DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
645 PINE STREET
BURLINGTON, VERMONT 05401
COMMISSION MEETING OCTOBER 20, 2021
DRAFT MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Commissioner Barr, Commissioner Bose (via zoom), Commissioner Hogan (Chair), Commissioner Kennedy, Commissioner Munteanu, Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco (Vice-Chair), Commissioner Overby

ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Hogan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ITEM 2 – AGENDA

Commissioner Hogan stated that item 6, General Obligation Bond Letter of Support would be taken off the agenda as this was discussed the previous month and six commissioners were in agreement to support it. Commissioner Overby was absent.

Commissioner Barr made a motion to accept the agenda with Item 6 removed
Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco seconded
Unanimous approval

ITEM 3 – PUBLIC FORUM

Maureen Frye stated she just moved to Lakeside Avenue and came in to see how the Public Works Commission works. She stated that there is chaotic parking on both sides of the street where she lived, there are lots of delivery trucks, bicyclist and pedestrians and the street seems to take the brunt of the parking area. She asked if here was a better way to manage parking on the resident side of Lakeside Avenue. She suggested that there be no parking on that side of the street as it is hard to pull out of the driveway. She is asking for some no parking on the resident side of the street to make it safer for everyone going through that area.

Zoe Richards called about the narrow streets and single side parking on Charlotte and Catherine Street. She reviewed the narrow streets to consider streets for everyone and not just cars. I am not looking forward to one-sided street parking, as the vehicles will travel faster down the streets the parking on both sides. The parking on both sides of the street makes this a safer street as vehicles cannot travel too fast on the street.
ITEM 4 — CONSENT AGENDA

A. South Winooski Ave SSTA Transit Stop
B. Narrow Streets
C. Proctor Place Stop Sign

Commissioner Hogan asked for clarification to the last comment. The narrow street item on the consent agenda is not taking action at this time it is a summary of feedback to date and a synopsis of staff’s current thinking on that. There is no change.

Commissioner Bose asked for clarification as to what is in the summary as the staff recommendation would be coming to us next month.

Director Spencer stated that this is correct we told them that this was coming only as information tonight and that we would be acting next month.

Commissioner Bose asked for clarification what is in the summary, as the staff recommendation will be coming to us next month. Can I ask one more question? In terms of what goes into the rational I would love to see when the staff recommendation comes forward the public comment that was just made the potential of traffic calming of the narrow streets that would be great.

Commissioner Barr made a motion to accept the consent agenda
Commissioner Munteanu seconded
Unanimous approval

ITEM 5 — Parking Compliance Reform

Assistant Director Padgett stated that parking services have moved down to 645 Pine Street. Leonard Ducharme is the new head of the parking division and parking garages and there is a new position for an assistant to Leonard Ducharme for assistance in combining the two jobs.

We are here for scoff reform. During COVID scoff was suspended. I will go over the q important parts of this reform
• We will raise the scoff threshold from $75.00 to $275.00
• Scoff is a secondary violation, we cannot hunt you in scoff but you received another ticket and it goes over $275.00 you can be towed
• We will like to start a Whoops Whoops program in which you can get out of a ticket once a year either a metered ticket or a residential parking ticket.
This is transformational for the community.

Commissioner Kennedy program sounds great. How would it work in residential areas but having a permit, would that still require being towed?
Assistant Director Padgett stated that this was informally introduced to the Board of Finance on Monday night and we started thinking about what happens in residential parking. When you get a residential parking permit, you get a blue sticker, which will
void a ticket. We have extended that blue chip folder to everybody anybody can appeal the ticket and if it is their first ticket for the year they will get out of it.

Commissioner Kennedy I have read up on this where in some countries, not sure of any in the US where some tickets are based off from income and disposable income, based on a certain percentage. I think this is an interesting conversation that could happen in the future with this being a gateway to talking about programs like that. Assistant Director Padgett stated that this is how we see this. Decision used to be made by the attorney’s office, voiding tickets is something only the attorneys can do and this ordinance gives us power to void such tickets?

