

GREAT FALLS PARKING ADVISORY COMMISSION
Minutes of May 20, 2013

The Parking Advisory Commission meeting was called to order by Darren Brown at 3:00 p.m. in the Rainbow Room of the Civic Center.

Members Present: Chuck Fulcher, Darren Brown, David Campbell

Members Absent: Heidi Propp

Staff Present: Jana Cooper, Planner II

Others Present: Tena Grigsby, Standard Parking; Joan Redeen, BID

Meeting Minutes: Mr. Brown asked if there were any changes to the April 15, 2013 meeting minutes. Mr. Campbell made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Fulcher seconded, and all being in favor, the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Item 1. Capital Needs Assessment Update

- a. Exit Signs – Ms. Grigsby said only one exit sign has yet to be installed, and the City electrician is aware it needs to be done.
- b. Pigeon netting – Ms. Grigsby said she thought the purchase of pigeon netting was put on hold due to the purchase of new handheld devices.

Item 2. Display windows in South Garage

Mr. Brown said it had been discussed in the past that there were leaks in ceiling drywall in the display windows, which caused the windows to fog up. There had been discussion about having volunteers put up mesh. Ms. Cooper will follow up.

Item 3. Update on Lot #3

Ms. Cooper said she has not heard anything in the past month from Mr. Jim Kiser with the Great Falls Rescue Mission on negotiations for Lot #3.

Item 4. PAC Member Terms (Mr. Campbell and Mr. Fulcher)

Mr. Brown congratulated Mr. Campbell and Mr. Fulcher on their reappointments to the Parking Advisory Commission (PAC). He noted that PAC is short one board member, and Ms. Redeen is working on recruiting someone.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Monthly Revenue & Expense Reports (4/2013)

PAC members reviewed the financial reports and there was no discussion.

2. Lot #4 Repairs/Design

Ms. Cooper said that when Lot #4 was being repaired, the original sink hole turned out to be a vault and had to be filled in. She said it cost a little more than originally expected and was about \$1,500 for the repairs.

Wayfinding signage was briefly discussed. Ms. Cooper said that item is on hold at the moment due to possible changes in the parking contract in the future. Ms. Redeen said it had also been put on hold while the Downtown Access and Circulation Study was being done, and the hope now is that the Downtown Development Partnership might handle wayfinding and include the parking program. Mr. Campbell noted that there is no visible signage, for instance, that Lot #4 is a public parking lot.

Mr. Campbell noted that parking meter poles on the northeast corner of downtown have orange stripes on them to identify them for the parking permit program. He asked if the public knows that the permits are for sale. Ms. Grigsby said attendants have been promoting them. Mr. Brown said the local television stations have been good about getting the word out on parking information and suggested someone contact them. Mr. Campbell said he had envisioned vinyl wrap-arounds that might say, "permit allowed." Ms. Grigsby said that since it is a trial, the former Deputy Director of P&CD wanted more flexibility. She also said that she has received comments that people want to park in areas other than what the current permit allows.

Ms. Redeen made a request to Ms. Grigsby that Standard Parking staff not use certain weed control products around the trees because it kills the trees. Ms. Grigsby noted that irrigation lines had been accidentally cut when some of the trees were planted, which caused some trees to die, and those lines are now repaired.

3. Purchases: Library Pay Station Purchases & Handhelds

Ms. Cooper said three handhelds are being ordered at a cost of \$9,319. She said the new Library pay station is on hold per the City Manager, who has requested more information about how long it will take to pay off the equipment. She said she is going to talk to the Library about splitting the cost of the equipment, and she needs to contact the provider about the possible purchase. Ms. Cooper said this company will not lease a pay station. Mr. Brown asked about whether the handhelds were able to be upgraded, and suggested she check into that before purchasing. Ms. Cooper said she would, and will provide an update on the pay station at the next PAC meeting.

4. Passport Parking

Ms. Grigsby said the fee for credit card transactions on the Passport Parking program is \$.35 per use. That is in addition to the \$.25 per use fee charged by the company providing the program. She said gross revenue for April for the program was \$58.75. The company provided \$1.50 validations for customer use to promote the program, but she has only seen one validation come in. The company's fee on the gross was \$14.50 before credit card fees. Credit card fees were \$22.30, and therefore, total revenue for the City was \$25.45.

Mr. Campbell asked how many actual hours of parking the \$25 paid for. He said that if the number of parking hours was \$25 worth, and the rest of the fees are paid by the customer, the program is still okay. Ms. Cooper asked if there was any increase in use over time. Ms. Grigsby said there were 51 transactions the first month, and 58 transactions in April. So far through May 17, there have been 28 transactions. She clarified that the credit card transaction fees are not paid by the customer. However, there is a minimum \$.50 use per customer to break even with the program. Ms. Cooper said she spoke with an agent for the company and he is willing to extend the pilot program and possibly add another 100 meters to the program district. Discussion followed about the difference between a pilot program and a permanent program. Ms. Cooper said she thought the only difference would be having a permanent sticker on the meters with a permanent program. She suggested passing the \$.35 transaction fee for credit cards on to the customer. She said she has a phone call appointment with the company on

June 7, and will ask questions about passing along fees. The company has stated that there are new and repeat users in Great Falls with the program as it moves along. There was discussion about the value and convenience of the program, and passing along all fees to customers. Ms. Cooper asked if PAC would approve a 3-month extension of the pilot program, passing fees on to customers, and adding 100 meters to the program district. All agreed to Ms. Cooper's request.

5. Shop Til You Drop Postcard

Ms. Cooper reviewed the Shop til You Drop program, which began in 2011. The City provided 2 hours of free parking to visitors, and local groups paid for the printing on the postcards for the program. She said they were almost out of the postcards, and with all the groups being in support of the program, they are printing 3,500 additional postcards. Ms. Grigsby said that local hotels and motels that use the program need to make sure the cards are filled out correctly or otherwise the card is not valid and a citation can be issued. There were a few instances of misuse of the cards. Mr. Campbell asked if there is a way to place the name of the hotel issuing the card on the card itself. Ms. Cooper said the Visitor Center had called for more cards, and PAC members noted that only hotels should be issuing the cards. Ms. Redeen said to pass cards along to Karen, as the Lodging Association meets once a month and she can distribute them there. Cards were printed at the Printing Center for \$188 and should be available next week.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Fulcher motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Campbell. The meeting adjourned at 3:29 p.m.