

**ASHLAND DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT & CIRCULATION AD HOC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
January 6, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 3:34 p.m. in Council Chambers, 1175 East Main St.

Regular members present: Pam Hammond, Emile Amarotico (arrived at 4:14pm), Dave Young, Marie Donovan, Lynn Thompson, Michael Dawkins, Joe Graf (arrived at 4:25pm), and John Fields, John Williams, Lisa Beam

Regular members absent: Joe Collonge and Cynthia Rider

Ex officio (non-voting) members present: Katharine Cato, Michael Faught, Pam Marsh, Sandra Slattery, and Lee Tuneberg

Ex officio (non-voting) members absent: Mike Gardiner, Bill Molnar, and Rich Rosenthal

City of Ashland Staff members present: Tami De Mille-Campos and Kyndra Irigoyen

PUBLIC FORUM

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of December 2, 2015

Minutes approved

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

Approval and Review of Final Downtown Strategic Parking Management Draft Plan

Consultant Williams (Rick) thanked the committee for including him in this project. He said we will review the draft to make any changes. Williams (John) asked the consultant to review the summary of the main changes that have been made in the last month. Rick said the main change is that we moved from 'steps' to 'strategies'. We also collapsed the discussion of new parking capacity into one strategy with two equal steps so that we can communicate to the public that when we talk about capacity we are talking about parking capacity and alternative mode capacity equally. Strategy 16 was collapsed, referenced on page 27, we took a number of steps that seemed iterative that probably were not, they are steps that are happening concurrently. We re-titled strategy 16 and updated the three steps, a, b, and c. A graphic was removed that was related on how to format the on street parking system. It was telegraphing a decision as opposed to a discussion that was supposed to occur. There were some minor word changes, nothing significant.

Cato noted on page 30 that 'Shakespearea' had an extra 'a' on the end.

Thompson noted that on page 41 that 'July 206' should be changed to 'July 2016'.

Faught said he has recommended changes for page 13. Under the third paragraph where it reads "It is recommended that the City begin internal discussion on restructuring parking management into a single Parking Services Division, logically housed within the Public Works Department", we will remove "logically housed within the Public Works Department". He also noted Downtown Parking 'Manager; should change to 'Coordinator' in all instances. Young asked the differentiation between manager and coordinator. Faught said a manager is hired at a supervisory level opposed to someone who is coordinating the program.

Thompson asked about the uses of the parking and transportation fund. The list does not mention the personnel expenses. The context does suggest that the funding of the position would come out of parking revenue. Rick said he will change this under 'b' where it reads "Parking operations" (page 12) to "parking operations and administration".

Thompson asked about the reference to 'peak hour'. Rick said this is a term used in his area of business. The 85% rule is determined by the community which defines a sustained period, whether this is one or more hours, a season, the whole supply, or zones within the supply. Rick suggests that 'peak hour' should be changed to 'peak period' in all instances. In the section of the 85% rule, he will leave as is. Eventually, while using the 85% rule, the committee will

have to say on street parking will be three hours, but each individual lot will operate in its own unique way for purposes of management or prices.

Fields said he still isn't clear how the 85% rule will be triggered. Rick said theoretically we have two base lines. One base line is of the on street system that was done during the summer months. It showed sustained periods of occupancy on street over multiple days. It calls into question, what happens in the spring or in the winter. The 18 month plan calls for getting this information, so when we hit strategy 16 we will have more than one baseline, with a possibility of two samples. The other piece of data we have is the work we did on the off street system during the summer; it was mixed. There were sustained occupancies in the core, but we saw huge opportunity of underutilization well below the 85% rule in other lots. The 18 month plan calls for a spring sample and possibly a fall sample leading into the July 2016 discussion.

