

GREAT FALLS PARKING ADVISORY COMMISSION
Minutes of February 22, 2011

Members Present: Darren Brown, Dave Campbell, and Phil Kiser
Staff Present: Wendy Thomas, and Dave Gagnon (Standard Parking)

Others Present: Steve Alley, BID

Call to Order: The Parking Advisory Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Kiser at 3:00 p.m. in the Rainbow Room.

Meeting Minutes Mr. Kiser noted that in the meeting minutes there is a spelling error, lease should read lessee. Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2010 meeting as amended. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion, and the motion passed 3-0.

Old Business

Rome, GA Parking Program

Ms. Thomas discussed the parking programs in Rome, Georgia and Casper, Wyoming per the request of Mr. Kiser. The programs are smaller than Great Falls. Rome recently completed a parking study, and they have decided to reinstall parking meters which were removed in the 1980's. The Commission discussed the physical similarities between Great Falls and Rome. Citation fees in both communities have an escalating scale, as more tickets are written on a vehicle the higher the fine. Mr. Kiser closed the discussion on the parking survey. Rome is considering setting fees in lots and in the new on-street program at \$1-2/hour. All parking revenue goes to the parking fund. In Casper, citation revenue goes to the general fund and the police issue citations. Mr. Kiser discussed the importance of competition in the retail sector and the role free parking plays in consumers choosing which merchants to patronize. Ms. Thomas offered to contact Rome to acquire copies of the parking studies in Rome for the Commission to review.

Mr. Alley stated that he visited Hanford, CA where there are no parking meters in their downtown which is similar to the Great Falls downtown. He did not know how the parking area was patrolled.

Parking District Proposed Amendments

Ms. Thomas distributed maps that showed the proposed amendments to the parking enforcement areas that the Commission had discussed at the January meeting. Ms. Thomas stated that she discussed the proposed changes with Neighborhood Council 7. The Council had strong concerns regarding any changes to the areas north of Central Avenue. The Commission discussed parking demand from the school and where school employees are parking. Mr. Gagnon stated that given the land uses in the area, he felt that the residential parking area restricted area gets utilized when the weather warms up. Non-residential users will park farther from their destination in the good weather. Mr. Kiser commented that there may be trade-offs for residents given what they live near, ie., a school or downtown. The Commission discussed removing parking restrictions on 6th Street North in the 200 and 300 blocks and 3rd St. N and 6th St. N from 3rd Ave N to 4th Ave N.

No complaints have been received regarding the parking area on Central Avenue east of 9th Avenue.

The Commission discussed the County's desire to have more parking downtown. The County and City are continuing to discuss lease rates and parking facility availability. Mr. Gagnon suggested that the City examine the viability of a long term contract at a reduced fee rate.

No complaints have been received regarding the parking areas south of Central Avenue. Mr. Gagnon stated that given his reduced staff he feels that the parking program is no suffering regarding enforcement. The Commission discussed the uses along 2nd Ave. S., 3rd Ave. S., and 4th Ave. S.

Staff recommended that the Commission revisit the proposed changes to the parking program in April. Mr. Gagnon stated he would update the Commission on any changes in parking patterns. Mr. Gagnon reminded the Commission that the current contract allots 20 hours for patrolling lots and residential enforcement.

Mr. Alley mentioned that the South Parking ramp roof is often empty. Mr. Gagnon stated that the garage can be oversold by 20% and still be functional.

Sign Removal Costs

Ms. Thomas informed the Commission that based on their direction she contacted Public Works to gather information on the cost of removing/installing 116 signs.

Remove Signs:	\$600
Remount Signs:	\$600
Remove Poles:	\$3,200
Install poles and signs:	\$125 per installation

Mr. Kiser recommended that this issue also be revisited in April. Mr. Campbell cautioned the Commission to not overreact to complaints.

New Business

Monthly Revenue & Expense Reports

Ms. Thomas reviewed the Monthly Parking Revenue Report for January, noting that revenue was up 5% over the same period last year. Mr. Campbell noted the year to date (YTD) inconsistencies on the spreadsheet. The Commission noted that YTD information is a useful tool to compare year to year revenue. The Commission instructed staff to review and update the revenue spreadsheet.

Revenue from parking citations per fiscal year are:

FY: 2008-2009	\$77,610.95
FY: 2009-2010	\$83,761.54

Miscellaneous

The Commission discussed the replacement of the scooter utilized by Standard Parking. The scooter now being utilized is old and it is difficult to find parts and to repair. Mr. Gagnon stated that a pick-up truck would be a replacement for the scooter and remaining funds could be utilized to replace the aging sweeper.

Mr. Campbell requested that Saturday enforcement be expanded through the 500 block of Central Avenue. Spaces in this area are being utilized by long-term parkers on the weekends. Mr. Gagnon stated he would expand the patrol area.

Mr. Campbell asked about parking being created with the new Public Drug building.

Mr. Brown asked what is happening with regard to the Rocky Mountain Building. Ms. Thomas stated that she has a series of meetings set with Set Free.

Mr. Kiser asked about the standard street width requirement is for Central Avenue. Is it possible to replace the parallel parking with angle parking to increase parking downtown. Ms. Thomas shared the drawing provided by public works. The Commission asked that staff again follow up with Public Works to get the street width requirement.

Public Comment

Mr. Alley asked about daily access to the South Parking garage. Mr. Gagnon stated that this facility is now used only for monthly parking.

There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 4:09 p.m.