

Parking Committee Meeting
March 7, 2024 5:30 PM

The parking committee met on March 7, at 530 PM. In attendance were Committee Chair Barbagallo, committee members Alderman McCann, Alderman McClure, Police Chief Kilkullen and DPW commissioner Provanski. Also in attendance were Mayor Doenges, President Talbot, Alderman Davis, Alderman Gilian, City attorney LaChance, City Treasurer Markowski, Officer Lozario. Various city employees, and members of the public.

Members of the public were first asked if they wished to comment on anything. Merchants from the downtown area expressed concerns about the increase in street parking prices. They said many of their customers were complaining to them also. The owners said because of the complaints it is making downtown an unpleasant place to work. Complaints varied from the cost to park, unable to use Park Mobile app for less than one hour and one complaint about being double charged on Park Mobile app. They tried to contact Park Mobile app and were unable to get the charges reversed. We told them to bring the complaint to the treasurer's office and they would take care of the problem. To date this is the only know case of this. We felt as with anything new a learning process will happen and it will not occur very often if at all in the future.

Currently street parking is now \$1.50 per hour. Using Park Mobile App you must get at least one hour to use the system. This cost is \$1.50 per hour plus a \$0.45 processing fee charged by the app. People were asking to be able to set less time using the app as some people do not need an hour. We explained these charges were only for street parking in the downtown area. Outer areas are cheaper but require a short walk to get to the downtown area. From early studies it is noted that Mobile app usage is going up and meter usage is going down. We also told the public that parking in the deck is only \$3.00 per day with the first 30 minutes free. Safety concerns were expressed by the public about parking in the deck. Police Chief Kilkullen stated we now have an officer stationed downtown all day. This had stopped for a while when there was a shortage of officers, but now it has restarted. The officer, when notified, can be at the problem site quickly. From the deck you can access Merchants Row through the Bloomer Building, Center St. through the passage across from the Paramount and West St. simply by walking out the front of the deck.

There are also long term parking lots downtown available for rent on a monthly basis. The rate is about \$35.00 per month. This does not guarantee where you will park in the lot. There are no assigned spots.

At the last meeting of the parking committee fines were raised to \$30 for the first violation. These new rates have not gone into effect yet. Fines are still \$15.00. We found out that in order to raise these rates we must refer this to the Charter and Ordinance Committee. A motion was made and passed to refer these new rates to Charter and Ordinance Committee for review and I so move.

Public Works Commissioner Provanski has reported that 205 new meters have been installed downtown and are working well. This should eliminate many of the problems customers have had parking. He also stated 53 meters have been retrofitted and are also in service. The kiosks are still a problem. New internal workings for these units are on back order but should be arriving in about 3 weeks. As soon as they arrive they will be installed. It was stated that part of the problem with the kiosks is that they jam up and need oiling. This is being done on a regular basis (At least once a week) and more if a problem develops. We are still short 67 meters and a suggestion was made to seek purchasing these. This was noted and will be taken up at a future meeting.

It was brought up that we need language for people parking at a broken meter spot to keep them from getting a ticket. Commissioner Provanski reported these new meters have 3 symbols on them. One for an active meter (Green) with time on it, one for an expired meter (Red) and one for a broken meter (Orange). This will help the downtown officer know if a meter is just expired or in trouble. It was also noted that in other cities you cannot park at a broken meter spot. A motion was made to refer this need for language to the city attorney to be developed and then forwarded on to Charter and Ordinance for review and I so move.

It was brought forward to try and come up with language for a "Fine forgiveness program". It was suggested we look at the language used by the Village of Woodstock. Their plan allows forgiveness for the first 2 tickets issued to a particular plate number if the person goes back into the business and has them stamp the ticket with a ^{store} logo or a stamp issued by the city. Treasurer Markowski stated this would create a lot of extra work for her people and asked to

please review this carefully before adopting such a plan. After language is written up for such a policy, and after having the city attorney review it, the language should be referred to charter and ordinance committee for review and I so move.

There were various other discussions that all will be continued at the next Parking Committee Meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm