



**Approved Minutes**  
**Thursday, October 4, 2012 – 4:00 P.M.**  
**Strategic Planning Retreat**  
**Special Meeting of the Hartford Parking Authority Board**  
**155 Morgan Street, Hartford, CT 06103**

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Commissioners Present:

Paddi LeShane, Chair  
Ken Lerman, Vice Chair  
Rex Fowler, Treasurer  
William Breetz, Commissioner

Also Present for HPA:

Mark McGovern, CEO/Executive Director  
Carey Redd, Associate Director  
John Michalik, Chief Financial Officer  
Terry Leonowicz, Secretary to the Board  
Brian Yeakel, Director of Property Management  
Gina Varano, Assistant Corporation Counsel, City of Hartford  
Demar Osbourne, Special Corporation Counsel, City of Hartford

Members of Public Present:

Dan Nash, Regional Director Business Development, Republic Parking System  
Robert Kliman, Real Estate Manager Services, Kay Management Associates  
Ken Sugarman, Associate, Desman Associates

1. **Call to Order** – Ms. LeShane called the Special Meeting of the Hartford Parking Authority (the Authority) to order at 4:07 P.M.
2. **Roll Call of Commissioners** – Ms. Leonowicz conducted roll call and announced there was a quorum present.
3. **Strategic Plan Review**
  - Completed Items
  - Prioritization of Remaining Objectives

Ms. LeShane stated that the purpose of this special meeting was to review the HPA Strategic Plan and to share information among Commissioners regarding a variety of issues and topics to determine direction and objectives for the HPA, both short term and long term. No action was anticipated at this meeting. The updated strategic plan was reviewed and discussed including status of outstanding objectives and those which have been researched but put on hold. Mr. McGovern praised staff for an excellent job in executing and completing many of the Board objectives and stated that any remaining items can be prioritized and expanded to broader strategies.

The status of several Specific Strategies listed in the plan were discussed including Residential Parking permit programs and additional metered parking opportunities in commercial districts outside the Central Business District.

4. **Governance**

- Regular Committees/ Membership

HPA's current Bylaws were reviewed and discussed including the Regular Committee structure, process and membership diversity. Ms. LeShane and Mr. McGovern explained the use of both titles – "Executive Director/CEO" in the Bylaws was appropriate since "Executive Director" must be used on all contracts per Municipal Code.

As it relates to Committees, there was a consensus that the current Bylaw language stating "not more than two Commissioners" provided flexibility and should remain as is. It was also agreed that each Committee has the autonomy to meet as recommended by the Committee Chair, unless specifically requested by the Commission Chair or the CEO.

Mr. Fowler suggested that seeking members from the community with expertise specific to each Committee would be helpful, particularly for the Finance Committee, which could benefit from a CPA or Municipal Finance Expert. Mr. Breetz suggested Hartford's local business schools such as Barney or UCONN as a resource for internship programs and offered to make some inquiries.

Ms. LeShane stated that the Marketing Committee would benefit by expanding its membership in several areas including community involvement.

Mr. Lerman suggested using simpler meeting guidelines versus the more complex "Robert's Rules" for conducting Board meeting business and offered to distribute some examples to the Commissioners for consideration. Mr. Fowler suggested that this topic be assigned to the Bylaws Committee for research. Ms. LeShane agreed to bring the topic to Mr. Jasinki's attention.

5. **Rates - Discussion Led by Republic Parking**

**On-Street**

- Variable Rates
- Demand Pricing

Mr. McGovern summarized a parking rate study of cities comparable to Hartford, as well as several industry articles, and introduced Dan Nash of Republic Parking, who provided data based on Republic's recent parking utilization survey and recent experience managing HPA's on-street program. Mr. Nash estimated 65% usage in Hartford's busier sections but the City as a whole was much less.

Mr. Nash explained variable and demand pricing which pull rates up at meters in high demand areas, and lowers rates at others in order to spread parking traffic more consistently. Progressive pricing increases rates for parking over two (2) hours in areas which demand greater length of stay, such as Hartford's courthouse.

