

**CITY OF NORWICH
NORWICH PUBLIC PARKING COMMISSION**

The following are the minutes of the regular meeting of the Public Parking Commission held at 5:15 p.m., May 19,2009 in the Buckingham Memorial Bldg.

PRESENT: Ms. Olive Buddington, Co-Chair, Mr. Alan Bergren,
Mr. Bettencourt, Mr. William Nash,
Mr. Sean Ryan and Mr. Robert Zarnetske.

ABSENT: Mr. Jeffrey Lord

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. Robert Mills, Director, NCDC
Mr. Peter Polubiatko, NCDC Project Manager
Mr. Michael MacDonald, Downes Group
Mr. Joseph Loyacano, Director Norwich DPW

At 5:25 p.m. Ms. Buddington called the meeting to order, noting a quorum was present.

MINUTES:

On a motion by Mr. Bergren, second by Mr. Bettencourt, the Commission voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the March 17, 2009 meeting as recorded.

FINANCIAL REPORTS & BILLS TO BE PAID:

A motion was made by Mr. Ryan, seconded by Mr. Bergren to accept the financial reports and accounts payable reports from March 2009 through April 2009.

The motion to accept the financial reports and accounts payable was voted on and passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE**CORRESPONDENCE:**

A letter from the Italian Cultural Committee regarding use of the Waterfront Lot was provided.

Mr. Zarenetske introduced a fax from Ms. Denise Hebert relating to an overtime violation issued by the Police Department. The fax will be forwarded to the issuing officer.

NEW BUSINESS:

A presentation related to the Intermodal Transportation Center was provided by representatives of NCDC and the Downes Group. Mr. Mills introduced the representatives and gave an overview of the project. The Commission was provided printed information relating to the project schedule and the anticipated ribbon cutting in June 2011.

Mr. Polubiatko stated that after the completion of the structure, the responsibility would shift from NCDC to the City. The City of Norwich owns the ITC and will be responsible for maintenance, monitoring and general upkeep of the garage. SEAT will have use of the bottom/entry level. It will be used as a bus terminal for current bus routes. We were also informed that the busses would still use the Viaduct as a pick-up/drop-off area.

The Commission was informed that there was a proposal that SEAT would be responsible for maintaining and cleaning of the interior area of the entry level, including the comfort area. This would alleviate the need for DPW to have an assigned position at the ITC. DPW will be responsible for cleaning and maintaining all interior levels, except the entry level, and the entire exterior of the ITC. The funding to maintain & clean would be expected from the NPPC/ City of Norwich.

The NPPC would be responsible for monitoring the garage. There will be a fee to park in the garage and restrictions for vehicles parking there. The restrictions are placed because the structure will be built with Federal and State monies. The parking will be limited to vehicles that are going from one mode of transportation to another, i.e. personal car to a bus, bus to a shuttle or bus to a taxi, ferry or train.

The options for parking payment were discussed. Mr. Mills and Mr. Polubiatko provided printed information on the latest technology for “selfpay” stations. The Commission members looked the pamphlets over and decided that it would be prudent to forego “gates” if possible. The Commission members would strive to look for ease of use and high visibility of the machines. Mr. MacDonald added that signage will be a necessity to familiarize the patrons with the machines.

There was concern voiced by several Commission members regarding the projected use of the ITC. It was asked if any numbers had been projected as to usage of the 170 available spaces. Mr. MacDonald stated that there had been studies done, using events at the Marina or downtown. Ms. Rizzuto stated that these are usually on weekends or in the evening and traditionally, there is no fee to park during these times. The Commission staff does not monitor parking at night or on weekends. The Commission members agreed that usage of the facility is the biggest concern. If revenue is not generated, than how is maintenance/upkeep paid for? There will be further meetings with NCDC to discuss strategies, including the use of a “city shuttle” to move people from the ITC to downtown. The Commission members thanked Mr. Mills, Mr. Polubiatko and Mr. McDonald for the presentation and their patience. The Commission members look forward to working on the project.

