

GREAT FALLS PARKING ADVISORY COMMISSION
Minutes of July 18, 2016

The Parking Advisory Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Bill Mintsiveris at 3:02 p.m. in the Planning and Community Development Conference Room of the Civic Center.

Members Present: Bill Mintsiveris, Dave Campbell, Kenny Volk

Members Absent: Chuck Fulcher, Dave Snuggs

Staff Present: Craig Raymond, Director P&CD; Tom Micuda, Deputy Director, P&CD; Connie Tryon, Sr. Admin Assistant, P&CD

Others Present: Tracy Houck, City Commissioner; Tena Grigsby, Standard Parking; Joan Redeen, BID; Jenn Rowell, Great Falls Tribune; Brad Livingston, Chamber of Commerce

Meeting Minutes: Mr. Campbell motioned to approve the minutes of the June 20th meeting. Mr. Volk seconded. All being in favor, the motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Volk asked about the Kenco estimate for security at the parking garages. He discussed other security systems that he had dealt with in the past and different companies that offer security.

NEW BUSINESS

Item 1. Next Parking Contract RFP Review

The group discussed the 2010 Parking Contract and what changes could be made for the upcoming contract. Standard Parking is responsible for general maintenance in the parking garages but bills the City of Great Falls for any maintenance. Enforcement in Lot 3 will no longer be necessary as it is not owned by the City of Great Falls. Daily enforcement in the surface lots could be reduced, as well as hours spent in overall enforcement in the parking district. Automating the surface lots would decrease time spent on enforcement.

There was discussion regarding parking fees. Commissioner Houck discussed the possibility of implementing seasonal fee schedules like ones used in other parking districts around the State. Implementation of different fee schedules and time limits would be easier with electronic systems, but with an increased initial cost. Mr. Raymond would like to include specific improvements in the RFP to aid in implementation of electronic systems for the parking program.

Mr. Volk questioned the rate increases that were approved in December 2014. Rates in the lots and parking garages increased while the fee schedule for parking citations was restructured. Those changes have not generated a substantial increase in revenue. Courtesy parking citations have been well-received from a consumer view but not from a revenue-generating standpoint. Monthly rates in the parking garages are not high enough to maintain the garages.

Commissioner Houck believes the parking contractor should have the ability to negotiate parking fees and rates.

Mr. Micuda questioned the feasibility of extended enforcement times. Mr. Campbell said there are a few areas when extended enforcement times would be beneficial but not in the entire parking district. Commissioner Houck believes the City is missing out on potential revenue by not requiring people to pay for parking in areas such as Gibson Park, or for special events in the downtown area after 5pm.

Item 2. Mr. Campbell's Suggestions

Mr. Raymond feels that education for the public regarding way-finding and monthly rates will only bring positive feedback and experiences. Mr. Mintsiveris agreed, and said that a graphic fee schedule of all parking fees, including where to buy the permits, should be posted at each surface lot and at the garages. Ms. Redeen stated the production of a brochure to include a map of the downtown parking district, as well as metered and non-metered locations, could also be a helpful educating tool.

Mr. Campbell feels that the difference in fees between the garages and the surface lots should be narrowed. By getting more people to pay monthly fees for the garages rather than the lots, revenue can be increased while decreasing enforcement times; enforcement is easier in the garages than the surface lots. Mr. Volk agreed that the volume based approach would be more competitive and increase revenue.

Item 3. Mr. Snuggs' Suggestions

Mr. Mintsiveris does not believe increasing time limits in varied areas throughout downtown is a good idea. The group feels varied time limits would only create confusion. A two hour time limit would ideally drive people to use the parking garages in order to be downtown for longer periods of time without receiving parking citations. Enforcement after 5pm was discussed, with Mr. Mintsiveris stating he is opposed to extended enforcement. Mr. Raymond stated issuing citations related to enforcement after 5pm would greatly increase revenues.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Raymond stated that he would make changes to the RFP for the parking management contract to make it more relevant to what is going on with the parking program at this time. The budget shortfall will not be remedied by small changes in the contract. The improvements that have been discussed will help, but in no way will they cover the deficits in the parking program.

The next meeting will be August 15th, 2016 at 3pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:34 p.m.