

WEST WINDSOR PARKING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting

August 12, 2020

The West Windsor Parking Authority meeting was held on Wednesday, August 12, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. via conference call. The dial-in details were posted on the WWPA website.

Sunshine Law Announcement

In compliance with the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, location, and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board, and filed with the Township Clerk.

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Lupu called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The following individuals dialed in:

Commissioners

Andy Lupu, Chair
Tom Crane, Vice Chair
Dan Fabrizio, Treasurer
Michael Cerullo, Asst. Treasurer
Larry Katz, Secretary

Non-Commissioners

Scot MacPherson, Director of Operations
Sonia Gawas, Township Liaison
James Colitsas, CPA, Princeton Financial Group, LLC
Phil Mosca, CPA, Princeton Financial Group, LLC
Frank Bal, Officer of West Windsor Police
Robert Schwartz, Attorney
Lyle Girandola, Parking Consultant

Comments from Audience

None present.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes (July 8, 2020)

Commissioner Katz moved to approve the July 8, 2020 minutes. Commissioner Crane seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted to approve the minutes.

Approval of Bills (July 2020)

Board members reviewed the bills for July that displayed a substantial number of refunds requested by permit parking customers that were issued due to COVID-19. Mr. MacPherson stated that refunds given amounted to \$15,283.35 for NJ Transit permit lots and \$3,692.00 for West Windsor permit lots. Approximately 100 NJ Transit permits were released leaving a little under 1,500 permit holders remaining. Chair Lupu stated that the uncertainty of how many commuters renew their permits will become apparent next month when quarterly payments are due for October, November, and December.

Commissioner Cerullo asked how the Authority addressed the concerns of permit parkers who were affected by COVID-19. Mr. MacPherson explained that in April, all West Windsor lot permit holders were credited for an entire quarter, so for those whose parking permits were to expire on June 30th, do not have to make their quarterly payment until the following quarter; September 1st for the October, November, and December. Mr. MacPherson also explained that the policy allows customers one suspension request every two years; however, an additional suspension request will be honored.

Commissioner Fabrizio moved resolution 08.12.20-01 to approve the July bills. Commissioner Crane seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Reorganization

Commissioner Katz moved to replace Lyle Girandola with Tom Crane as Vice Chair. Commissioner Fabrizio seconded the motion.

Chair Lupu moved to replace Tom Crane with Dan Fabrizio as Treasurer. Commissioner Katz seconded the motion.

Chair Lupu moved to replace Dan Fabrizio with Larry Katz as Secretary. Commissioner Crane seconded the motion.

Chair Lupu moved to replace Larry Katz with Michael Cerullo as Assistant Treasurer. Commissioner Crane seconded the motion.

In a Roll Call vote, each Board member approved the motions.

REPORTS

Police

Officer Bal informed the Board on the police activity in July stating that there were only 45 incidents. Although incidents at the train stations have decreased, domestic violence, drug overdoses, and shoplifting have increased throughout the Township.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

COVID-19 Impact Update

Mr. MacPherson stated that the average number of daily parkers remains low. Mr. MacPherson obtained reports from Nexus Parking Systems which he shared with Mr. Girandola who created from those reports a Daily Revenue & Occupancy Analysis document. Mr. Girandola displayed the document that exhibited the trend of daily parkers in the Hamilton Park & Ride, Hamilton Station Park & Ride Overflow lot, Metropark, Trenton, and Princeton Junction lots from February through July 2020. The document showed that the number of commuters is slowly increasing at each of the stations, and the opportunity exists for commuters to park at the Princeton Junction daily lot at a cheaper rate than the other lots. Board members strategized on how and when to advertise positive messaging to commuters on the safety measures that have and are being taken to keep the stations and trains sanitized and the cost-effective benefit of commuting via train versus driving into Manhattan. Chair Lupu stated that commuters may be comfortable with taking the train since the volume of individuals is low, but those who require additional transportation after exiting the train station may be concerned with the sanitation of the buses and/or subways; therefore, may consider driving instead, regardless of the high cost of tolls, bridges, parking, etc.

Survey

Mr. MacPherson shared a [commuter survey \(click link here to view survey\)](#) that will be emailed this week to WWPA customers. The survey is intended to help identify what marketing and operational strategies would be appropriate for the future parking demand. Besides emailing the survey to permit, daily, and waitlisted customers, it will also be uploaded on social media and advertised by West Windsor Township. Mr. MacPherson will compile and share the responses at the next board meeting. To follow privacy guidelines, personal information will not be requested. Mr. Girandola requested that a test email be sent to all board members first to ensure accuracy.

Food Truck Event

Mr. MacPherson stated that the Food Truck event scheduled for September had to be canceled due to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Township's stringent regulations that would bring the costs up considerably. To meet the guidelines, only 5 food truck vendors would be permitted into the lot, and seating for 600 individuals would be required. It is anticipated that the event will be scheduled to take place in the spring of 2021.

Chair Lupo inquired about attendance and COVID-19 mitigation practices at the Farmers' Market. Commissioner Katz and Councilwoman Gawas stated that it seemed to be spaced out accordingly and has been well attended. Mr. MacPherson said that regulations are being followed, and that they are doing a great job at sanitizing to maintain a safe environment. Commissioner Katz said that they have a large number of volunteers to safeguard the wellbeing of their customers.