The next item to be discussed was the proposed budget for 2009/2010.

In the opening statement, Ms. Rizzuto stated that revenue projections will not be met, due to loss of lease spaces with the MEB, for the current year. FY 2010 projections will be impacted as well. Expenses have been cut, with the allocation to DPW being decreased by \$20,000.

Ms. Rizzuto proposed 2 options to increase revenue levels. The Commission is being asked to approve a lease with Nassi Realty for spaces in the Viaduct Lot for a term of 5 years. The lease agreement would increase our rental income by approximately \$20,000. The second option is to increase the parking meter rates. These fees have not been raised since 1987. The new rate will be set at .25/20 minutes. Meters will use quarters only and new decals will be applied that are self explanatory.

At this point, Mr. Loyacano spoke regarding how the decrease would effect the maintenance of the lots and garages. With the \$90,000.00 allotted, he would be able to perform our routine maintenance requirements, i.e. line striping, garage sweeping/cleaning, sign replacement, service contracts, but snow removal would be done on a cost/storm contract basis of \$3500.00/storm. In an average winter, we have about 12 “plowable” snowstorms which would translate into \$42,000.00 for snow removal.

Mr. Bettencourt inquired what the effect would be if the \$20,000.00 were restored. Mr. Loyacano stated that with the additional 20K, he would be able to maintain services at the current level, including snow removal. Mr. Bergren was asked if 20K would allow Mr. Loyacano to keep the position he was losing. Mr. Bergren was unable to answer for certain. At this point, Mr. Loyacano left the meeting.

Mr. Bettencourt suggested that we look at cutting salaries and restore the DPW allocation. Mr. Zarnetske spoke and said that he was not in favor of cutting our staff. Mr. Nash also agreed that cutting our staff was not the answer. In order to restore the allocation to DPW, we need to generate more revenue.

At this time, Mr. Zarnetske made a motion to approve the request for a 5 year lease with Nassi Realty, effective June 1,2009. The motion was seconded by Mr. Nash. Voted on and passed unanimously.

The motion was made by Mr. Bettencourt to increase the meter fees. Motion seconded by Mr. Nash. The motion was voted on and passed unanimoulsy. The change will be completed by mid-June 2009.

Mr. Bettencourt suggested that the budget should be adjusted to reflect the increase in revenue projections, based on the meter fee increase and lease with Nassi Realty. Discussion about restoring the allocation to DPW continued. Mr. Zarnetske, Ms. Buddington, Mr. Nash and Mr. Ryan were comfortable with the cost/storm contract. Mr. Zarnetske was cautious about over estimating revenue amounts. These figures include revenue from the YMCA Lot. Mr. Nash and Mr. Zarnetske were concerned that allocating an additional \$20K to DPW was not going to guarantee the restoration of the “position” lost.

Discussion continued, with Mr. Bettencourt making a motion to amend the budget to reflect the projected increases in revenue and the allocation of an additional \$20K Public Works. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zarnetske. The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE**ANYTHING ELSE BROUGHT BEFORE THE COMMISSION:**

Mr. Nash brought before the Commission the idea that perhaps the Commission should expand enforcement from the immediate downtown area. It was explained to Mr. Nash that we have done most of the leg work already. We have an opinion from Cororation Counsel that states we are not limited by the Charter to parking enforcement downtown. We have spoken to Chief Fusaro and have an okay for a "test area". Mr. Zarnetske suggested that we have a Public hearing and let people know what is going on and what we will be focusing our efforts on. Mr. Nash stated that the Police Officers really don't have the time to patrol and write parking tickets and it would be a great help to the deapartment. The Commission members agreed that parking is a problem throughout the City, and regualtions need to be enforced consistently. A target date of September 2009 was established for the expansion. Ms. Rizzuto was tasked with researching costs, vehicles and insurance. Response to be provided at the July meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made to adjourn by Mr. Bettencourt, second by Mr. Nash. Voted on and passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith A. Rizzuto, Administrator
Norwich Public Parking Commission