Commissioner Bose I strongly support this as a program. I also serve on the Community Justice Board and one of the things that has been striking to me is when we look at some of the contributing factors that lead some folks into a cycle of, you know job loss one of the precipitating factors is what many of us would consider a low threshold of violation. Questions are if we still want to use fines as a deterrent in terms of a certain kind of behavior. Where do you see managing the swing if this is kind of a policy push from the department?
Assistant Director Padgett we have very good compliance, like 90%. We collect a lot of money in fines but with 80 90’s compliance, most people are able to pay. The people that aren’t able to pay and are impounded are the vulnerable this is what we’re trying to change.
Commissioner Bose do you see this as not a pilot program, what would be the threshold of initial assessment?
Assistant Director Padgett stated we are keep statistics on things we will be doing statistics to the Mayor in a couple of weeks and this will be a part of what we’re looking at. We have made explicit goals that we want to lower the impoundment rate.

Commissioner Overby said this is really an excellent piece of work coming up with improvements and particularly with reducing the number of the impoundments. Do you have statistics on the current number of impoundments annually?
Assistant Director Padgett stated he couldn’t pull it off the top of my head. Parking services is a contributor to the general fund and I am actively reorganizing personnel staff and services so we can defer, we can keep them revenue neutral but we can move money from economically driven revenue like the garages and the lots and meters into parking services to back fill the losses from this program. We are now backfilling the fund with economic activity versus fine activity. We don’t want to lower the amount that we contribute to the general fund but we are trying to shift how we provide that money to the general funds.

Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco I do think this is wonderful. The data management on the system but with the metered parking and the app is allowing some of this tracking is that correct.
Assistant Director Padgett stated Park Mobil is integrated with a program called T2Flex and it’s a citation management program. That office is a federally secured space with cameras and key codes because we have access to DMV records. Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco with those management systems is there a tracking and payment plans? Can I check for my parking history? I don’t want to stir the pot because I don’t have the money right now.

Assistant Director Padgett stated it goes in as your license plate number and if you pay your ticket in 30 days that’s it. If you don’t pay your ticket in 30 days the fine is attached and we send you an invoice and that’s when we physically go and get your address and the invoice. We do not have the authority to set up a payment plan right now. But you can come in, we’ve made is explicitly clear that $275 is a threshold.

Commissioner Barr curious about the notification after a month and then they get the invoice and they pay the $26 will it compound again will their car be towed again if they don’t pay the $274?
AD Padgett stated that as long as they are under $275. Somebody could consistently owe us $275.00 they have to get two more tickets to be towed again.

Commissioner Munteau I want to echo the support, I definitely think this is a step in the right direction when it comes to parking. My question would be how the Whoops Program would work. You stated that you expect sixty percent of the people to be appealing their ticket once this program is around how is it actually going to be communicated to people that this program exist.
AD Padgett communication out to the public is challenging. I’ve contacted the BBA because they do have an interest in this and Rob Goulding is our information guru so he will be involved in that. We have to have a robust communication platform.

Commissioner Hogan is there a sense of how much is cost us to impound a car.
AD Padgett should cost us nothing. We tow its $125 ticket, 75 fine and 50 tow.
On the Whoops thing, your one comparable the city does a one-time freebie, what is the reasoning for year.
AD Padgett stated is just sort of felt right. I couldn’t justify two a year, couldn’t justify every two years, annual seemed right.

Commissioner Barr makes a motion to accept staff’s recommendation?
Commissioner Bose seconded
Unanimous approval

ITEM 6 – General Obligation Bond Letter of Support

This item has been removed from the agenda.
ITEM 7 – APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES 9-15-21

Commissioner Munteanu a motion to approve September minutes
Commissioner Barr seconded
Unanimous approval
Commissioner Overby abstained, as she was not present at September meeting.

ITEM 8 – DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Approved update to parking management plan.
Consolidated collection did not pass for fully municipal option. Gotten feedback from Councilors, CSWD and a number of the haulers and plan to come back to the council probably in December or January with likely a hybrid recommendation.
Champlain Parkway expecting a Record of Decision in the coming weeks and we are on track to have this out to bid this winter.
Rail Yard Enterprise Project planning to go to the City Council on the November 8th meeting to get approval for a consultant contract to bring us through conceptual design.
195-201 Flynn Avenue — acre parcel going to council October 25th seeking approval to extend MOU out three months to give us time to discuss a lease/purchase agreement for the city to purchase this three acre parcel. Possible for this parcel to be developed for a modern safe drop off center.
Fall leaf pick up is coming up

City Engineer Baldwin stated Main Street Great Streets needed to be mentioned. Laura and Olivia are advancing the great streets project and went to council seeking authorization to execute a design contract with VHP to begin that work. There is still financial follow up that needs to happen to fully fund it to aspire to do all six blocks. I believe there will be limited for two block.