Mr. Fowler asked if shortening time limits on or near Pratt St. would improve the difficulty of finding parking in this area. Mr. McGovern noted that Pratt St. merchants have been vocal against HPA's metering policies and felt that varying rates might confuse the public. This could negatively impact HPA's ongoing Public Information campaign and recent signage improvements. Also, raising rates would not necessarily achieve a system-wide improvement and could be viewed as "consumer unfriendly" by many.

Mr. Nash noted that Providence has "short-term" meters which charge discount rates, but it is not a common practice nationally. Mr. McGovern concluded that the next logical step would be to consider progressive rates in certain areas specifically the courthouse and the entertainment districts.

Mr. McGovern noted that in the current marketplace, HPA's four (4) year-old Pay and Display meters are considered aged and are no longer being manufactured. However, HPA's meters are still in excellent condition due, in part, to the number of meters per block (less wear and tear), as well as less corrosive weather conditions. Staff will continue to research upgrade options and planning process in the event that current meter parts and technology are no longer supported.

Opportunities for additional non-parking fee revenue were discussed, such as advertising on parking receipts and kiosks.

#### **Off-Street**

- Market Rates
- Standard Rates - Hourly, Monthly and Event
- Special Rates - Fuel Efficiency, Early Bird, etc.

Mr. McGovern opened the discussion and invited the Commissioners to comment on the current hourly and monthly rate structures. Elimination of the current volume discount rates at MSG can now be considered in favor of posted monthly rates now that HPA has the authority to negotiate rates with Board approval, similar to competitors.

Review of MSG's monthly volume rates will be reviewed by the Property Management Committee and will make a recommendation to the Board.

According to recent data, Mr. Nash stated that 33% of CSG patrons park between 1-2 hours, and at MSG, 63% of patrons park for less than two (2) hours. The demand in this time range may warrant a rate increase. Grace periods at each facility and the feasibility of early bird rates were also discussed.

Mr. McGovern noted that any hourly rate increase at MSG would impact Capital Community College financially and must be taken into consideration, given our special relationship with them. He concluded that best practice would be for staff to work with the Parking Operators to complete further analysis on hourly rate structures by facility and recommend a strategy based on current activity.

#### **BREAK**

#### 6. **Off-Street/Facilities**

##### **Church Street Garage**

- Life Span consideration following restoration project - Discussion led by Desman Associates)
- XL Center Future
- Future Capital Expenditures - Near Term and Beyond

Mr. Yeakel introduced Mr. Ken Sugarman from Desman Associates, who presented the Board with information regarding restoration of CSG versus other options such as expansion and new construction.

The estimate for anticipated annual repair and maintenance of CSG was \$.89 cents per square foot or \$3.5 million over ten (10) years. The cost of a new pre-cast concrete garage was estimated at \$18,000 per space but did not include potential unknown variables.

Mr. Sugarman stated that the life expectancy of a well-maintained garage could be indefinite depending on the long-term goals, needs, and budget for the structure, which could be determined by completing a study. If restoration is performed every 2-3 years, the estimated life span for CSG could be up to twenty (20) years.

Mr. Breetz pointed out that the aggregate cost of CSG restoration did not appear to be included under the report heading "Restoration of the Existing Garage". Mr. Yeakel responded that Restoration expenses of \$4 million through 2015 (\$5.5 million minus \$1.1 million for the current project) should be added.

Ms. LeShane commented on the negative aesthetics of a blank concrete wall at CSG which faces Ann St. asking what techniques could be used safely for beautification of the structure. Mr. Sugarman described several options such as painting and foam stucco.

Mr. Kliman noted that an addition was built to accommodate 400 parking spaces at CSG in the 1980's.

Mr. Yeakel noted that another improvement planned for CSG was to install a back-up generator for power outages. Ms. LeShane suggested researching the Clean Energy Fund for potential assistance options.

