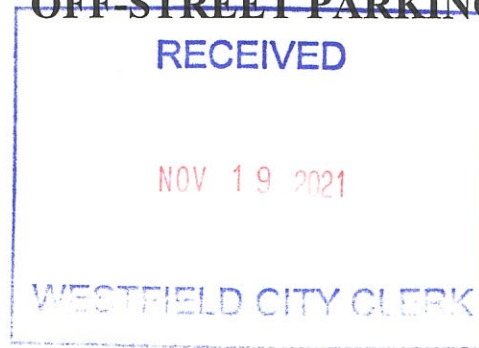


Eli Meyer, Chr
Joseph Golio
John Regan
Bridget Matthews-
Kane, Council Liaison

City of Westfield, Massachusetts

OFF-STREET PARKING COMMISSION



CITY HALL
59 COURT STREET
WESTFIELD, MA 01085
413-572-6202 x2

OFF-STREET PARKING COMMISSION MEETING Wednesday, October 20, 2021, 6:00 PM via Zoom

MINUTES

Meeting convened at 6:00 PM

Chairman Meyer, Commissioner Regan, and Commissioner Golio were present.

The next Off-Street Parking Commission meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2021, 6:00 P.M. to be determined whether it will be in person or via zoom.

A motion was made by Commissioner Regan, seconded and unanimously VOTED to approve the minutes of July 28, 2021 as presented.

REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Peter Miller was present and updated the Commission on the following:
 - He went around to each of the eleven (11) Off Street Parking Lots to see the progress Dave Moretti from Garten has made after being awarded the contract to weed flower beds, cut back the bushes and curb line cutting in the Municipal Parking Lots.
 - He shared pictures with the Commission on the finished project.
 - He will reach out to Verizon to remove the old telephone stand in the Main Street Restaurant Parking lot.
 - He confirmed with Office Manager Kim Sienkiewicz the cost of this project was \$8,000.00
 - He feels that this has been a good use of money.
 - It took Garten approximately three to four weeks to complete the project and we are very pleased with their work.
 - We have also hired Garten on a separate contract to remove all the leaves for fall in all of the Municipal Parking Lots.
 - The plan is to go through the lots four or five times instead of waiting until the end of fall to keep the lots maintained.
 - In the spring we will work on a maintenance plan along with mulching in the lots.

Office Manager Kim Sienkiewicz stated the following:

- There were big pot holes located in the entrance of the Gravel lot.
- She was going to call Burke Brothers to have them come fix it.
- Dave Moretti saw how bad it was and went ahead and took care of it for us.
- These are the kinds of extra things that he does for our parking lots.

Chairman Meyer stated that we really need to be more proactive on mulching in the spring.

Peter stated the following:

- He would like to have a community wide mulching event sometime in April.
- In years past, we have had this event with a group of volunteers to pick up the liter and spread mulch.
- It has been a great event with the Community to spread goodwill and support.
- In past years we have reached out to a few local mulch providers who have been willing to donate a few yards of Mulch.
- We have partnered with the DPW to have their trucks in the lots with an over-time worker in case we need to move piles and get rid of trash.

Kim asked if we would be partnering with the Mason's schedule for Earth Day like we did a couple years back. Peter stated that he will talk with Meredith in Conservation on when she is doing Earth Day and maybe partner up with her.

Peter updated the Commission on some other issues in the Municipal Parking Lots:

- Central Street parking lot and the City Hall parking lot significantly being used by the Washington House right now for their tenants due to their lot being reconstructed.
- They should be done the first week of November.
- Ticketing has been suspended in that lot for the next two weeks.
- There are still couches in the Reader 3 Parking Lot near the residents' dumpsters. He is working with DPW to have them removed.
- We are still having issues with illegal dumping in the Franklin Street lot by the dumpster corral.
- He has reached out to DPW a number of times to remove the items and is still waiting for this to be completed.
- He is still waiting for quotes from the IT Department on a camera for the Franklin Street lot to try to catch some of the illegal dumping.

