



Unapproved Minutes
Friday, August 28TH, 2015 - 3:00 P.M.
Special Meeting of the Hartford Parking Authority Board
155 Morgan Street, Hartford, CT 06103

**To be Approved at the
October 15TH, 2015
Regular Board
Meeting**

Commissioners Present

Paddi LeShane, Chair
Ken Lerman, Vice Chair
Rex Fowler, Treasurer
Mat Jasinski, Commissioner
Bill Breetz, Commissioner (Via Telephone)

Also Present for HPA:

Eric M. Boone, CEO/Executive Director
Carey E. Redd, II, Associate Director

1. **Call to Order** - Ms. LeShane called the August 28TH, 2015 Special Board Meeting of the Hartford Parking Authority (“Authority” or “HPA”) to order at 3:05P.M.
2. **Roll Call of Commissioners** - Mr. Redd conducted roll call and announced there was a quorum present. Mr. Breetz attended via teleconference.
3. **Chair’s Comments** - Ms. LeShane stated after eleven (11) years on HPA’s Board of Commissioners, the last seven (7) as Chair, she would be stepping down from the Board December 2015 at the end of her current term, continue to serve but not as Chair until a replacement is appointed. She stated Mr. Lerman’s reappointment was sent to City of Hartford’s (City) Council (Council) and Mr. Breetz reappointment was pending. Commissioners acknowledged Ms. LeShane’s valued contribution over the years then opened discussion on the subject and agreed to continue the dialogue in the ensuing months.

FY 15-16 STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT ITEMS

1. **Significant Events and Impacts since the Adoption of the Strategic Plan** – Ms. LeShane stated that this Special meeting was called to review the status on the initiatives adopted in the HPA’s Strategic Plan and suggest the Nelson-Nygaard Parking Study as part of the significant events and the impacts which was acknowledged by staff.

Mr. Boone stated the two (2) significant events that impacted the HPA were the sale of the Church Street Garage (CSG) and HPA taking responsibilities for surface lots.

- Church Street Garage - Mr. Boone reported that the plans to restore the parking structure were halted pending the sale which was scheduled for the 1st quarter of the fiscal year. The sale was delayed for months and during the delay, staff researched/presented a CSG monetization proposal as an alternative to the sale that was not supported by the City’s Administration and or Council. The delay in the sale of the CSG required the HPA to perform maintenance/repairs that were not planned or budgeted for, and the HPA continued to collect revenue.

- Surface Lots - Mr. Boone reported that HPA assumed five (5) surface parking lots creating a new product line for which staff had to institute bookkeeping guidelines; install technology; and established contracts; including but not limited to improvements/repairs; management operations; maintenance and security services. He stated that the surface parking lot inventory will be reduced to two (2) sites and they are located at 141 Sheldon Street (SS1) and 166 Sheldon Street (SS2). The other three (3) sites will be used over a five (5) year period which began in 2014 for development of the Downtown North Project. The majority of HPA's corporate/monthly parkers are, or will be moved to private parking operator's (operator) sites with one (1) exception.

Commissioners discussed the Downtown North Project at length then agreed to engage decision makers in discussion on long term sustainability of public parking in the City's and HPA's duty to manage this community asset and generate revenue as an initiatives in the strategic plan.

- Nelson-Nygaard (N-N) Parking Study - Mr. Boone stated that the City's Development Services (DS) and HPA commissioned the study to achieve two (2) objectives:
 1. To determine the current City's parking supply demand/utilization, how utilization can be improved, and does the City need or do not need additional parking resulting from the economic development projects underway (Downtown North, UCONN, etc.) and/or planned for the future.
 2. To review improvements for zoning regulations; requirements; and rules needed or not, to make parking competitive with suburbia to attract businesses to Hartford.

Mr. Boone stated that the first four (4) recommendations in the N-N study pertained to privately owned and/or commercially operated garages, and surface lots as follows:

1. Commercial Lots/Garages

- To increase fines for ordinances non-compliance. Mr. Boone stated DS and HPA's staffs have been updating the ordinances using the SS1 as an example.
- To strengthen compliance enforcement. Mr. Boone stated that the City's License and Inspections Department (L&I) perform inspections as a result of issuing two (2) year permits to operate a surface lot but are not authorized by the ordinance. L&I is in agreement to transfer the responsibility to HPA via Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The short term goal would be to acquire the responsibility and long term goal to bring operators into compliance.
- To require on-line posting of prices prior to events. Mr. Boone that the stated operators are required to provide the City with their maximum parking rate ninety (90) days prior to invoking the parking rate for a fee which is not monitored and the regulations is limited to surface lots not garages.
- To bundle HPA properties with XL ticketing to drive down pricing

2. On-Street

- Zone based demand pricing: Mr. Boone stated that on-street zone based demand pricing could as determined (increased/decreased) by the demand/utilization in the zone and could be easily deployed for nights and weekends.

