



Approved Minutes
Thursday, April 17th, 2014 – 5:00 P.M.
Regular Meeting of the Hartford Parking Authority Board
155 Morgan Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Commissioners Present:

Paddi LeShane, Chair
Ken Lerman, Vice Chair
Bill Breetz, Commissioner

Also Present for HPA:

Eric M. Boone, CEO/Executive Director
Michael DesRoches, Director of Finance and Administration
Terry Leonowicz, Director of Revenue Control/Marketing Promotions

Guests:

Kyle Nichols, General Manager, Republic Parking Systems
Dan Nash, Regional Manager, Republic Parking Systems

1. **Call to Order** – Ms. LeShane called the April 17th, 2014 Regular Meeting of the Hartford Parking Authority (“Authority” or “HPA”) to order at 5:07 P.M.
2. **Roll Call of Commissioners** – Ms. Leonowicz conducted roll call and announced there was a quorum present.
3. **Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes for March 20th, 2014**
Ms. LeShane polled the Commissioners for amendments to the minutes and hearing none called for a motion and a motion was made by Mr. Lerman, seconded by Ms. LeShane.

VOTED: The March 20th, 2014 Regular Board Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted (ayes: LeShane, Lerman, Breetz)

4. **Approval of Revised Special Board Meeting Minutes for March 7th, 2014**
5. Ms. LeShane called for a motion and a motion was made by Mr. Lerman to consider corrections to the previously approved March 7th Special Board meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Breetz.

Ms. LeShane stated that the following corrections were recommended:

- Delete 2nd sentence, page 1, Item 3, 2nd paragraph: “An offer of employment was extended.”
- Revise sentence on Page 2, 5th paragraph, 1st sentence to read: “Mr. DesRoches is approved as the new Director of Finance and Administration for the HPA, contingent upon successful background and reference checks, as well as his acceptance of a soon to be adopted outside employment policy by the Board as outlined to him by the CEO at the time of his job offer.”.
- Revise 6th paragraph, page 2 to read: **VOTED:** Approve the recommendation to hire Mr. DesRoches as the new Director of Finance and Administration for the HPA, contingent upon successful background and reference checks, as well

as his acceptance of a soon to be adopted outside employment policy by the Board.”

Ms. LeShane called the motion and the motion carried unanimously that -

VOTED: The March 7th, 2014 Special Board Meeting Minutes were approved as amended (ayes – Breetz, Lerman, LeShane)

6. **Chair’s Comments** - Ms. LeShane stated for the record that Ms. Varano was excused so that she could attend to work-related business for Corporation Counsel. It was also noted the Commissioners Fowler and Jasinski were out of town and unable to attend.

Ms. LeShane reported that the City hosted an open meeting today for key stakeholders regarding the City’s parking study. She also formally welcomed Mr. DesRoches as HPA’s new Director of Finance and Administration.

Ms. LeShane called for a motion to add “review and approval of the City’s internal audit of the Parking Citation Accounts and Operations” as an agenda item under the Property Management Committee. A motion was made by Mr. Lerman, seconded by Mr. Breetz, passing unanimously that:

VOTED: Review and approval of the City’s internal audit report for Parking Citation Accounts and Operations be added to the agenda under Property Management (ayes – Breetz, Lerman, LeShane)

Ms. LeShane noted that Executive Session discussion would cover personnel and contract considerations.

REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

1. **Personnel Committee** - *Please see Personnel Committee Memo for details*

- a. **Recommendation to Approve a Conflict of Interest Policy** - Mr. Lerman presented the Committee’s recommendations for a Conflict of Interest policy for review and discussion.

Mr. Breetz moved to adopt the recommended policy, seconded by Ms. LeShane.

Discussion was heard regarding best practices. Ms. LeShane said she was in favor of continuing the current transparency policy where Board members would recuse themselves in conflict of interest situations and not participate in any discussion pertaining to the topic in question or vote on such topic. Mr. Boone responded that the policies were designed to apply specifically to HPA employees, not the Board of Directors, and that the language should be amended to reflect this clarification.