Wallace Permit/Daily Lots

Mr. MacPherson stated that a daily parking area with new zone number 4801 was added in the Wallace permit lot. Signs are displayed at the entrance with instructions on how to pay for the new daily parking area via ParkMobile app only. This daily parking capacity is temporary and intended to facilitate filling the lot with daily parkers until the lot resumes regular capacity.

Mr. MacPherson stated that the vacant lots have allowed easy access for restriping the pavement and tree removal and trimming services.

Board members discussed closing off portions of the lots for financial savings, and it was determined that the only savings would be on snow pretreatment and removal services. Mr. MacPherson stated that if the same capacity remains into the winter, the gravel lot and portions of Station and upper Vaughn lots would be closed to reduce the cost of snow pretreatment and removal services. Those closed areas must not be accessible for pedestrians to use as a walk-through, as that would be a liability. Mr. Schwartz agreed and emphasized that those areas are to be blocked and signs must be posted.

Mr. Korkuch asked Mr. MacPherson if he spoke with the snow removal contractor yet on the possibility of closing off parking areas which would affect the existing contract. Mr. MacPherson stated that he is waiting for a return call and will work with Mr. Schwartz on adding a clause to the contract referencing the possibility of partial closures.

Mr. MacPherson said that Woodwinds Associates requested that the Authority extend the contract for snow removal services on the platforms (separate from the lots) with the same requirements and a 2% increase, as noted in the contract.

Commissioner Fabrizio called for a motion to approve resolution 08.12.20-02 to award the extension for snow removal services on the platforms to Woodwinds Associates. Chair Lupo seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

REPORTS (continued)

Accounting

Mr. Colitsas reviewed the financial reports with the board members and stated that all of the expenses significantly changed, as expected. Year-to-date, WWPA is down about \$1.2M compared to what was projected. The decrease for daily parking from 2019 to now is approximately \$900k. For the month of July, the permit and daily parking actuals from 2019 to 2020 are down approximately \$232K.

Mr. Colitsas discussed the cash flow for WWPA and NJ Transit stating that he expects WWPA to generate enough revenue to be sustainable, but not NJ Transit, which will preclude the Authority to meet its contracted minimum guarantee payment to NJ Transit. Mr. MacPherson has spoken with NJ Transit members to defer the quarterly guarantee payment of \$375k since they are projected to have a cash shortfall as their expenditures are significantly higher than their revenue. NJ Transit agreed to defer the payment until October 1 in the amount of \$500k and additional payments of \$125k on November 1 and again on December 1 to allow them with enough funds until October 1. Mr. MacPherson and NJ Transit will discuss further negotiation options in September after permit renewals are paid which will provide a better projection.

Mr. Colitsas discussed future large payments that may have a substantial effect on cash flow such as, bond payments of principle and interest, West Windsor Township's Vaughn lot rent payment, funds paid to the Township after the audit is completed, and the snowfall.

Mr. Colitsas stated that the salaries for office employees increased by 12.1% from last year and decreased by -11.60% for enforcement employees.

Mr. Colitsas stated that the cash balance is strong for the West Windsor side of the business, and projections for January's budget will be determined after September's quarterly payments are received.

Mr. Colitsas stated his concerns on the guarantee quarterly payment that was deferred to October 1, as mentioned above. Chair Lupo said that the October payment is not possible, especially without knowing what the cost on snow removal services will be. Board members agreed that WWPA must avoid drawing from their own cash reserves to meet NJ Transit's expense obligations due to this revenue shortfall. Mr. MacPherson stated that because of the Authority's true-up, payment will eventually be paid, but not until after the audit. WWPA's lease agreement states that WWPA receives all of the revenue and pays all of the expenses associated with the lot. WWPA and NJ Transit share expenses for several areas which include staff salaries, rent, and shared contractors, and the left-over revenue is due to NJ Transit. If funds are not available, they do not receive money.

Mr. Colitsas stated that he would work with Mr. MacPherson after September's permit renewals have been paid to project the next three months. Mr. Girandola recommended adding an amendment to the contract whereas a mechanism is put in place that ensures reimbursement. Board members agreed, and Chair Lupo requested that Mr. Schwartz work on the amendment's language addressing NJ Transit's potential deficit. Mr. Schwartz stated that he would work on the contract. He explained that the contract is beneficial for NJ Transit because it allows the Authority to manage the lots, and it is beneficial for the Authority because it subsidizes the Authority's operation by approximately 74%; however, it was never contemplated that they would owe the Authority. Therefore, an amendment is imperative as well as a discussion on negotiations to take place during this temporary pandemic situation. Mr. Schwartz will review and work with Chair Lupo and Mr. MacPherson.

ACT ENGINEERS

Wallace Pond

Mr. Korkuch stated the he expects the permits to come through soon for the electrical work to be completed in the pond.

Mr. Korkuch provided his perspective on the NJ Transit contract regarding the financial mechanics and related challenges.

REPORTS (continued)

Administration

Chair Lupo stated that because of Mr. Girandola's finance background and knowledge of WWPA's finances, he was asked to remain with the Authority as a consultant to meet the financial challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commissioner Fabrizio called for a motion to approve resolution 08.12.20-03 to employ Mr. Girandola as WWPA's consultant. Commissioner Crane seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. MacPherson stated that to be ADA compliant, the yellow lines on the train platforms will be replaced with tactile ground surface indicators for the visually impaired. Minor concrete repairs will be made as well.

Mr. MacPherson stated that the Segway needs new tires and brakes, but parts have been discontinued.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lupo moved to adjourn. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully,

Elle Magarelli