



MEMO

TO: Great Falls Parking Advisory Commission, Great Falls City Commission
FROM: Lee Nellis, Deputy Director, Planning and Community Development
DATE: June 19, 2014

RE: Comments on Courtesy Parking Program

Staff sent a letter to all current participants in the Courtesy Parking program on May 29, 2014, asking for their thoughts. This memo conveys the responses received to date.

Via Telephone

Vicki at the Daily Grind, would like to keep her spaces. 6/5/14

Email, attached

from Steve Erwin at Erwin Insurance, a series of emails beginning on 6/3/14
from Stevi Phillips at First American Title, 6/4/14
from Lorie Hager at the Wendt Agency, 6/10/14

Letters, attached

from Holly Benson at JM Grain. 6/6/14
from Susan Cline at Susan Cline Insurance LLC, 6/10/14

Lee Nellis

From: Stevi Phillips [sPhillips@gofirstam.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2014 10:18 AM
To: Lee Nellis
Subject: Courtesy Parking

Good Morning Lee, I received your letter on the proposed changes to the Courtesy Parking Meters. I do not like the idea of tokens for the meters. With our type of business it would not work well for us to have our customers running back out to put tokens in the meters, it would be a huge inconvenience to them. And I don't have the staffing to be able to have someone running out and plugging the meters all the time. I believe this would end up with us paying a lot of parking tickets for our customers. Along with that I really don't like the thought of paying over \$800 a year for our 2 spaces. I guess I don't know what the answer is but if it is costing the City \$1400.00 per year in billing I would be willing to pay a year at a time with a slight increase to off set the costs. Please let me know when this issue will be discussed and I will try to make the meeting.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to participate in this situation!

Stevi

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Stevi Phillips
Vice President / Manager



*First American
Title Company*

110 2nd Street South, Great Falls, MT 59401
Phone: 406.761.8796 | Cell: 406.217.7255 | Fax: 406.453.1070

 **PLACE AN ORDER**

 **TOOLS**

100 1st Ave. South, P.O. Box 3186
Great Falls, Montana 59403
Voice 406-268-1028
Fax 612-435-4868
www.jmgrain.com



6 June 2014

City of Great Falls
Planning and Community Development Dept.
Lee Nellis, FAICP
Deputy Director

Lee Nellis,

JM Grain in conjunction with Wendt Agency and DOWL HKM Engineering share the use of two courtesy parking spaces on the 100 block of 1st Ave South. Wendt has shared with me your letter of May 29, 2014 regarding the proposed replacement of the courtesy parking program with a parking token program.

From JM Grains prospective we would very much like to see the courtesy parking program retained. As merchants, we have a very personal connection with our clients that we feel would be strained by the parking token program. Our reason for applying for the courtesy parking was to facilitate positive business relationships. The courtesy parking program has gifted unmeasurable goodwill by eliminating unnecessary stress for our clients such as required coins or proposed tokens, saving them steps/time in their and our busy day. I have not found the privilege abused by those making use of the courtesy parking spaces.

A significant leak in revenues is imperative to address in any business and solutions found to put books back in the black. I propose that the city consider billing for courtesy parking on a yearly basis rather than monthly to cut administrative expenses. We would find a courtesy parking rate increase to meet the actual expected level metering those spaces would provide as an acceptable option to the parking token program. In my limited financial acumen I also question the expense that will be incurred with the minting of tokens and the administrative expense required to distribute and track their usage. The token program would also place an extra burden on my valuable time in procuring the tokens and their distribution.

Please share my comments in their entirety with the Parking Advisory Commission and City Commission.

I appreciate the opportunity to share my views with the Commission members who have the task of guiding our fine city to maintain the highest fiduciary standards.

Kind regards,

Holly Benson
JM Grain, Inc.

Lee Nellis

From: Steve Erwin [steve@7613300.com]
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2014 10:37 AM
To: Lee Nellis
Subject: FW: Courtesy Parking - 117 1st Ave N

Sorry Lee, I see that my email might not have made sense. My reference to the more expensive option for us is the monthly fee, but that we were willing to go that way given the convenience for our clients.

