

PARKING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Thursday, March 21, 2002
City Hall Conference Room A

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Parking Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman, Alex Hanson at approximately 9:50 a.m.

Members Present: City Councilor Alex Hanson, Chairman
John P. Bohenko, City Manager
John Burke, Parking & Transportation Engineer
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director
Deputy Police Chief Michael Magnant
Andrew Purgiel, City Auditor
Kevin Coakley, Parking Meter Technician

City Manager John Bohenko introduced Meg Kennedy, the Portsmouth High School student City Manger for the day and Steve Parkinson introduced Charlton Dobson, the student Public Works Director for the day.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Motion made by Steve Parkinson to accept the November 15, 2001 minutes of the Parking Committee. Seconded by Mike Magnant. Motion passed.

III. CORRESPONDENCE:

(A) 15-Minute parking on Daniel Street – There was a request by Navigant Vacations of Daniel Street to extend the 15 minute meters on Daniel Street to 30 minute meters. John Burke stated that the owners at F.A. Gray requested that they stay 15-minute meters. The meters were installed for quick customer turnover for area businesses including the sub shop, paint shop, etc.

MOTION made by City Manager John Bohenko to place on file. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.

(B) Monthly Parking Leases – John Burke referred to a request from Shoals Marine Laboratory to discount the parking rate at the High-Hanover Parking Garage for several Shoals Marine Laboratory vehicles. Discussion followed and John Bohenko suggested meeting with the Bethel Assembly of God Church to see what their interest might be for possibility using their parking lot on a seasonal basis. He referred this matter to John Burke for a report back. Another area discussed was the Pease Tradeport.

MOTION made by John Bohenko to investigate the potential use of various parking areas near the downtown in conjunction with the PDA and DOT. Seconded by John Burke.

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

- (A) **Truck Loading Zones** – Deputy Police Chief Mike Magnant stated that he was working with John Burke to draft an Ordinance proposing that all trucks in the downtown area use specific loading zones. The next step would be to solicit input from downtown merchants. John Bohenko suggested that John Burke and the Deputy Chief meet with the merchants and set up a pilot program. The City Manager asked John Burke to prepare a memo for the April 1st City Council meeting for first reading in May.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- (A) **Court Street – Proposed New Metered Parking Spaces** – John Burke stated that two new metered parking spaces can be added to the southerly side of Court Street between Rogers and Chestnut Streets because the property owner had eliminated a curb-cut (driveway) there – which makes room for the parking spaces.

MOTION by Steve Parkinson to accept the proposal as presented. Seconded by Andrew Purgiel. Motion passed.

- (B) **Summer Street – Proposed Handicapped Parking Space** – An elderly resident with a valid State of New Hampshire disability placard has requested a space on Summer Street be posted just east of Austin Street.

MOTION by Deputy Police Chief Mike Magnant to approve the installation of a handicap parking space on Summer Street just east of Austin Street. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.

- (C) **Peirce Island Parking Regulations** – Hugh Jenks, Chairman of the Peirce Island Committee has requested a meeting with the Parking Committee to discuss parking regulations on the Island. John Bohenko asked John Burke to contact Mr. Jenks to see when he would be available to meet.

MOTION made by John Bohenko to table this matter. Seconded by John Burke. Motion passed.

Discussion followed concerning parking near the boat launch. Deputy Police Chief Mike Magnant stated that there were many complaints last year that boaters were unable to get their boats out of the water because

the ramp was blocked. The City Manager suggested installing stakes to mark the parking area. Steve Parkinson stated that he and John Burke would take a look at this.

(D) Meter Maintenance and Performance – John Burke introduced Kevin Coakley, Meter Repair Technician who was hired into the newly created position last July. John stated that Kevin’s efforts had helped the City reduce its meter fail rate substantially below the national average of 5-10%. John added that this has increased confidence in the meters, reduced the number of appeals the City has received and increased meter revenue significantly over previous years. John noted that Kevin’s work was most important in light of the fact that the City’s 4-year warranty on the meters expired last September. Kevin then reviewed the inner workings of the electronic meters. He noted that a major work effort right now is replacing the plastic coin discriminators (coin chutes) on the original Duncan mechanisms. They tend to wear out after 3-5 years on the street. Kevin stated that most of the problems with the meters relate to vandalism - graffiti and coin jams caused by people plugging paper, toothpicks, etc. into the meters. Kevin then explained that changing the batteries every 6 months or so helps to maintain the meters and that he has worked out a schedule so that they have full power through the cold of winter and heat of summer. Kevin was asked how many meters are on the street. He replied 827 meters; 20 15-minute meters; 52 4-hour meters and 755 2-hour meters. The Committee thanked Kevin for his efforts.

(E) Parking Enforcement Policies and Practices Manual – John Burke informed the Committee that a Parking Enforcement Manual would be developed over the summer. He added that no one in Enforcement could recall ever having one. He noted that the manual should go along way to create consistency in enforcement between officers. Deputy Police Chief Mike Magnant asked that the manual be developed with input from the Police Department.

VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

(A) Proposed Parking Restrictions T.J. McIntyre Federal Building - City Manager John Bohenko asked if the GSA had provided any letter response to the City’s previous communications. No one on the Committee indicated receiving any response.

(B) Parking Improvements Implementation Schedule – John Burke informed the Committee that in May, the Division would be installing the two new meters on Court Street, applying the 2-hour stickers on the 2-hour meter posts, and repositioned and restriping the Bow Street parking stalls. The City will also be beginning the restoration work on the High-Hanover Parking Garage in May. The work will include replacement of

expansion joints on the top deck of the original structure as well as some masonry work, cleaning, and rust inhibiting. The bid opening is March 25th.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS:

- (A) John Burke informed the Committee that the downtown merchants requested that the seasonal summer trolley downtown run on Sundays. The only reason the trolley has not run on Sundays in the past is because COAST is not opened on Sundays. The COAST Board is now reconsidering this policy.

- (B) Deputy Police Chief Mike Magnant requested that next month's Agenda include the matter of the RV's parking on City streets and parking lots. He noted that there should be a policy on how long an RV can park on municipal property. This matter had previously been tabled. City Manger suggested that proposed signage be brought back for the next meeting. Chairman Alex Hanson stated that there still should be a place for RV's to park. City Manger John Bohenko stated that he would hold a meeting with Jason Page, John Burke and the Police Department to discuss the matter before next month's meeting. Also to be included on next month's Agenda is the matter of contractors parking their large trailers on City streets while working.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Elaine E. Boucas