- Mr. Sugarman departed the meeting at 6:00 P.M.

Mr. Yeakel reported that the estimated repair costs per Desman's 2011 MAT Garage Conditions Assessment are \$550,000. In addition, he reported that MSG was in good shape with small miscellaneous projects planned including the new lane camera system.

Mr. Michalik and Mr. Fowler answered several questions regarding the funding of these various projects.

Mr. Yeakel stated that the Library Garage is in most need of repairs, also based on the recent Condition Assessment, and anticipated that all work would be completed in the spring.

#### **Opportunities for New Facilities – Lots /Garages**

- Downtown North – City Redevelopment Effort
- M&T Lot
- Union Station – State Mass Transit Effort
- Sources of funding – State/Federal Grants

Mr. McGovern reported on current redevelopment considerations by the City in the Downtown North area for mixed used purposes such as residences, retail, offices etc., which may lead to the need for new parking facilities. The M&T lot would be considered part of this land parcel.

#### **Sustainable parking initiatives**

- Electric Vehicles
- Solar Generation

Mr. McGovern noted that HPA agreed to hold the installation of Electric Vehicle Chargers at MSG for six (6) months in favor of monitoring the market. With that time frame approaching, a consideration of combining EV chargers with the solar initiatives makes sense. Mr. Lerman asked if CLP would still give credit if EV chargers were not tied to the power grid. Mr. McGovern believed that they would.

Discussion was heard regarding the ZREC Credit Program and Mr. McGovern explained the SPPA (Solar Power Purchase Agreement) using a sample flowchart. The Committee's previous assumption was that HPA could generate more power than used at MSG, which was proven not to be the case.

Mr. Yeakel explained that solar generation at MSG would provide about half of the current kilowatts used by only one (1) of three (3) meters in use and, coupled with potential ZREC's would reduce our power grid cost.

Mr. McGovern suggested that staff solicit RFI's from qualified companies to compare ZREC pricing, which would be guaranteed for the 15 year term of any SPPA agreement. Mr. Breetz recommended deferring the RFI process until staff is able to contact the Town of East Hartford which has experience through this process.

#### **Oversight surface/ commercial lots**

- Ordinance vs. zoning
- Supportive zoning, smart growth

Mr. McGovern reported that he met with Tom Deller, Director of Development Services, to discuss his review of an ordinance that would support HPA's permitting objectives, and expects a draft back in a few weeks for the Committee's review in advance of submission to City Council.

### **7. On-Street**

#### **Hearing Process and Fees - (Input from Corp. Counsel)**

- Customer Experience
- \$15 Hearing Fee

The Chair recognized Mr. Demar Osbourne, an attorney from Corporation Counsel, assigned to the Citation Hearing Office. Mr. Osbourne gave an overview of the hearing process for the Commissioners including administrative review of citations prior to appeals and the complete appeal process. He noted that the process and procedures are part of the City's ordinance and would require City Council approval for a variety of changes.

The appropriateness of charging a mandatory \$15 Hearing Fee was discussed and Mr. Osbourne stated that it was implemented to defray administrative costs, including the cost for Hearing Officers. It is also considered a means to discourage frivolous claims; however, some recent discussion by users indicates that they view it as "customer unfriendly". Any action to change this would require City Council approval and would need to be championed by Corporation Counsel. Mr. McGovern distributed data regarding the number of citations issued, appealed and dismissed, which facilitated more discussion on the hearing process. Further work will be done by the HPA and Republic Parking in collaboration with the

Corporation Counsel's Office to provide detailed data on the use of the appeals process and its impact on consumers.

**OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. LeShane called for a motion and a motion was made by Mr. Fowler, seconded by Mr. Lerman passing unanimously (ayes – LeShane, Breetz, Fowler, Lerman). The October 4, 2012 Special Meeting ended at 7:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

*Terry Leonowicz*

Terry Leonowicz  
Secretary to the Board