Mr. Breetz and Mr. Lerman proposed amended language for the policy as follows:

- Amend the introductory paragraph titled “**Purpose**” on page 1, 1st sentence, to read: “The purpose of this conflict-of-interest policy applies to staff only and is to

protect an organization's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private, personal or financial interest of one of its employees..."

- Amend section 1a. "**Interested Person**" to read: "An Interested Person does not include any voluntary member of HPA's Board of Commissioners, but is any employee with delegated powers who has a direct or indirect Financial Interest, as defined below."

Ms. LeShane requested that Mr. Boone submit the amended policy to Ms. Varano at Corporation Council for review and approval and report back to the Commissioners at the next Board meeting. Ms. LeShane also suggested referencing the conflict of interest questionnaire specific to Board members which is required by the Mayor's office.

Ms. LeShane called the motion and the motion was carried unanimously to -

VOTED: Approve the Personnel Committee's recommendation to adopt the "Conflict of Interest" policy with the above recommended amendments (ayes – Breetz, Lerman, LeShane)

- Recommendation to Approve an Outside Employment Policy** - Mr. Lerman presented the Committee's policy recommendations for Outside Employment for the Commissioners' review and discussion.

Mr. Boone summarized the outside employment policy and recommendations from an outside attorney specializing in Human Resource (HR) law. The HR attorney strongly recommended including language regarding volunteer activities and services. The Commissioners made recommendations to revise the language as follows:

- Section 1 – Definition of "Outside Employment", 1st and 2nd sentences to read: "Includes, but is not limited to, self-employment and consulting activities. Outside employment does not include uncompensated volunteer activities."

Additional discussion was heard relating to volunteer services and full time versus part time employment, and how these topics were applicable to the policy. The Commissioners' consensus was to table the agenda item so Mr. Boone could make revisions based on the Board's recommendations and present the amended draft for review and approval at the next meeting.

2. **Finance Committee** - *Please see the Financial Report for details*

- Monthly Report – Mr. Boone reported HPA's operating loss decreased favorably in March due to higher citation revenue and monthly parking revenue at CSG. Closed out operations changed slightly after write-off of a small amount of MSG receivables (City parking validation accounts), and expenses show a favorable variance of \$538,399. Overall operating income is \$504,931 ahead of budget.

Debt service coverage is 3.91 and debt service ratio is 1.73. Year-to-date standard collection rate for citations is up slightly at 76% of the 80% target goal for the year.

Mr. Breetz asked if it was necessary to keep MSG on the Monthly Occupancy report. Mr. Boone said that the tracked data will fall off the report over time.

Ms. LeShane noted that HPA staff have been asked to calculate the cost of operations per parking space for each of HPA's garages, surface lots and on-street parking spaces, and that this information would be vital to future rate setting evaluations or proposed changes.

Ms. LeShane invited the Commissioners to consider meeting for a half-day strategic planning session sometime in September to discuss rates, capacity, updates to the HPA Strategic Plan and other important topics. There was an agreement that this will be scheduled for September.

Ms. LeShane called for a motion and a motion was made by Mr. Lerman, seconded by Mr. Breetz, passing unanimously to -

VOTED: Accept the March 2014 Finance Report as submitted. (Ayes – Lerman, Breetz, LeShane)

- b. Discussion of IT Support – Mr. Boone reported that staff is looking into contracted IT services and plans to seek a direct contract with a private service. With a small team at MHIS and a large demand, HPA has experienced several occasions where MHIS was unable to meet the HPA's needs and timetables. With five (5) IT staff members overseeing more than 14,000 computers there are long waiting periods for service and frequent server glitches. Mr. Boone met with Ms. Sitaru, MHIS's Chief Information Officer, and said she was supportive of the move. HPA would still be connected to the City's Munis and e-mail systems.

Because the expenditure is in the recommended 2014-2015 HPA budget and the pricing is within the CEO's approval authority, further Board action would not be required once the HPA's budget is approved by the City in May 2014.

Ms. LeShane stated that she requested to have this item formally reported to the Board for the purpose of transparency.

3. Marketing Committee Report

- a. Neighborhood Initiatives - Ms. LeShane reported that she received favorable feedback from the Council President who stated how well-received HPA's neighborhood initiatives have been, particularly in the Sheldon St. area, and that HPA has his continued support in any expansion.
- b. Amnesty Program and Night Enforcement Updates – Ms. LeShane gave updates on the night enforcement program which has been favorably received and noted that ticketing will commence tonight. Mr. Boone reported that some valet parking

abuse was uncovered during the warning process and is being addressed satisfactorily.

