



Ted Zeller – Chairperson
Santo Napoli – Vice Chairperson
Daryl Hendricks – Secretary
Bina Patel – Treasurer
John N. Morgan – Executive Director
Dan McCarthy, Davison McCarthy – APA Solicitor

ALLENTOWN PARKING AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Allentown Parking Authority Board of Directors was held at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at The Americus Hotel, located at 555 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA 18101.

The following attended:

Ted Zeller – Chairperson
Santo Napoli – Vice Chairperson
Daryl Hendricks – Secretary
Bina Patel – Treasurer
Dan McCarthy – APA Solicitor
John Morgan – Executive Director
Jon Haney – Deputy Director
Christina Dayton – Deputy Director
Jill Fessler – Finance Manager
Christina Nolden – Minutes (Absent)

Guests:

James Lee Whitney
Jessica Ortiz
AJ Jordan
Betty Cauler
Greenburg Lemus
Ricardo Ramos

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Zeller called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Coming out of executive session, Mr. Zeller said he would like to make a motion to change our internal enforcement policy times. Mr. Zeller recommended that we do not have active patrols except for the hours of 7am to 10pm Monday through Saturdays, Sunday there would be no active patrol. Mr. Zeller said this leaves flexibility if there is a PPL, or other City event that is after the hour of 10pm, then the active patrol would stop within 30 minutes of the conclusion of that event. Mr. Zeller added that we would maintain dispatch 24/7, as this is what the County and City want us to do. Mr. Zeller said that if we get a call for service, we will be responding to that call whether it is after those service hours or during those service hours. If the officer sees critical safety violations during that dispatch, they are going to issue tickets for that. The critical safety violations are parking in front of hydrants,

blocking a street, double parking, parking too close to a corner, and violating a clear no parking sign. A motion was made by Mr. Zeller. Mr. Napoli seconded the motion. The Board voted and approved this change.

APPROVAL OF THE MARCH MINUTES

Mr. Zeller asked for approval of the March minutes. Ms. Patel made a motion to approve the minutes, Mr. Hendricks seconded the motion. The Board voted and approved the March minutes.

2023 BUDGET REPORT

Ms. Fessler reported on the highlights of the 2023 budget report. Total budgeted revenue for 2023 is proposed at \$13,423,800. Total expenses including transfer to other funds and the City of Allentown are proposed at \$13,418,721. The revenue, which consists of operating revenue, is budgeted at \$13,301,100. A 23% increase over our 2022 budget. The enforcement revenue component is budgeted at \$9,440,100. This represents 71% of our total operating revenue. Customer service revenue budget is \$16,000.00. Total FEOD revenue is budgeted at \$3,854,000.00. 29% of operating revenue. Our general operating expenses for 2023 are budgeted at \$9,003,003.00. An increase of 26% over the 2022 budget. The largest component of operating expenses is payroll and employee benefits, these costs are budgeted to increase in 2023. The number of hourly employees, full time and part time have increased in events, enforcement, and customer service. Wages for full-time and hourly employees show an increase of 41%. The wage budget for part-time hourly employees shows an increase of 31%. The full-time starting rate varies from \$19.50 an hour to \$20.50 an hour. Part time wage rate increased to \$20.50 an hour. In 2023, we will continue to pay shift differentials for those employees who work in the field. Health care costs will increase 33% in 2023 due to an increase in full time positions. The actual renewal rate for 2023 increased 14% based on our claims experience over the last 18 months. Continuing in 2023, all full-time employees on our health plan will be paying 5% of the premium cost via payroll deductions. Worker's compensation insurance increased 24% due to the increase in positions. Professional services are budgeted at \$600,050, an increase of 22% over the 2022 budget. Repairs and maintenance costs are the second largest source of expense budgeted at \$586,600 this is an increase of 19% for 2023. Utilities are the third largest expense and are budgeted at \$234,700. This is a decrease of 18% for 2023. The APA just signed a contract with IGS energy to reduce our annual costs. Materials and supplies will increase 30% over last year. Gasoline is budgeted at \$71,000.00. Our budgeted total revenue for the year of \$13,423,800.00 will exceed total operating expenses of \$9,003,003.00 by the amount of \$4,420,797.00. This expense will be used to provide funds for the following: \$3,873,710 will be transferred to the Authorities' debt service fund. Total debt is \$51,592,000.00 as of December of 2022. (This is what's due in principle, not in interest.) Mr. Zeller made a motion to approve the budget with the caveat of closely monitoring the enforcement income, Mr. Hendricks seconded the motion. The Board approved the 2023 budget.

MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY RESOLUTION

Mr. Morgan explained that PennDOT is a customer at our Maple Street deck. For them to make payments to us, we had to have a document read into the record and approved by the Board to accept PennDOT's payments. Mr. Zeller made a motion to approve of Mr. Morgan signing the executory contracts for parking with PennDOT on behalf of the APA. Mr. Napoli seconded the motion. The Board approved.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Spiral Deck: Pennoni has finished its RFP for additional work, repair and maintenance to the Spiral deck. That bid will go out on Monday. It may be anywhere from \$300,000.00 to \$600,000.00 in repairs.

Maple Street: The Walnut Street entrance has now been completed. They will finish paving the alley today. The only thing left outstanding is the sidewalk.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March Enforcement Results: Mr. Haney reported on the March enforcement results. In the area of focus on 7th Street, the APA issued 117 double parking tickets for the month of March. This was 91 less than what was issued in February, which was 208. For the year we have issued 536 in that area for double parking. In the area of the Hamilton Street corridor, 27 double parking tickets were issued for the month of March. This was 2 less than what was issued in February, which was 29. For the year we have issued 57 double parking tickets for the year in that area. The APA assisted in the recovery of 3 stolen vehicles and 2 stolen plates for the month of March. 1,308 calls for service were made in March.

March Customer Appeal Procedure and Results: Ms. Dayton reported on complaint issues and customer service calls for the month of March and year to date. There were 322 internal appeals, and for the year there have been 800 so far. Out of the 800, 375 were found valid, 143 were dismissed, and 282 were reduced to warnings. 53% of tickets going through the internal appeals process are found either to be a no violation or a warning.

COMMUNICATIONS – LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES/CITY COUNCIL FOR REVISIONS TO PARKING ORDINANCES AND FINES

Mr. Napoli said that night, they discussed all the recommendations that the Board brought to City Council, the alley position was discussed, as well as new internal policies for inspections and registrations, changing the curb from 6 inches to 9 inches, and removing the word “imprisonment” from every ordinance they could find regarding parking. Mr. Zeller said there will be a special session at 6 o'clock this evening. Mr. Napoli also said that tonight he will be addressing with council the new changes made to enforcement hours of operations.

Mr. Napoli suggested that we find a way to make the Government deck free to park in for City Council meetings. Mr. Napoli asked if chaser tickets are an option for the Government deck. Mr. Morgan said yes. Mr. Zeller asked for the most effective way to hand out chasers. Mr. Napoli said he would talk to City Clerk Mike Hanlon about having people that attend to get a chaser ticket from him. It wouldn't be a lot of chasers needed, Mr. Napoli said, maybe 10 or 15 every other week.

Next, Mr. Napoli discussed community groups. Mr. Napoli said that the APA could do a better job helping these individuals execute their mission. Mr. Napoli suggested having one of our customer service employees be a dedicated liaison to working with them. Mr. Zeller said that he thinks we need a completely new position for this. Mr. Zeller said with Ms. Dayton spending all her time on appeals, she will not have time to conduct community outreach.

Mr. Morgan said that he talked to Pastor Alex and has a meeting scheduled May 5th at the 7th Street lot. The purpose of the meeting is to look at future food bank give outs. Mr. Morgan said we would work with him to open that lot for those events.

PUBLIC PARKING FORUM NIGHT

Mr. Zeller would like to get another parking night scheduled. Mr. Napoli said that he thinks we should schedule these quarterly with our next one to be in June. Mr. Morgan said he will look for a date in June. Mr. Zeller said that we should then look to schedule another in the month of September. Mr. Zeller also added that since we don't have a Board meeting in December that we should probably schedule one then as well.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Ricardo Ramos introduced himself first as a resident of 530 W. Allen Street. He said that at 4:54 am he was coming back home from washing his clothes. He received a double-parking ticket, he parked his car, put his four ways on and popped the trunk, he said that the officer never flashed his lights, beeped the horn, or tried to warn him at all. He took his basket out of the trunk, put it on his porch and got back in his car. Mr. Zeller asked if he appealed the ticket. Ricardo said yes, he took the ticket to the office and was told that he should hear from someone within 7 business days. He said that it's been a week and he still has not received a call. Ms. Dayton said there are a lot of tickets being appealed right now, she is backed up. Mr. Zeller asked him to write his ticket number down so we can expediate the process. Mr. Napoli asked Mr. Morgan if the horns had been installed in all the vehicles and if they are being used. Mr. Morgan said yes. Mr. Zeller also mentioned to Ricardo that with our new enforcement operation hours, this will help his situation going forward.