Thanks again for your interest.

Steve

From: Steve Erwin
Sent: Thursday, June 05, 2014 11:29 AM
To: 'Lee Nellis'
Subject: RE: Courtesy Parking - 117 1st Ave N

Thanks for your response Lee... yes we would use the tokens. As I mentioned, that system would be expensive for us, but we were willing to pay the monthly fee because it is nice to have the spot available for our clients.

Steve

From: Lee Nellis [mailto:lnellis@greatfallsmt.net]
Sent: Tuesday, June 03, 2014 11:22 AM
To: Steve Erwin
Cc: Craig Raymond
Subject: RE: Courtesy Parking - 117 1st Ave N

Thanks for writing, Steve. We sincerely are trying to get to the best solution. Your courtesy space is somewhat atypical and I hear what you are saying about your situation. My question back is, since you were plugging the meter for your clients before, would tokens that you could obtain at a discount work for your situation?

We have enough different opinions from different people on this topic that we're going to take it to a public hearing. Should be interesting.

From: Steve Erwin [mailto:steve@7613300.com]
Sent: Tuesday, June 03, 2014 10:36 AM
To: Lee Nellis
Subject: Courtesy Parking - 117 1st Ave N

Lee,

In regards to your May 29th letter concerning our courtesy space, I think the city should base their decision on what is most fiscally responsible.

In our case, the \$240 annual fee for the space will be considerably more than you will collect in tokens should you revert to that system. Prior to getting the courtesy space, we plugged the meter for our customers and probably spent no more than \$1-\$2 per week. The space is rarely used by other than clients visiting our office.

We would continue the space if the fee stays the same, and would be willing to pay a year in advance if that helped alleviated the billing costs. We would not however, continue the space if the cost were raised to \$400 per year.

Best Regards,

Steve

Steve Erwin
Erwin Insurance, Inc.
117 1st Avenue North
Great Falls, MT 59401
steve@7613300.com
www.761-3300.com
(406) 761-3300 Office
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Lee Nellis

From: Lorie Hager [lhager@wendtagency.com]
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2014 4:17 PM
To: Lee Nellis
Subject: Courtesy Parking

Attn: Lee Nellis

I represent one of three tenants in the building located on the corner of 1st Avenue South and Park Drive. Our three businesses currently share the cost of two courtesy parking slots on 1st Ave South. These parking spaces have become invaluable to our businesses especially with the addition of a great new restaurant on our block. We are unanimous in our request that the courtesy parking program be maintained. Much of our daily business traffic consists of quick visits to pick up or drop items off, so having our courtesy spaces close and limited to 30 minutes or less promotes easy access.

You suggested a discounted "parking token" program. This program would not work for us as our visitors are not always the same people and I couldn't imagine asking them to walk a block or more to see us, then give them a token to walk back, put in the meter and return again.

If monthly costs must increase to support the continuation of the courtesy parking program as is, then we will comply.
Thank you,
Lorie Hager

THE WENDT AGENCY

Lorie Hager, CPA
Chief Financial Officer
406.454.8500
thewendtagency.com





As per the letter you sent
out about the Courtesy
parking. It would be
OK if you raised the
monthly fee to \$33. My
clients all think it is a
nice feature. They are
all from out of town and
end up getting a ticket
because they are not
used to paying parking.
Please consider keeping
the Courtesy parking and
raise the monthly fee.
Sue Cline

SUSAN CLINE INSURANCE LLC.

8 5TH ST N
GREAT FALLS, MT 59401

2370

93-524/929
54

DATE 6-5-14

FRAUDARMOR

THE
ER OF City of Great Falls \$ 20⁰⁰
twenty dollars and ^{no} 100 DOLLARS

S Stockman Bank

25 5th Street North - PO Box 2327 - Great Falls, MT 59403
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Susan Cline

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