The amnesty program is currently being reviewed for approval by Corporation Counsel and is expected to roll-out in May. A public information campaign theme "Beat the Boot" will correspond with the amnesty program.

c. Recommendation to Affirm Board Authorization to Modify Off-street Pricing in support of Uconn Parade

Due to the last minute planning necessary to hold the UConn double Victory parade to honor the UConn Men's and Women's Basketball National Championship, Mr. Boone canvassed all HPA commissioners by email to authorize him to set a modified rate for parking on the day of the parade. Corporation Counsel Varano confirmed that this was within our authority and that we would need to confirm such authorization at our next HPA meeting.

Ms. LeShane called for a motion and a motion was made by Mr. Lerman, seconded by Mr. Breetz and carried unanimously that -

VOTED: To confirm the authorization to set a \$5.00 event rate in support of the 2014 UConn parade, as approved via e-mail. (ayes – Lerman, Breetz, LeShane)

4. **Property Management Committee** - *Please see the Property Management Report for details.*

- a. Monthly Report - Mr. Breetz reported the following updates: the CSG enhancements RFR was issued and four (4) companies attended the walk-thru; Desman has begun field work on the MAT Garage repairs and the RFR release is expected in late April/early May, and citation revenue collections has increased two (2) months in a row reaching \$68,000 for March.

Mr. Breetz reported that the Committee discussed in great detail the high cost associated with continuing full service maintenance and monitoring on the P & D meters now that Parkeon's contract warranty has expired. HPA will continue maintenance with Wescor on a monthly basis through June 30th, while staff researches best long-term solutions.

Mr. Boone noted that a large part of monthly cost is the cellular service supporting the meters, and staff is working with IT support experts to research what would be involved to capitalize a Wi-Fi system more reliable than the City's Wi-Fi program. Also being researched is spreading out the meters to cover a larger area. Mr. Boone stated that while attending the recent parking study public forum, he learned that Nelson/Nygaard, the company conducting the study for the City, has been tasked with assessing parking as a whole, including regulations, policies and pricing structures. The data collected from the study will be provided to HPA to facilitate recommendations for best practices and long-term strategies.

The Commissioners requested a detailed report of all possible alternative options and potential cost savings for the Commissioner's consideration including best practices from similar jurisdictions, possible policy changes such as complete removal of the Pay & Display kiosks and return to coin operated meters.

Ms. LeShane also noted that staff has been requested to complete a comprehensive inventory of all HPA contracts to provide more strategic tracking of expiration dates and expenses.

- b. Sheldon Street Lots Pricing - Mr. Breetz reported that the surface lot RFR was released March 7th and the four responding companies will be interviewed at the end of April.

Mr. Boone presented pricing structures for monthly and transient rates at the Sheldon Street lots, as recommended by the Committee. Pricing structures were researched through City records and comparable cities such as West Hartford. IPI members were also consulted for feedback and best practice recommendations.

Ms. LeShane and Mr. Lerman requested revisions to the pricing sheets to include adding "per space" under the monthly rate columns, add "zero" to the 3-4 hour transient rate increments, and replace the word "transient" with "hourly". Mr. Boone confirmed that the revisions will be made.

Ms. LeShane called for a motion and a motion was made by Mr. Breetz, seconded by Mr. Lerman. The motion carried unanimously to:

VOTED: Authorize HPA staff to hold a public hearing regarding Sheldon Street Lots pricing (as submitted) in accordance with Municipal Code. (ayes – Lerman, Breetz, LeShane)

Mr. Boone confirmed that signage regarding proposed pricing and the public hearing would be posted at the Sheldon Street lots.

- c. Recommendation to Approve Implementation of a 4-hour On-street Zone in the Vicinity of Prospect and Sheldon Streets - Mr. Boone presented the Committee's recommendation to create a four (4) hour on-street parking zone in the areas surrounding the Sheldon Street surface lots (141 and 166 Sheldon Street) as indicated on the map presented. The Commissioners agreed that the map would be referred to as "Exhibit A".