Fields said in the next step, when you look at the cost of a paid system, we aren't really defining what the low hanging fruit is. He thinks that if we could find somewhere for the employees that work downtown to have somewhere to park, our problem would be solved. He added, this seems to all lead to paid parking. Rick said if everything works out, we will go to the shared use parking plan first, which is changing the time stay but not adding pricing. We are trying to move forward quickly with the data we have on the off street system and see if we could move some employees into off street facilities, then do a sample. The anticipation is not to assume we are going to jump to paid parking but to go through this process logically by managing our problem without pricing by using this 18 month plan. The hope is that when we get to strategy 16, the problem has sustained itself and paid parking is not needed. Fields said it was not clear to him that we weren't going to go all the way through to both phases without stopping. Rick said the major benchmark is when you get to Strategy 16 because theoretically you will be equipped with all this information. There will be better communications, better directional systems, consistent time stay provisions, and working with employees to get them off the street.

Review Proposed Draft Budget

Faught explained there is about \$225,000 in revenue that we bring in, in a year which can be used for this program after we retire a couple of our debts. There is also talk about expanding the enforcement area from the core into the entire area that is described in this plan as well as possibly raising fees. Between the two of those, the parking side alone is \$160,000 in revenue. If you figure you double that area, you might double the revenue. He said he kept the draft budget conservative and he feels good about this budget given that we could get another \$102,200. He said he made sure it matched what our budget was, given our history and what we are getting ready to do, both in fees and expansion in the area will meet that need.

Young asked for clarification on salary and wages. Fields asked if the current revenue was from fines and tickets. Faught said some of it is funds from the parking structure. He said he worked with finance to see what piece of that revenue could be used for this program. We currently pay \$125,000 to Diamond Parking and we can use roughly \$100,000 from fines and the parking structure. What other revenues will we generate from these other proposals? What would it take to expand the area and how much staff? Two full-time employees will be needed to cover the additional area. Currently the program cost for Diamond Parking is about \$140,000 and will jump to about \$171,000. Linda from Diamond Parking is confident they can cover this additional area, administrative staff will stay the same but a new employee would be brought on to cover the new area. The enforcement side is \$171,700 with the expanded area and the parking coordinator position includes wages and benefits of \$82,000. In the strategies outlined in the plan, we can hire an employee or a consultant. It will cost about \$327,200 to manage the program. He believes this is a reasonable increase considering we are doubling the size of the program.

Young asked what the internal fees are. Tuneberg said think of it as overhead, including space, legal, HR, payroll, etc. Williams (John) asked if there was a general amount that is applied per FTE. Tuneberg said overhead is calculated on approximately 27 different criteria depending on what services you use such as insurances, central services, equipment, fleet, etc. Williams (John) asked if there would be any cost savings for using the parking coordinator to manage some of these things. Faught said if you look at the workload for the first 18 months just the negotiation of all the agreements is a lot of work; the agreements are dependent on our success of the program. If we are successful after this phase, then maybe there will be some time for this position to have time for other things. He said he would like to hire someone and give them enough time to be really successful in obtaining the agreements. He said he sees this position being full-time.

Slattery asked if the internal fees would cover the increases that would be required by legal. It seems that our attorney will be involved more in this process when negotiating leases and working with private businesses, that this will accelerate that level of staff commitment. Tuneberg said for the most part, internal service fees are constant and grow over time. One year you may spend all your time talking to the legal department and the next year you may not need to talk to them at all. We smooth this out over time and not increase it radically. Slattery said she was thinking of the unknown, we do not know how many property owners will be involved in those kinds of purchases or leases. Tuneberg said as far as creating the agreements, there will be an advanced amount of work that comes in from legal. He said when he looked at the conceptual budget, this individual (Parking Coordinator) is going to need some administrative support.

Young said for example, we have this new initiative there is going to be some percentage of overhead and staff resources that will be directed towards this program starting up. Besides the new staff that are identified here, he interpret this as saying you will take existing resources from the city and direct them to doing what they need to do with legal or secretarial; it seems there is potential for redundancy that if you have existing staff and overhead, the current staffing level beside these two new positions, the overhead uses existing resources, which seems like it is going to double counter every other project that gets overhead and at a certain point it is more than a 100% of these resources. Tuneberg said yes, attention from other activities will be directed to parking activities and parking will pick up their percentage and reduction will occur elsewhere.

Thompson said there is potentially some Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) and Food & Beverage tax revenues that have to be used for tourist related expenditures, which are not included here. Faught said we didn't have to look at those funds because the Diamond Parking's expanded area alone should generate the additional revenue needed. Thompson said this could be used to pay for at least the Coordinator position as well as the other costs incurred within this plan; from signs to consultants, parking meters that have to get paid for whether those get for paid out of this fund or another is not being addressed. Faught said the consulting work, to do the additional tracking needs to be done this year, so that money will have to be used this year, so that cost will already be expended. Signs are generally paid for out of the street fund, which we will continue to do.

Fields asked if this whole process we are in now is being funded with planning money. Faught said he believes it is paid through the street fund, but would follow up on that. Fields asked what does this cost with staff time, overhead time, and space time. The only relevance is when he looks at the budget, this budget is looking in place when we see increased revenue with structured parking, parking meters, capital expense in signage, real costs to make this transition, this budget is new to the first 18 months, but what about the second 18 months. Faught said if creating these contracts and options with offsite parking is successful then this is funded appropriately. If we go to the next stage, we will have to figure out how to fund these. Fields said when we look at the public process, how much does this cost to use staff time and if we are going to continue this with another committee and hire another person for \$82,000 a year and we don't have any more revenue how will we pay for it? He said if we do a mean calculation of what this process costs, it is at least a \$100,000 or more a year. Before we take it to council, it would be nice to have what it really costs. Faught said from his perspective, for the first step, to get the contracts out, this pays for that strategy. The committee following this committee will evaluate this strategy to see if it works or not and will go from there.

Dawkins said this reminds of him of Crowman Mill Plan. The whole process was that there was no accountability to Council, it just went on and on, and we kept wondering what the process really cost us for getting the grant funding. He thinks it is imperative that things like this have a price tag on it before going to council. At the end of the process, what did this really cost the city and what did we really get for it?

Young asked if there was any more discussion on the budgetary aspect of the plan.

Approve Plan

Young suggested that the committee move to vote on the plan.

Williams (John) motioned and Dawkins seconded to approve the final plan presented by the consultant.

Fields said he would like to see a projected estimate of what it costs for this level of process for the next 18 months.

He would like to make an amendment to improve the expenditures with more detail.

Williams (John) asked if there could be an amendment with more detail in the budget before it goes to the council.

Young said we are asking to vote with at least one member who has voiced that until we see specific numbers that are budgeted it, would be hard to vote yes on the plan. Fields responded, yes.

Thompson said she is in favor of the plan. She feels a lot of effort has gone into identifying the costs of the plan to the extent they can be ascertained. She is not sure if Fields is asking for the cost of the having a commission and what that costs the city and she's not sure how that is ascertained. It's part of the function of the staff to be a liaison to committees and to support the citizen's interface through commissions like this. If the Council feels that is important before a new commission is established that they clarify that, it is their prerogative to decide. She is not comfortable attaching a condition to the motion. This plan is about the substance of a process of moving forward to solve a problem and is well done. It does not assume too much in the way of conclusion. She is not supportive of trying to put price tags on the aspects Fields is talking about as a condition to approving the plan.

Donovan said she agrees with Thompson. She said that even if she saw a more concrete budget, she's not sure she would approve that. This has been about how the process is going to move along and making a budget now is premature.

Williams (Rick) said the function of the committee that comes after this one will be to address how the money is spent.

Roll call vote:

Yes: Hammond, Amarotico, Young, Donovan, Thompson, Dawkins, Graf, Williams, Beam

No: Fields

Motion passes.

Young thanked the committee and the consultant for their hard work on the plan and process.

Slattery thanked the committee for the opportunity to contribute. She feels that this is the first plan that has tangible, progressive steps in place that can get us to solutions and that it feels hopeful there is a direction.

NEXT STEPS

Faught said he has a couple of things he would like the committee to start thinking about. We are looking at removing the beaver slide. We are looking at traffic patterns around OSF and Pioneer area. Other strategies we are going to talk about include some costs and ideas for the offsite parking structures that have lighting and sidewalk projects tied into them. He said he hopes that most of the people on this committee stay around for the committee that follows this one. Also, before we go to Council we will set up a town hall meeting to get community input. He thanked the committee for their hard work.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:34 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kyndra Irigoyen, Administrative Assistant