

PARKING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Thursday, May 15, 2003
City Hall – Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Parking Committee meeting was called to order by City Manager John Bohenko at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: John P. Bohenko, City Manager
John Burke, Parking & Transportation Director
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director
Andrew Purgiel, City Auditor

City Councilor Alex Hanson, Chairman, absent.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Motion made by Steve Parkinson to accept the April 17, 2003 minutes of the Parking Committee. Seconded by Andrew Purgiel. Motion passed.

III. OLD BUSINESS:

(A) **Downtown Parking Validation Program** — Update on implementation presented at meeting – John Burke informed the committee that he had met with the Downtown Merchants Association yesterday and there was a lot of positive feedback to the proposed program. Approximately twenty businesses have already ordered the parking validation stamp booklets. The intent is to start the program the first week in June. The stamp booklets and door logo decals are now in production. City Manager Bohenko asked for regular updates and suggested leaving the item on the Committee Agenda for a couple of months.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

(A) **NHDOT Request to utilize area under Memorial Bridge for employee parking** – 4/11/03 letter attached – Steve Parkinson reviewed past history of this area under the bridge. The NHDOT had requested that the parking between the first couple of columns under the bridge be blocked off a few years ago because of the random parking and people getting blocked in. The NHDOT Bridge employees have used the area at the back wall of the bridge abutment for parking. At shift change all three Bridge Tenders have to come down from the bridge at once to move their cars for the three incoming people - which leaves the bridge unattended. NHDOT has

concerns with having all three employees off of the bridge at the same time because security issues. They are requesting that the guardrail that closes off the middle bay of parking be removed so that they can utilize the space for three parking spaces. They would bear all costs associated with opening the area up and would install a chain across the area to prevent public parking in the spaces.

John Burke asked if they were concerned about getting blocked in again as in the past. Steve Parkinson stated that the area in front could remain a posted no parking zone.

MOTION by Steve Parkinson to approve the NHDOT request for parking spaces under the Scott Avenue Bridge. Seconded by Andrew Purgiel. Motion passed.

- (B) **Omnibus Parking Ordinance April 20, 2002 to April 17, 2003** – Presented at meeting – John Burke reviewed actions and pilot programs from past year.

He first discussed the truck loading zones that were established in consultation with the Police Department. They have been in place for just under a one-year period and have worked very well. There are 11 truck loading zones currently around the downtown and there is a need for another on lower State Street.

4-hour parking was also increased along Bridge Street and in the lower end of the Bridge Street parking lot at the request of local businesses.

An additional 15-minute parking space was added on Deer Street at the request of Jardiniere.

There was a request for an additional 15-minute parking space at the Olde Mill Fish Market on Marcy Street, which has not been implemented yet and therefore should probably not be included in the Omnibus Ordinance this year. John Bohenko suggested waiting a year to see how the space works out.

Two taxi stands have been installed on Market Street on a trial basis. A survey is being conducted by the Parking & Transportation Division to determine taxi utilization. This survey will be brought to the June Taxi Commission meeting. Since the trial period will continue, this item will also not be included in the Omnibus Ordinance.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to suspend the rules to allow a member of the public to speak to the issue. Andrew Purgiel seconded. Motion passed.

Matt Giovanni, Owner of Breaking New Grounds stated that the two new taxi stands on Market Street are simply not being used. They are empty all day.

John Bohenko stated that this is something that is still being evaluated. It will be going to the Taxi Commission before coming back before the Committee.

Mr. Giovanni requested a couple of 15-minute parking spaces on Market Street in the vicinity of his store. John Bohenko suggested that he put this in a letter for the record and it will be put on the next Agenda.

John Burke noted that the two new 15-minute parking spaces on Congress Street at the Newstand Store will be installed shortly. He noted that this is another pilot that would be considered in next year's Omnibus Ordinance.

The last action relates to a penalty increase for parked in a no parking area. The rate increase would be from \$10.00 to \$20.00. This will be a separate Ordinance from the Omnibus since it deals with rates.

John Bohenko stated that Ordinance amendments should be prepared for the June 2nd City Council meeting dealing with the truck loading zone program; the 4-hour zones on Bridge Street and the parking lot; and the 15-minute parking spaces on Deer Street. The public hearing will be June 16th.

All other actions, which have yet to be implemented, or have not had sufficient time for evaluation, will be included in the 2004 Omnibus Ordinance or past separately.

MOTION made by Andrew Purgiel to bring the proposed actions to the City Council in the Omnibus Ordinance as presented. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.

John Burke stated that the Pilot Validation Program and Valet Program will be evaluated during FY04.

- (C) **Resident complaint regarding 2-hour parking regulation** – 4/25/03 letter attached – John Burke stated there are two concerns expressed in the letter. The first is that the woman had received a parking ticket for parking 2 hrs. and 9 minutes in a 2-hour zone - after spending a considerable amount of money downtown. The person did not realize it was a 2-hour zone. The second issue expressed was that the woman does not use the parking garage because she feels less safe there than in an onstreet parking

space. With regard to the 2-hour limit, John had met with the Downtown Merchant Association and explained that the City had increased the amount of 4-hour parking spaces downtown to over 50 spaces. The meter poles are marked with blue tape and blue letter stating "4-HOUR". Also the street signs are posted to reflect the 4-hour zones on Russell Street, Deer Street, Bridge Street, and half of the Bridge St. parking lot.

One suggestion that came up is to make all of the Bridge Street and Wright Ave. parking lots 4-hour parking. This would make it easier to publicize and promote where the 4-hour parking is. John Burke stated that before this is done it would be necessary to speak with the businesses in the vicinity of these lots to determine customer needs.

The City Manager thought it would be a good idea to have longer term parking on all four corners of the downtown (i.e. High-Hanover Parking Facility, Bridge Street lot, Wright Ave. Lot and Parrott Ave. Lot. He recommended that John come back to the June meeting with more information for a recommendation.

MOTION by Steve Parkinson to contact the businesses near the Bridge St. and Wright Ave. parking lots to review the proposal to convert these lots to 4-hour parking zones and to bring this information back to the June meeting with a recommendation. Andrew Purgiel seconded. Motion passed.

John Bohenko stated that at the next meeting he would like to have the Police Department speak about the issue of security in the parking garage. He believes there is a misconception relative to safety. John Burke added that he would like to include a report on the many security enhancements that have been implemented at the garage in the last couple of years.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Steve Parkinson to adjourn. Andrew Purgiel seconded. Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:35 am

Respectfully submitted

Elaine E. Boucas, Secretary