Usage of the two Sheldon lots was evaluated and found to be loosely monitored and the concern of displacement of unauthorized parkers exists, once these lots are gated for payment. Local businesses have also expressed interest in extended length of stay at meters in this area. Meter pricing will be the same as the progressive rate structure implemented in the Washington Street courthouse area.

Ms. LeShane called for a motion and a motion was made by Mr. Breetz to approve the Committee's recommendation to adopt four (4) hour parking in the Sheldon St. area (as indicated on "Exhibit A") and subject to the same rates and

regulations as the Washington Street courthouse parking zone, seconded by Mr. Lerman. The motion carried unanimously to -

VOTED: Approve the Committee's recommendation to adopt four (4) hour parking in the Sheldon St. area (as indicated on "Exhibit A") and subject to the same rates and regulations as the Washington Street courthouse parking zone. (ayes - Lerman, Breetz, LeShane)

- d. Citation Audit Report: - Mr. Breetz and Mr. Boone reported on the City's internal audit report for parking citation accounts and operations. A copy of the audit and Republic's follow up action plan was presented for the Commissioner's review. Mr. Boone noted that HPA invited the auditors to review both on-street and CSG and that he was satisfied with the results. Both staff and Republic took a collaborative approach during the process.

Ms. LeShane asked about the process for dismissal of parking citations. Mr. Boone gave several examples of justified cases where fines were dismissed when a system error or mistaken identification was confirmed. Mr. Boone also confirmed that no HPA staff is involved in the dismissal process, and that all such cases are referred to Corporation Counsel for handling.

The Commissioners requested that Mr. Boone provide a list of transactions by user name, which have had multiple waived or voided citations, for their information. Mr. Boone confirmed that he would work with Republic to provide the list.

Ms. LeShane called for a motion and a motion was made by Mr. Breetz, seconded by Mr. Lerman to -

VOTED: Accept the auditor's report as submitted (ayes - Breetz, Lerman, LeShane).

Ms. LeShane stated that the Commissioners would review the audit action plan submitted by Republic and discuss, if needed, at the next Board meeting.

- e. CEO Report on Past Due Citation Plan - Mr. Boone gave a presentation of his analysis of past due citation data and made recommendations based on the analysis.

Reported statistics included: uncollected citations by state consisting mainly of out-of-state leasing and rental car companies which may infer that Hartford has had a higher rate of out-of-state visitors; citations by city; number of citations which may not have enough reliable contact data to trace; and "null" citations which have no available information (from 2001-2002) totaling about \$5.6 million. Additional data filtering removed citation values under \$100 which left a recommended \$4.5 million value of potential write-off citations. Final analysis supports a decrease in the value of the potential collectable citations from \$20.3 million to \$12.9 million.

Discussion was heard regarding best practices for writing off debt and debt collection. Mr. Boone agreed to review State law and statute of limitations on debt collections and will continue to work with Republic to collect and evaluate data to determine best strategy for maximum debt collection to be recommended to Commissioners for consideration. Ms. LeShane recommended continuing to apply substance to reasoning for debt write-off and to research and develop an appropriate approval process so that the Board could vote on removing some of the debt in the first quarter of the new fiscal year. She also commended staff and Republic on their efforts in making such exceptional progress with the collections process.

5. **Bylaws and Revisions Committee**

There was no report for this Committee.

OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. LeShane called for a motion and a motion was made to enter Executive Session at 7:17 P.M. by Mr. Lerman, seconded by Mr. Breetz, passing unanimously (ayes – Lerman, LeShane, Breetz)

- Mr. Boone and Mr. DesRoches remained for the Executive Session
- Mr. DesRoches and Mr. Breetz left the Executive Session at 8:00 P.M.

Executive Session ended and the Regular Meeting reconvened at 8:30 P.M.

There was no action taken during the Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. LeShane called for a motion and a motion was made by Ms. Lerman, seconded by Ms. LeShane, passing unanimously that the April 17th, 2014 Regular Board Meeting ended at 8:30 P.M. (ayes – Lerman, LeShane)

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Leonowicz

Terry Leonowicz
Secretary to the Board