



Ted Zeller – Chairperson  
Santo Napoli – Vice Chairperson  
Daryl Hendricks – Secretary  
Bina Patel – Treasurer  
Yamilett Gomez - Member  
John N. Morgan – Executive Director  
Dan McCarthy, Davison McCarthy – APA Solicitor

## **ALLENTOWN PARKING AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Allentown Parking Authority Board of Directors was held at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 26, 2023, at the Office of the Allentown Parking Authority, located at 603 W. Linden Street, Allentown, PA 18101.

The following attended:

Ted Zeller – Chairperson  
Santo Napoli – Vice Chairperson  
Daryl Hendricks – Secretary  
Bina Patel – Treasurer  
Yamilett Gomez - Member  
Dan McCarthy – APA Solicitor  
John Morgan – Executive Director  
Jon Haney – Deputy Director  
Christina Dayton – Deputy Director (Absent)  
Jill Fessler – Finance Manager  
Jayme Adams – Minutes

Guests:

Zachary Sienicki, (City Center)  
Jennifer Dalrymple (City Center)  
Captain Alicia Conjour (APD)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Zeller called the meeting to order at 12:13pm.

### **APPROVAL OF THE JUNE MINUTES**

Mr. Hendricks made a motion to approve the June minutes. Mr. Napoli seconded the motion. The Board voted and approved the June minutes.

### **COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

Mr. Zeller offers Courtesy of the Floor ahead of schedule due to the attendance of guests. Mr. Sienicki of City Center wants to follow up on their new memo of understanding regarding Spiral Deck and Community Deck which reflects everything previously discussed. Mr. Morgan confirms that it is a legal matter that will be discussed in the Executive Session. Mr. Sienicki has one other item regarding complaints City Center receives from mutual customers. He mentions that he and Mr. Haney have

had an open dialogue regarding this matter. The concern is around the functioning of the equipment. There are currently weekly complaints, usually about 1-2. As monthly parking is expected to grow, this malfunction is a perceived concern to City Center. City Center has thrown out some ideas and is interested in working with the Allentown Parking Authority to resolve these issues. Mr. Zeller points out that the equipment in those garages is brand new. Mr. Sienicki states that their ideas revolve around having a backup to offer monthly partners a way out of the deck when License Parking Recognition (LPR) fails. Mr. Zeller inquires if the 1-2 failures per week has been consistent, and Mr. Sienicki says that they have only been tracking for the last 2-3 months. Discussion continues between Mr. Zeller and Mr. Haney regarding the nuances of user error that can occur causing LPR to not work at times. Mr. Haney's approach has been to address this on a one on one basis and assist users. For example, if a bike rack is obstructing the view of the license plate, the LPR will not be able to read the plate. Mr. Napoli speaks up that he has a printed copy of his QR code in his visor as a back up and has proven very effective. Mr. Napoli mentions the value of having troubleshooting education available. Mr. Haney takes a closer look at the numbers – roughly 56 issues out of 30,000, and states that we do follow up on these issues that occur and are constantly seeking improvement. Most LPR systems claim 95-98% accuracy. There is room for error. The Authority investigates errors and adjusts accordingly. Mr. Haney discusses issues noticed with the Bluetooth “slide to open” capability that the flash system has in the Park Whiz App. The Authority is considering removing this option from within the app. More discussion circles back to the backup plan or tips and tricks options we can explore to resolve the concerns Mr. Sienicki has raised. Mr. Zeller asks Mr. Haney if he can send some tips to Mr. Sienicki and he states that he will. More discussion occurs between Mr. Haney and Mr. Sienicki regarding the nuances of LPR in City Center and Allentown Parking Authority decks. Mr. Zeller asks if anyone else has any comments for Courtesy of the Floor. No one does and Mr. Zeller offers Mr. Morgan the floor for the Executive Director's Report.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Morgan updates on construction projects:

Spiral Deck repairs are underway and expected to be completed by October 1<sup>st</sup>. We are in phase 4 of this project. We are re-doing work that was done 5 years ago that was not completed as it should have been.

The North Lot has a crew working on sink holes / settling from previous foundations (par for the course with the history of lot construction in Allentown, as stated by Mr. McCarthy).

Mr. Morgan continues that the Type Street Sidewalk by Community Deck collapsed due to PPL continuously parking line trucks on the sidewalk. This was reported by City Center to Allentown Parking Authority. The parking of PPL trucks occurs a couple times per month. Our engineer, Mr. Young, is working on an estimate to repair it. Mr. Morgan is working on getting permissions from the city to get a barrier preventing vehicles from driving or parking on it. Discussion ensues about what kind of barrier may be applicable to this situation.