Passenger Rail is continuing to progress. Contract between College and King is struggling to get traction with some of the work and we are slowly getting there with the contractors making good progress but more progress on Phase 3, which is between King and Maple. Will still need to have bike path detour going own King Street for some time until such time they have to repave King Street itself because they are doing signal work there as well.

ITEM 9 – COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Barr Main Street and University Heights intersection. I’ve heard a lot of people has been reaching out asking about it. I could do some education and messaging. We’ve done a lot of things and there are some things pending to do so I guess what I would like to do is get those things out to people to reduce the anxiety in some.
Director Spencer stated we got a couple media inquiries this week after students have been posting on social media some of their concerns.

Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco a note on the Great Street, the Main Street what blocks are the priority?
City Engineer Baldwin stated that what is authorized is what we would do first. The two blocks are between Church and Pine. I think the message is we are moving ahead with the six-block plan.
City Engineer Baldwin stated that support of businesses and communication, evaluating what we can do to support them through this process and sequencing the work. The other piece is to be good partners with private property owners who have services that need attention before we make the investment in all the things that are above ground.
Commissioner O'Neill-Vivanco the bike path detour changes on Battery Street I think communicating out in anticipation of upcoming changes helps. People are upset because the cones were moved and arehey what is going on. Staying ahead of the communication curve so that folks are aware.
City Engineer Baldwin stated that we are secondary to that conversation because the state if managing that project. WE as a city have taken on the task of dealing with the bike path along Battery Street simply because there is a series of contracts so some of what we were informed about was late coming and we've expressed our concern about that but much of these contracts are weather and material predicated on.

Commissioner Overby follow-up on one of the items about the Railyard project. I know you said it's November 8th that you're going to have the City Council look at it is it possible that that Railyard Enterprise Project can be times to fit between the Phase 1 and the Phase 2 of the Champlain Parkway. I think one of the concerns that people have had are the traffic increasing in the King and Maple neighborhood.
City Engineer Baldwin our goal is to get it completed as soon as possible following all of the federal requirements. In a perfect world it would mean that we would have this work complete before Phase 1 of the freeway but there is no way of knowing how it's going to play out. That along with sequencing it with the roundabout project and other projects because there is so much going on in the south end that we have to think strategically how we can best serve the community and that's what this whole sequencing plan is about.

Commissioner Bose - the point about the consolidated collection you mentioned that the hybrid model will be advanced to the city council for consideration in the next couple of months. Is this coming back to us either for review or for a vote? Director Spencer be happy to bring it back either for discussion or engagement. We brought forward your vote, which is for the hybrid model.
Commissioner Bose the upgrades in the storm water and drainage systems in the city and we haven't had any reports of anything. Nothing urgent on this but I'd love to hear something about how the upgrades are functioning.
Director Spencer the BTV Stats that we are planning for next month includes data on the number of CSO's and we'd be happy to share that with you.

Commissioner Kennedy wanted to go back to what Commissioner Barr was saying earlier about the U Heights/Main Street intersection would love to have further conversations about what we can do there. I feel I could offer a good insight on that. Director Spencer thank you for that we will reach out to you and set that up.

Commissioner Hogan looking forward to BTV stats. Considering a shift in minutes handling it again put it on the consent agenda. Other city boards do that. If there is an issue or something, it can come off. Director Spencer stated if that is something, you want we can look at making that happen next month if that's a direction that you would like.

Commissioner Hogan I will close the commissioner communication and move forward to the next item adjournment.

ITEM 10 – ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING DATE November 17, 2021

Commissioner O’Neill-Vivanco made a motion to adjourn
Commissioner Bose seconded
Unanimous approval

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.