- Extend enforcement hours: Mr. Boone stated that the recommendation was to keep the parking meters active and enforce until 10P.M. He stated that he felt this was aggressive though it is something to consider for parking zones that are completely occupied after 6P.M.

Mr. Boone stated that discussed the recommendation with restaurant and bar (R&B) owners who stated that they were aware their staff took up most of the parking spaces but they believe this recommendation should not be implemented. He added an alternative is to have incentives for their staffs to park off street.

- Discount the evening parking rate but not provide free parking nights/weekends

3. Walkability

- To improve street infrastructure (streetscape): Mr. Boone stated that individuals in an unofficial survey expressed concerns regarding parking off street at night and walking along under lit streets. He added that they preferred to pay premium parking rates closer to the R&Bs they are going to.
- To better equip/train on-street Parking Ambassadors (Ambassadors): Mr. Boone stated that Republic and Business Improvement District's on-street personnel should be trained to provide directions to individuals not familiar with the City.
- To provide clearer parking signage: Mr. Boone stated that the parking signage should be uniform with branding.
- To unify wayfinding messaging: Mr. Boone stated that the City should have a unified methodology, format and color scheme.

4. Communications

- To create one (1) parking key message for downtown businesses: Mr. Boone stated that the HPA should work with the business community to have one (1) consistent parking message.
- For the HPA to control all on-street signage.
- To coordinate signage with private operators.
- To improve HPA website map.

Mr. Boone stated that the fifth recommendation in the N-N study speaks to areas that the HPA can do beyond the management of the City's parking assets.

5. Governance

- To establish parking fund for mobility. Mr. Boone stated that parking rates could be increased and a portion (i.e., ten (10) cent) should be designated to establish an account that would fund bike share, benches, trash cans, etc. which has become a big initiative in southwest municipalities.
- To reduce the number of one-way streets.

- To align all parking operations under HPA: Mr. Boone stated that anything that relates to parking should be under HPA by ordinance, such as towing vehicles; install signage; or perform inspections which are supported by the City's DS.
- To expand HPA to become Hartford Mobility Authority: Mr. Boone stated that anything that deals with mobility to make the city a walkable town HPA would be the authority to administer it, i.e., Bike Share and Zipcar should be active in Downton Hartford. He added that he organized a meeting with Zipcar, State of Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT); Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA); City; and HPA representatives which resulted in Zipcar's commitment to start operating at Union Station September 2015.
- To address disabled parking abuse: Mr. Boone stated could install more disabled parking zones (but charge), work with the appropriate city/state agencies to adjust placard distribution, remove meter exception, and form committee including stakeholders to implement changes/improvements.

Commissioners had a robust discussion on the N-N study then directed staff to prioritize the items discussed and prepare a report for board review.

Ms. LeShane stated that the next item on the agenda was an update on the status of the HPA's FY15-16 Strategic Plan (SP) goals including parking citation collections/debt.

2. **Review of FY 15 Strategic Goals** - Mr. Boone stated that the SP the Board approved defined HPA's strategic initiatives into three (3) categories, short (FY15-16), medium (FY16-17 to FY17-18) and long (FY18-19 to FY19-20) term. He presented an updated SP to inform Commissioners on the status of each goal, noting that some are not completed and there were two (2) strategic actions included that were not in the original SP but have been discussed in prior meetings and need to be fully addressed within the next 12-18 months.

They are the:

- Replacement of the current generation of Parkeon meters. Mr. Boone stated that AT&T has publicly stated in 2012 that they would sunset their 2G network. This July, Parkeon confirmed that AT&T will not end 2G operations in Hartford until 2017. Though the expense is minimal, in order to continue using Parkeon meters for on-street parking HPA would have to upgrade them which would not be cost effective and replacing them with Municipal Parking System (MPS) meters will enhance HPA's on street capability long term.
- Replacement of the MAT Garage gate equipment. MAT Garage utilizes 3M (Federal APD) equipment and 3M announced as of Feb 2015 they would no longer support their Parking and Revenue Control (PARC) systems which will require HPA to replace MAT Garage gate equipment.