Lastly, Mr. Morgan states that the water company excavated around the Maple Street Deck to work on a water leak and left a hole in the sidewalk. The assumption is they will return to fill it but in the meantime there is a wide open pit in the brand new sidewalk.

## **JUNE ENFORCEMENT RESULTS/PUBLIC RELATIONS TRAINING**

Mr. Haney goes over enforcement numbers.

Double parking on 7<sup>th</sup> street area of focus: 8 tickets issued in the month of June. 3 less than June bringing our total to 637 issued this year.

Double parking on Hamilton Street area of focus: 7 tickets issued in the month of June. 5 more tickets were issued than previous month bringing out total to 105 for the year.

There were 322 accounts of horn usage in June.

Allentown Parking Authority assisted in 2 stolen vehicle recoveries.

Dispatch received 1212 calls for service in the month of June. Th yearly total is 7,112 calls.

Mr. Morgan congratulates Mrs. Gomez on going on a ride-a-long with our Enforcement Assistant Manager, Ms. Cohen. Mrs. Gomez speaks to her experience. In summary, she did not realize how many violations could have been given. The equipment is good. Her initial reason for joining the board has shifted. She now realizes that The Allentown Parking Authority is only enforcing what they have to do and that we as a community have to do better with registrations, inspections, and parking. It became obvious to Mrs. Gomez that registration is a huge issue as she witnessed vehicles with no plates, cars parked in clearly marked no parking areas, and streets being blocked. Mrs. Gomez made a Facebook post about her feelings about the Allentown Parking Authority not abusing their power and how everyone in the community needs to do their part in being responsible. Mr. Morgan inquires about the public's treatment of us. Mrs. Gomez had positive feedback about the way in which Ms. Cohen conducted herself in the presence of belligerent citizens and was able to deescalate situations and stay respectful while still doing her job and issuing necessary violations. Discussion between Mrs. Gomez and Mr. Hendricks continues about the safety issues with illegal parking and blocking streets. Mrs. Gomez speaks about her surprise in hearing that only 7 tickets being issued this month on 7<sup>th</sup> street as she witnesses constant double parking on 7<sup>th</sup> street. Mr. Hendricks mentions the public safety risk this imposes. Mr. Zeller states we used to average 100 double parking tickets per month. The horn has decreased tickets exponentially and the problem remains the same. Discussion will be revisited with city council about how to best enforce this area. Mr. Napoli speaks to ways to communicate and help people find success in following ordinances, such as offering a link to online registration on our website.

Mr. Haney reports on public relations training. We have now completed that training with our maintenance staff. Customer service and enforcement had already completed it. That brings the majority of our staff into a complete status with that training. Mr. Zeller inquires if we have determined a cadence of repeating that training. Discussions around that will occur in the executive session. Mr. Haney continues that we have scheduled a training session with International Parking and Mobility Institute's senior trainer, Cindy Campbell, who will conduct 2 training sessions with the majority of our staff at the Americus Hotel. Mrs. Gomez will be attending the training as well.

The Automotus Project (cameras being installed to collect data for loading zones) is on hold. Enforcement manager, Mr. Tosado, was on site with a representative from the traffic department and a member of Automotus. They walked the beats and identified areas. We have been informed that the city is not supportive of the project, are refusing to allow camera installations for this purpose, they will not pay for electricity, and will not permit installation on traffic poles. Mr. Morgan states it is the executive branch of the city that is objecting to this project. He continues that we can calculate the electricity and pay bulk for a year in advance. Mr. Hendricks says that he will look into the denial of this project. The purpose of this program is to identify data who is parking in loading zones and how long they stay. The project is at a standstill unless or until something changes.

Mr. Haney goes on to reveal a concern that was brought to the Allentown Parking Authority from a City Council member regarding kiosks in residential areas. A question was brought about regarding placement of meters and kiosks. Mr. Hendricks and Mr. Haney have discussed that perhaps a study should be done about the need for meters on various blocks and if it is a good time to do so. Mr. Haney reached out to a contact in the industry, Walker Consultants, explaining to them what is going

on. They gave us a proposal which Mr. Haney will give to the City Council to determine if they want to move forward with that as it is their jurisdiction to determine what blocks are metered. The Allentown Parking Authority is happy to offer insight and cooperate with this operation. Mr. Haney expresses how the needs of the city have changed and such a study could offer insight about necessary meter placement. The base price for the proposal with Walker Consultants is \$40,000 but does not include travel, equipment, etc. Mr. Hendricks weighs in that he feels the study proposal is a good and timely idea.

