



**Parking & Transportation Committee meeting minutes**  
**July 26, 2017 at 9:00am**  
**549 Congress St.**

**Board members Present:** Phil Haughey (MHR Management), Kim Volk (Aurora Financial), Anastasia Contos (Top of the Old Port Parking) on phone, Mike McDonald (North River), Peter Tousignant (Northland Enterprises)

**Others:** Sarah Cushman (Cushman Consulting) on phone, Dawn Tully (volunteer), Todd Dominiski (East Brown Cow), John McDevitt (Harbor Landing)

**Staff present:** Casey Gilbert, Taffy Eaton, Amy Geren

**Minute 1.** Phil Haughey opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and asked for introductions.

**Minute 2.** Review and approve June 28, 2017 minutes: Mike McDonald made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Kim Volk seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

**Minute 3.** Update on technology upgrade by City of Portland Parking Department: Phil moved this item to the August meeting since John Peverada is attending a parking conference.

**Minute 4.** Park & Work program updated parameters review: Amy

- Amy reviewed the 2 redline historical Park & Work documents. Discussion:
  - Phil believes this is an important program and deserves this committees' attention. Amy has done a good explaining the purpose of the program at the booklet point of sale, which discourages people from purchasing the books that might not be in compliance with the program requirements (low wage earner, part-time worker, or volunteer)
  - How do we provide affordable downtown parking for low wage earners, not specifically through the Park & Work program? This will be discussed with the Multi-Modal Marketing campaign.
  - Casey envisions purchasers sign a "contract" saying they know the parameters of the program and will honor them.
  - Amy pointed out the limited nature of participating garages – only the 2 City owned garages. Both Spring & Elm Street garages are often full, allowing monthly parkers only. Kim asked what it would take financially for other garages to sign on to the program. Phil commented that the monthly parker wait-lists, as well as varied technology in the garages make that idea untenable.
  - Casey suggested that Portland Downtown consider partnering with METRO to offer free or discounted bus passes. Perhaps Portland Downtown could assist in funding such a program, as it is in-line with the committee's desire to implement programs to help reduce congestion and encourage multi-modal transportation. Kim suggested METRO attend the next meeting, as they had in the past.
  - Sarah mentioned the available Federal Transit Subsidy. Employers can set it up for employees to purchase passes pre-tax. The program has employee benefits as well as benefits to the bottom line for the employer. Most employers are not aware of the program and struggle with setting it up. Could Portland Downtown and METRO work together to simplify the process? Sarah will send information to Casey.

- Kim mentioned that the City opened up Angelo's Acres on Commercial Street to offer lower priced parking for downtown employees. It is currently heavily used by visitors also, limiting the access for downtown workers. Should the parking time limit be reduced from 8 days to 1 day to encourage more availability for downtown workers? Ask City to revisit.
- Kim asked the committee whether it seems reasonable to raise the booklet price for Park & Work stickers. Should we invite someone from the City's Transportation committee to attend a future meeting?
- What is the demographic of the late afternoon/evening downtown employee? Mostly restaurant workers and their shifts often end after the garages close, so they mostly use street parking. Todd mentioned that the Fore Street garage offers a half-price after-hours rate. Cars must leave the garage by 8:00am. Very few users have taken advantage of the reduced price after-hours.

In conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

- a) Park & Work booklet price increase to \$100. Phil added that the program should be cost neutral for Portland Downtown. Anastasia commented that \$100 might be difficult for an individual to come up with. Casey assured the committee that it is mostly store or business owners that purchase the booklets and offer the stamps to their employees or volunteers as a benefit.
- b) Require a signed contract for program users. Sarah agreed that a written commitment card is effective.
- c) Add the updated program parameters to outreach materials:
  - i. Add to the Fact Sheet: "Part-time workers, low-wage earners and volunteers"
  - ii. Todd suggested we also add METRO bus pass information. Casey will reach out to Greg at METRO prior to the committee finalizing the new material.

**Minute 5. Downtown Beautification update:** Casey described the current banners, planters and benches that contribute to the beauty of downtown. City Manager Jon Jennings suggested adding hanging baskets in a public/private partnership with Portland Downtown. Portland Downtown could purchase the hardware and baskets. The City could purchase and plant the plants and maintain the baskets. Casey researched brackets and hanging baskets and found several options. One style would cost about \$350.00 per light pole. Amy and Casey will take a pole inventory and identify areas that would benefit from the baskets.

Funding: The Park & Shop account has \$68,000 in it. The Parking & Transportation recommendation letter committed \$25,000 towards implementation strategies. \$15,000 is slated for the Multi-modal marketing campaign. We safely have \$20,000 available for other projects, outside of those identified in the recommendation letter. This committee will decide whether to recommend using available Park & Shop funds for this project. Casey will report back on City funding also.

- This model is based on Don Shoup's idea of a Parking Benefit District. All the people who paid into the Park & Shop program will benefit visually from the long-term sustainable beautification.
- A question was asked about possible vandalism to the baskets. Amy will double check with Tommy Higgins about whether there was any vandalism to the Free Street hanging baskets in the past.
- Are there other options beside hanging baskets? Todd suggested talking to Jeff Tarling about adding trees instead of covering over empty tree wells. Amy mentioned the City Arborist said that urban trees don't have long lives. ADA compliance has also deterred tree planting. Tree planting has been focused in locations where there is room for good pedestrian flow and room to plow round them. Amy added that curbing changes for METRO on the Congress Street corridor are coming which might allow for more tree planting.

**Minute 6. Status of the Fort Hill Parking Study meeting with Casey:**

Casey went to the presentation to City staff by Fort Hill Consultants. The report has not been finalized. By the August 23<sup>rd</sup> committee meeting, Casey hopes to have the final study in hand. Phil asked whether Don Shoup's students' reports will be included. Casey said that one study was sent to Fort Hill but Casey is unsure whether the suggestions will be taken into consideration in the consultants' final report. Casey reported that the City Manager is exploring whether the City of Portland could be a test site for autonomous vehicles, such as the Olli bus.

**Minute 7. Other business:**

- GoMaine commuter challenge: Amy met with Rebecca Grover with the Maine Department of Transportation. Rebecca describes the challenge as Match.com for commuters! She runs this challenge each October by matching up like-size businesses. This committee thinks it would be beneficial to be involved. Sarah explained that she was hired to work on the challenge. It will be multi-modal focused. GoMaine just launched an app for iPhone users which needs more exploring. They are hoping for more reviews of the program also. Casey will ask Rebecca to have a digital presentation of the app at the August meeting.
- The Multi-modal video will be shown next month also

**Next meeting:** Wednesday August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00am

Phil adjourned the meeting at 10:03.

Respectfully submitted,  
Taffy Eaton, Recorder