Mr. Boone stated that the estimated gate equipment expense is roughly \$800k. HPA and CRDA used 3M exclusively and are coordinating efforts to address this issue in the MAT and Church Street Garages.

Mr. Boone stated that Investigate Making Outdoor Seating for Restaurants, was a medium term strategy action documented under External Strategy #1 – Permeate - F in the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan that was handed out.

Commissioners agreed that the FY15-16 updated SP presented was satisfactory then directed staff to identify all strategic actions that needed Board approval and report back to them.

Ms. LeShane stated that this part of the meeting will focus on thinking ahead, and more specific, what has come up in the last year that the HPA should concentrate on, and prepare for the next five (5) years that was not included in the FY15-16 SP.

3. Discussion of Technology Uses - Mr. Boone stated that there were four (4) key focus areas he discussed with Ms. LeShane that the HPA should be looking at, to determine what staff needs to integrate into the medium & long term portions of the strategic plan which are:

- a) **Technology Uses:** Mr. Boone stated that the parking industry is beginning to embrace technology (tech) more. He added he has been forward leaning on technology but he needs Board input on suitable technological advances deployed by HPA in the City.
- b) **Customer Focus:** Mr. Boone stated that this was discussed earlier in the review of N-N's study, and more importantly how the HPA make the garages and on-street parking operations more customer friendly and should HPA create designated Hartford resident parking which resulted from a recent discussion with Council?
- c) **Collections:** Mr. Boone stated that the HPA should focus on:
 - What are the collection options available to HPA?
 - What collection options should HPA implement?
 - What should be the benchmark for success?

He added that the benchmark is a function of the tools used and the more aggressive the tools the higher the benchmark should be.
- d) **Risk Management:** Mr. Boone stated that the key questions are:
 - What other diversified roles would HPA bring value to?
 - What is HPA's preparedness of a force majeure event?

Mr. Lerman left the meeting at 4:50P.M.

Ms. LeShane giving consideration for Commissioners' time and agenda topics remaining polled Commissioners who agreed to limit the discussion to Collections of the four (4) key focus questions presented. She asked Mr. Boone to update Commissioners on the three (3) actions the Board had approved prior to his presentation of the two (2) graphics which he stated were germane to Collections.

Mr. Boone stated that the estimated \$10M parking citations debt write off was approved by the Council's Operations, Management, Budget and Legislative Affairs Committee and has been placed on the Council's September 14th, 2015 agenda for action. He stated that it had not been decided whether the write off will be post for the last fiscal year as Commissioners' preferred or the current fiscal year but he would take up the question with the City's Finance Department and report back to the Board. He stated T², Republic's citation database management sub-contractor was working on the program logistics to identify the citations to be written off.

Mr. Boone stated that the Board approved FY15-16 budget had \$600k in revenue resulting from HPA's recommendations and ordinance changes that requires the Council's approval. The recommendations and ordinance changes were sent to the Council's Quality of Life and Public Safety (QOL) sub-committee and the QOL postponed any action on them therefore HPA cannot make any changes to its budget at this time.

Ms. LeShane confirmed with Mr. Boone that the Council sub-committees' voted favorably on the three (3) actions the Board approved to write-off parking citation debt then stated the next topic for discussion is what HPA needs to improve its collection rate.

4. **Discussion of Collections**

- a) Collection Rate/Citation Issuance: Mr. Boone stated that he presented two (2) charts (Collection Rate and Citations Issued) that track over a ten (10) period FY05-06 to FY14-15 the performance of ComPlus and Republic, HPA's previous and current on-street parking management companies. He stated that the Collection Rate chart is based on the industry standard calculation which is the calculation stated in Republic agreement though it is not the preferred metric of either Commissioners or staff. Republic's contract requires them to perform at an 80% collection rate.