Chairman Meyer stated the following:

- We have been waiting a long time to get this quote.
- Who do we have to go through in City Hall to get this done?

Peter stated that we have to go through the IT Department in order to have the WI-FI part done also. There will be access to the IT server. He has been waiting for a quote or communication from IT since July and will check on the status this week and report back to the Commission.

2. Commissioner Golio presented and Off Street Parking Campaign Proposal for downtown signs. Commissioner Golio stated the following:
- About 2 weeks ago he walked town from Main Street to Elm Street to Franklin Street.
 - He walked it as a stranger to downtown visiting or shopping trying to see where available parking was.
 - The City of Westfield's Parking Lot System in a "Hidden Gem". There are not too many Cities or Towns in Western Mass that provide such extensive free parking.
 - As we approach the Holiday Season it is imperative to get this message across. We have many new Businesses that need to make a good impression to "First Time" customers. One bad parking experience can lose a customer forever.
 - There is visible signage for one hour on-street parking but he feels our three hour lots lack signage.
 - No one offers the free parking like we do.
 - There are about 70 store fronts.
 - Maybe the business could host parking signs in their shops to let them know where parking is located.
 - We have great signs up now but we need more.
 - He would like to suggest a program that will encompass the signing. Since we are coming into the Christmas season, he thinks it's the perfect time to take a look at this issue. Commissioner Golio proposed a three part program.
 - He would like to propose a three part program.
 - Metal signage on the streets to indicate where closest lot providing free 2 or 3 hour free off street parking lot is located
 - Similar plastic signage to be prominently displayed at Downtown businesses
 - Handout depicting locations of City Parking Lots (possible "Bag Stuffers")
 - Commissioner Golio listed pressing estimates of the costs not including the installation of the metal street signage.
 - 7 x 10 Plastic Signing: \$465 (13.95 x 80)*
 - 10 x 14 Metal Signing: \$334 (6.24 x 24)*
 - 8 x 10 Handouts \$300 (.15 x 2000)**
 - *Smart Signs.com **Staples.com

A motion was made by Commissioner Golio to look into additional signage and flyers for downtown parking.

A discussion was held.

Chairman Meyer suggested that we make up a flyer using the maps that we do have and send them digitally with our City Logo to the businesses so that they can publicize the places for their customers to park on their facebook and Instagram page. Putting up more signs is very timely.

Commissioner Regan seconded Commissioner Golio's motion to look into additional signage and flyers for downtown parking. Chairman Meyer, Commissioner Golio and Commissioner Regan were all in favor.

Peter Miller stated the following:

- We will discuss this at the November meeting.
- He feels this is a great idea from a prospective of publicizing what we already have.
- We just finished what we are calling the Rapid Recovery Program Grant planning process through the State.
- One of the things that was pointed out by the businesses was not just the marketing of our parking but looking at our regulations.
- Like Joe said, we have an abundance of free parking options that a lot of communities could be envious of.
- Having the lots reconstructed over the last 8-10 years has been very helpful to us.
- A few years ago we received a grant from the State through Representative Velis for Wayfinding signage.
- We wanted to make sure that people could find where our parking lots were and that they were publicized from Elm Street, Main Street and Franklin Street.
- We put up new signs on the corners of the streets directing patrons on where the parking is located.
- We focused on the big P for parking when we designed these new signs.
- This was thought of as a first phase of a public education process.
- I love the idea of providing some sort of branded signage to each of the businesses.
- We could create different templates where they could put up a sign in their window saying 3 free hours of Municipal Parking available and state where.
- Making people aware that there is parking behind the buildings, especially for out of towners is definitely something that we want to look at.
- We can revamp the parking maps to make them more modern, a little bit more in line with what our branding is going to look like going forward.
- Putting all of this together and that we have collected a pretty good list of digitally emails, we could share some of these things with the businesses.
- We can certainly make this a project and use the Community Development Facebook page to promote it.
- He appreciates Joe doing some of the legwork on this.
- We can work together with Joe, Kim, Lisa and I to put together a plan on how to roll this out to people.