## **JUNE CUSTOMER APPEALS RESULTS**

Mr. Haney speaks on Ms. Dayton's behalf in her absence.

In June, there were 442 ticket appeals:

195 (44%) were found to be valid or upheld.

55 (12%) were dismissed.

192 (44%) reduced to a warning.

Overall, for the year there is a 53% dismissal rate while 47% are upheld.

Now that we've had consistency with our internal appeals program, Mr. Zeller's next question is if the district justice's noticing and reduction in their dockets. Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Santo express ideas about reaching out to them to get this data as it is tracked and should be attainable. Mr. Zeller continues to express that he would like the District Justice to be contacted to let them know that we put this program in place and one of the factors was their dockets. We want to see if it's having an impact and also the messaging that we are trying to do something to clear up tickets that we can. Mr. Hendricks suggests that our Internal Appeals Specialist can go the each District Justice office and have a conversation with the publicly elected officials and ask for feedback on if they are hearing things any differently over the last 6 months that we've been running the appeals program.

Mr. Haney reveals our customer service data for the month of June:

1,657 phone calls

2313 customers were served at our office

372 pieces of returned mail

Lastly, Mr. Haney announces that September 15<sup>th</sup> International Parking Day will be celebrated on Linden Street in front of our office.

## **JUNE FINANCE REPORT**

Total revenue for the month of June was \$926,550 (17% below budget). YTD total revenue was \$6,547,076 (2% below budget). Operating revenue was \$883,669 (20% below budget). YTD operating revenue was \$6,397,851 (4% below budget). Enforcement revenue contributed \$557,177 (29% below budget) and Off-Street, Events, and Customer Service contributed \$326,493 (1% above budget). Non-operating revenue was \$42,880 (319% above budget)

Total operating expenses for the month of June were \$662,650 (12% below budget). YTD operating expenses were \$3,812, 123 (15% below budget). For the month, personnel costs were \$486,090 (13%

below budget). Services and charges were \$166,062 (4% below budget), and materials and supplies were \$10,497 (40% below budget).

For the month of June, total revenue exceeded total expenses by \$263,900 (28% below budget). After transfers to capital, the City and the debt service fund, the general operating fund shows a loss of \$68,915.

Overall, for the six-month period ending June 2023, total revenue exceeded total expenses by \$2,734,953 (24% above budget). After transfers to capital, the City and the debt service fund, the excess for the period is \$436,625.

The total cost to date for the Maple Street Garage is \$24,723,639.

Mr. Zeller speaks to the budget. In September, 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of last year, we got significant technological advances that caused enforcement numbers to jump at least 25%. The total year this year was based upon that quarter as opposed to the whole year. When that happened, enforcement rose as did community angst. We've backed off as a result and are seeing that in the numbers. Dials in various ways need to continue to be examined and adjusted to find the proper balance.

Mr. Zeller continues that the mayor's initiative to do a study on our performance levels. Compared to other cities, our ticket rates are significantly below. Despite that, we are still meeting budgets and employing people, which are all good things.

Mr. Napoli chimes in that the CAPP award being held by members of our enforcement is significant.

Mr. Morgan adds that Urban Land Institute recently issued us an award for the redesign of the Allentown Transportation Deck.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Coming out of executive session Mr. Zeller summaries discussions were around legal claims, employment matters, hiring, and parking contracts.

Mr. Zeller makes a motion to authorize John Morgan to execute a declaration of restrictions in convenience in property 920 W Maple Street Allentown PA for purposes of maintaining compliance with the individual national pollutions discharge elimination systems permit. Mr. Napoli seconds the motion. The motion is passed.

Mr. Napoli makes a motion regarding a real estate matter involving Community Deck, Walnut Street Commons, and 520 Hamilton License Agreement allowing John Morgan to move forward taking action with City Center regarding these agreements and taking action regarding the Spiral Deck contract moving forward. Mr. Hendricks seconds the motion. Mr. Zeller abstains from the motion. The vote is 3-0 for the motion.

**This meeting was adjourned at 2:48 p.m.  
(Please note that Ms. Patel left at 2:30p.m.)**

The next Board Meeting will be held at 12:00pm on August 30, 2023  
at The Office of the Allentown Parking Authority (meeting venue subject to change).