Mr. Boone stated that prior to the Republic, ComPlus' collection rate was roughly 62% and post Republic the collection rate was roughly 78/79%. However, when one looks at the citation issuance for the same period there is a dramatic decrease in the number issued by Republic. He stated that the two (2) reasons for the issuance decrease is compliance, and more significant fewer Ambassadors writing citations under Republic's contract than were employed by ComPlus. During the peak of ComPlus tenure roughly FY08-09, thirteen (13) Ambassadors were employed while today Republic employs seven (7). Other there has been a significantly/steadily decrease in citation issuance are:

- City announces a snow emergency parking ban much earlier which effect parking ban citations.
- DS has directed DPW to remove the 3:30P.M.-6:00P.M. parking restrictions on numerous streets citywide which effect parking restrictions citations.
- Employers have moved and/or moved staff to suburbia which result in less vehicles coming into the City more importantly, the Central Business District.

Mr. Boone stated that Republic has hired two (2) additional Ambassadors which is within the approved FY15-16 Budget. He stated that two (2) Ambassadors of Republic's initial staff were reassigned to the Boot Program when it began a year ago.

Commissioners had an engaged dialogue on the staffing strategy and collections then directed HPA's staff to continue its collection analysis and prepare a report for board review.

- b) Collection Tools: Mr. Boone presented a Regional City Enforcement (RCE) chart which showed that all of the collection tools (tools) used by various municipalities within the region is different those used by the HPA. He stated that he researched other industries to determine what their measurements were for collection rate and what collection tools these industries utilized. Through his research he uncovered a five (5) year old document which

provided information on parking collection rates and collection tools. He added that he still needs to vet the calculation method to ensure the industry standard was used throughout the reference. The State of California (California) stood out and most of the cities had collection rates above 85%, i.e., San Jose 85%, San Francisco 88% and Santa Barbara 91%. The two (2) things California does different from Connecticut are:

- 1) Registration holds are placed on the 1st unpaid citation issued by any municipality.
- 2) California will withhold state tax refund if any monies are due to any municipality.

Mr. Boone added these tools are powerful which demonstrate why San Jose did not boot vehicles. They know the motorist/registrator with unpaid parking citations will be impacted by these tools at the state level. Other than these tools none of the tools California's municipalities utilizes is different from that the HPA utilizes.

Mr. Boone stated that the RCE chart shows HPA collection rate is comparable to other regional municipalities using the similar tools. He stated the results were self-reported base on survey staff sent out via the Municipal Forum and some municipalities were not forthcoming because they either did not calculate their collection rate or the collection rate was very low such that the municipality decided not to report it. He stated the HPA tried to get judgments in volume against motorists that owed citation debt to the City which has not proved successful because the court did not want to automate the process therefore only fifty (50) to eighty (80) judgments are filed per month. He added he was still researching whether the citation debt can be reported to a credit bureau.

Mr. Boone stated other things other industries are doing included:

- 1) Credit limits. This is the equivalent of reducing the unpaid citation threshold.
- 2) Have dedicated staff. Full or part time staff that only focus on collections.
- 3) Offer discounts. Offer discounts on citations other than those offered currently.
- 4) Telephoning. Phone individuals with unpaid tickets.
- 5) Diplomatic Agencies. Agencies that provide the initial collection prior to the debt going to a third party collection agency.
- 6) Automatic debt collection. The motorist keeps there credit on file to pay citations.
- 7) Withholding tax refund. Discussed earlier.
- 8) Mobile Payment. Motorists are allowed to pay by phone.
- 9) Small claims. This will require a surcharge to pay Marshalls that serve judgments to people.
- 10) Garnish wages for City employees and vendors.
- 11) Reduce third party collections timeline. HPA currently does not send unpaid citations to collections until they are one hundred and twenty (120) days old.

Mr. Boone stated that the recommendation would be to reduce timeline ninety (90) days. He added between sixty (60) and ninety (90) days HPA receives 6% and 8% unpaid citation compliance.

Mr. Boone that stated 33% of HPA's citations are outstanding over ninety (90) days. We should strive to reduce that to 20% after a year. Various industries range between 10 to 20% which include automotive; healthcare; information technology; etc. The national average for collections is 14% for all industries. Ms. LeShane stated that Mr. Boone's research verifies HPA is using the tools available in industry to perform collections.

Mr. Boone stated that another option that Republic has used which proved to be successful with other municipalities is sending out the collection notice on legal letter which invoke a thorough exchange among Commissioners. Staff was directed discuss/review the collection notice on legal letter with the City's Corporation Counsel and the appropriate state agencies to ensure the correspondence meets all pertinent legal criteria, and continue the research and prepare a recommendations for the Board.

- c) Customer Focused Parking Solutions: Ms. LeShane propose and Commissioners agreed to discuss the agenda item: Should HPA create designated Hartford resident? She stated the other topics under Customer Focused Parking Solutions were discussed earlier.

Ms. LeShane stated that during the Council's QOL meeting Council members expressed their concerns about the HPA's recommendations and ordinance then voted to table them. She stated that a Councilperson stated that City residents should not pay for parking but motorists coming into the City should. She committed to bring their concerns back to the Board for discussion. Commissioners discuss the Council members concerns thoroughly.

5. **Technology Uses** - Mr. Boone stated that there are numerous technologies that are being produced today. Some of the technologies coming out has to do with reliability and others are that none of the vendors except for a few are operating in an integrated way. MPS being one of them. He stated that the vendors with technology solutions do not communicate with other vendors which would be very expensive to do so for example; a vendor that can capture utilization information using street sensors does not have the ability to share that data with the parking meter manufacturer, or the vendor with that manufactures parking meters and sensors does not have a robust backend to analyze the data captured. He stated that during his tour of the International Parking Institute Conference exhibitors, he did see a few vendors were making infantile steps in that direction but nothing as comprehensive as MPS.

Mr. Boone stated that the four (4) things he believes HPA could use in multiple ways are:

- 1) Mobile apps whether it be pay by phone, pay by citation, and or wayfinding. Pay by phone can put HPA's system at risk due to the additional transaction fee expense and 15% of the on-street meter revenue come from over payment.
- 2) Space Occupancy that provides tremendous utilization data. Sensor pucks (pucks) that monitor space occupancy can become very "big brotherish" depending on its implementation. Some cities (New Haven and Middletown, CT) that acquired the technology have removed it because when articulated buses drive by the pucks the parking meters would reset. This will be avoided with MPS meters three-way tie breaker system because it uses pucks, License Plate Recognition (LPR) cameras and laser.
- 3) License Plate Recognition (LPR) which in used in HPA's rolling enforcement operation can be used:
 - To measure occupancy like the MPS offers.
 - To identify vehicles with unpaid property taxes.
- 4) Wayfinding technology to identify available parking spaces and or direct individuals to various locations in Downtown Hartford and or citywide.

- 5) Technology can be used to create validation systems. Mr. Boone stated there are no systems is off the shelf today. Stackpole has volunteered to test the MPS application.
- 6) Data collection algorithms which can be used to perform predictive modeling.
- 7) Credit card swipe machines with chips and pen capability and will allow the HPA to perform Applepay transactions.

Mr. Boone stated that the MPS agreement was finalized and originals were being sent to him for counter signature by the appropriate parties. The expectation date for the Test Bed Pilot Project is October 1st, 2015 and ends December 31, 2015. He stated that the selected sites are Lafayette Street between Russ Street and Grand, Trumbull Street between Church Street and Asylum Street and the corner of Ann Street and Allyn Street.

6. **Discussions of Risk Management** – Ms. LeShane stated under that Risk Management “Engaged Decision Makers Instead of Sustainability” which is something needed in the strategic plan. She added “What other diversified roles would HPA bring value to?” as discussed earlier in the meeting. She stated “What is HPA’s preparedness of a force majeure event?” need to be vett if there was a reported shooter in the MAT Garage. Mr. Boone stated that the staff has ten (10) Emergency Operations Plans (EOP) in place He will work with Ted Sheiber, Facilities and Project Manager to create an EOP for pipe rapture and the City’s Police Chief James Rozella to create one for an active shooter in response to Commissioners comments/inquiries. Mr. Boone stated that the staff was knowledgeable of HPA’s key corporate contacts and security personnel which will enable the EOPs to be updated accordingly. Commissioners discussed Risk Manager at some length and directed staff to discuss with the City’s Corporation was the protocol was for adoption of EOPs and preparedness, and update plan by October 2015.

ADJURNMENT

Ms. LeShane polled Commissioners for further comments/questions, and hearing none, then called for a motion, a motion was made by Mr. Jasinski, seconded by Mr. Breetz, passing unanimously to -

VOTED: Adjourn the August 25TH, 2015 Special Board Meeting at 6:10P.M.
(Ayes - Breetz, Fowler, Jasinski and LeShane)

Respectfully submitted,

Carey E. Redd, II, CAPP

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Secretary to the Board

Collection Rate



Citations Issued