3. Peter Miller asked the Office Manager Kim Sienkiewicz to inform the Commission on the News Release for the City Street Snow Parking Ban. Kim stated the following:

- The City of Westfield has an on-street snow ban parking policy during plow able snowstorms.
- DPW will call the beginning and the end of the snow ban.
- The DPW will send to our office, the police department, local cable access channel 15, TV stations, Local radio Stations and the City Website the information on when the snow ban will take effect.
- During this time motorists who use the downtown core streets for business parking during a snow ban are allot to park in the Off Street Parking lots free during snow bans from 9am to 5pm only.
- I will be sending a press release to the Westfield Paper and ask them to publish it in the newspaper a couple of times during the winter months.

- We will add this to our website and also hand out the press release to businesses and residents when they purchase their monthly parking permit.
4. Peter Miller stated the following regarding the Snow Emergency Plowing Plan for the winter of 2021-2022:
- We have entered into a signed contract with Mountain View Landscaping and are pleased that they held their pricing the same from last year.
 - They are familiar with the parking lots and the work that needs to be performed.
 - During the normal business work day, they will make plow passes during the snow storm to keep the drive-thru areas of the municipal parking lots open during snow storms.
 - When a storm ends the snow vendor will first plow the snow emergency lots to provide parking for the motorist in the CORE parking lots. The snow vendor will start plowing the CORE parking lots after plowing the snow emergency lots.
 - In the past three (3) years we have not had to close the parking lots and have motorists move their vehicles to the snow lots. We are hoping for that again this year.
 - We have a Robo-call list and a dedicated snow emergency phone number to reach the motorists and keep them updated on the snow plan.
5. Review and possible approval of the Off Street Parking Lot Regulations. Office Manager Kim Sienkiewicz stated the following:
- She updated the Parking Lot Regulations to now show all eleven (11) Municipal Parking Lots for use along with the price of the monthly parking permits.
 - She added to the regulations that passenger vehicles and commercial vehicles with a seating capacity of nine or more passengers along with tow trucks are excluded from purchasing a parking permit and parking in the Municipal Parking Lots.
 - Added also is the stated that it is prohibited in all Municipal parking lots to display a vehicle for sale.

At this point, a discussion was held regarding Food Trucks being allowed to use the Municipal Parking Lots. Kim spoke with the Law Department regarding this situation because the office has been receiving requests to use the Municipal Parking Lots to park their food trucks and sell their products.

Kim stated that there are two regulations the Commission can approve.

Option 1:

- The Off Street Parking Commission does permit Food Trucks from using any of the Municipal Parking Lots

Option 2:

- Food Trucks who are interested in parking and selling their products in any Municipal parking lot can come before the Off Street Parking Commission at a meeting and request the blessing of the commission. The applicant must submit to the Commission which Municipal parking lot they would like to be in along with the date and time. If the municipal parking lot is not at full capacity the

commission would then forward the request to the mayor who is the granting authority. If approved by the Mayor, the applicant will then need to sign a license agreement with the Mayor's office and supply any additional information that is needed.


A discussion was held.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Regan to approve the regulations as stated by Kim regarding prohibiting vehicles for sale in the Municipal Parking lots and to exclude passenger vehicles and commercial vehicles with a seating capacity of nine or more passengers along with tow trucks from purchasing a parking permit and parking in the Municipal Parking Lots. Motion to also include Option 2 for Food Trucks. Motion was 2nd and unanimously VOTED to approve.
- 6. A motion was made by Commissioner Regan, seconded and unanimously VOTED to allow Chairman Meyer to approve monthly bills via email in the event that the monthly meeting is cancelled for any reason or in the event that the meeting is held via zoom.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of monthly bills.
 - a. A motion was made by Commissioner Golio, seconded and unanimously VOTED to approve the monthly regular bills as submitted.
 - b. A motion was made by Commissioner Golio, seconded and unanimously VOTED to approve the monthly revolving bills as submitted.

With no further business, a motion was made by Chairman Meyer, seconded and unanimously VOTED to adjourn the meeting at 6:56 p.m.


Eli Meyer, Chairman _____ Approved: