is available is a good starting point for discussions.

6. PaybyPhone/mobile parking payment update.

Amstutz explained that he was not able to get into the backend of PaybyPhone to see the monthly reports at this time. Marshall noted the use of PaybyPhone appears to be accelerating and the use of credit

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cards in the meters appears to be decreasing, based on the amount of funds being brought in by PaybyPhone.

7. Set next committee meeting date and time.

Meeting members agreed to hold the next meeting on November 19 at 11 am and hold out the possibility to meet another time before December 31.

8. Any other business.

None was shared.

9. Adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 PM.