Next is Jessica Ortiz, she is a resident of 523 Tilghman Street. She appreciates the attempt the Parking Authority will be making to assist with food banks, she said she recently held one herself this past weekend and she received over 30 calls from people about how aggressive the Parking Authority was being with giving out tickets during it. She addressed next that tickets are being pulled off of their cars by disgruntled residents. She tries to help the older ladies on their block to see if they have any parking tickets; however, it's difficult since they are not familiar with entering their license plate into the website and with using the internet. Mr. Zeller said that we do send out notice letters to residents. Ms. Dayton added that when situations like this happen, she allows the resident to pay them at the original fine price. Mr. Zeller told Ms. Ortiz to have them appeal it so Ms. Dayton can help them.

James Lee Whitney stated that coming out of the pandemic he said there would be some adjustment period that would take some learning and patience from everyone, both the public and the parking authority. On 6abc Philadelphia there was a young man that worked for the parking authority. In the same broadcast they showed the mayor, who was shown talking very aggressively about the Parking Authority abusing its power. James was surprised he wasn't in that interview because he had just got done speaking with the young man, enforcement officer. What he told him was that he does his job in a way where he tries to educate people in the public and gives them opportunities to move their car. What the officer told him was that he can save 10 people's cars a day from getting tickets by educating them. On the other hand, the officer also explained that he is receiving harassment from the public. Mr. Whitney stated that this really creates a dangerous work environment for our officers. He feels that we need to call on mayor's office and tone down the rhetoric for the safety of our citizens and our officers, so we don't create an environment where there is aggression between those two groups. He agrees that we do need ongoing training for the Parking Authority and that Saturday was a perfect example. Another thing that this parking enforcement officer told him was that he's never been shown the discretion that he's developed. He said that we need to show these officers patience as they go through their training. Mr. Zeller added that more of these officers have been with us one year or less. He also called on the city to fully staff their agencies that do their patrols. He mentioned that we have two sweep officers for 120,000 people that live in Allentown with two of them out on medical leave.

Betty Cauler wanted to say that she received four tickets in February, all of which were thrown out when she went to the magistrate. The first thing the judge said when he saw all the pictures was "where's the sidewalk" "where's the curb?" "How are you opposing traffic?" Ms. Cauler added that a friend of hers went to Pittsburgh last week, and they only enforce 8am-6pm. Mr. Zeller said we enforce until 9pm downtown at the meters because of the PPL Center, Mr. Zeller asked how much they charge for a ticket there? Betty said she wasn't sure. Mr. Zeller said that's because they charge 5 to 10 times what we charge.

Next is AJ Jordan, he is here to appreciate the Parking Authority, he doesn't think the community realizes how beneficial it is and tackle any communication issues that we may have. He said that

having a community liaison will help as well. For example, it's helpful to have someone that can plan for certain things, but it's also beneficial to have someone that the community can go to if they have any questions about parking, or parking, etc. Signage in garages. Lack of signage for parking. Only garages. Alleys for smaller streets, the language is a little unclear, where the edge of the it is, and knowing where that boundary is. Mr. Zeller said unfortunately there is no definition of an alley, that's what we're trying to work through. Mr. Jordan added that with the new ordinances of alleyways that there should be a good contact number so residents can reach if someone is blocking an alleyway. Mr. Zeller advised that he and residents can call the dispatch number any time day or night if anything arises. Mr. Morgan added that he just signed up with a company that is going to add about 20 cameras downtown to monitor all the existing loading zones and corners, and they will come back with any recommendations. That will move forward in the next month or so.

Next, Mr. Greenburg Lemus expresses his concern about parking for his restaurant customers and the deliveries he is receiving and what can be done so they don't receive tickets. Mr. Zeller added that there are actual businesses that pay for the spots in front of their places, and they own them. Mr. Zeller advised him that there is a way for him to apply for a drop off spot right in front of his business. Mr. Zeller mentioned that Brew Works does this. Mr. Zeller added that by ordinance there are no loading zones permitted on Hamilton Street from 6th Street to 12th Street. Mr. Morgan suggested that Mr. Lemus utilize the Pay by Phone app for his customers if they park on the street. Mr. Napoli told Mr. Lemus that he would show him how ParkMobile would help his customers with their street parking. Mr. Lemus can enter the customers license plate into the app and only have to pay for a minimum of 15 minutes. Mr. Lemus thanked Mr. Napoli.

This meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

The next Board Meeting will be held on May 24, 2023
at The Americus Hotel Ballroom