

To: Members of the Public Parking Commission
Subject: Regular Meeting
Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 11, 2023
Meeting Time: 5:00 p.m.
Meeting Location: Room 319, City Hall

Agenda Items:

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Determination of quorum
4. Reports
 - a. Update on transition for administrative functions (attached)
 - b. Financial report (to be distributed)
5. Approval of minutes of preceding meeting
 - a. Review of minutes from the Special Meeting on January 10, 2023 ([available on the website](#))
6. Old business
 - a. Appointment of a recording secretary
7. New business
 - a. Consideration and possible action on draft parking ordinances (attached).
 - i. Correction of fine for handicapped space violation
 - ii. City Manager as person who appoints hearing officers
 - iii. Consideration of increasing fines for other violations
 - b. Consideration and possible action on draft parking policies (attached).
 - i. Consideration of increasing rates for parking spaces in lots and garages
 - c. Consideration and possible action on draft budget (attached).
 - i. Hours, wages, and benefits of parking enforcement attendant
 - ii. Transfer to General Fund for 2022-23 and 2023-24
 - iii. Repairs and maintenance of lots and garages
 1. PPC line item – signs and striping
 2. Capital Budget - \$150,000 for garage joint repairs
 3. Capital Budget – lighting efficiency projects for Intermodal Transportation Center
 - d. Consideration of designating 15 parking spaces in the Railroad Ave. parking lot for Mattern Construction in relation to their redevelopment of the former YMCA.
 - e. Discussion of parking near Norwich Free Academy.
8. Adjournment



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April 5, 2023

To: Members of the Public Parking Commission

Status update on parking administration transition

When Judi Rizzuto announced her retirement, it presented an opportunity to see whether we could deliver the administrative services for the Public Parking Commission (PPC) with other City staff at a lower total cost. If we are able to lower the PPC's administrative costs, then it should free up some PPC funds to put more money into maintenance of parking lots and garages. It will also slightly reduce the net costs to the General Fund by spreading some of the City's administrative costs to the PPC.

Here are the individuals who will be working on PPC administrative items:

- Pablo Parrilla – Parking Enforcement Attendant
- Josh Pothier – Comptroller
- Orla McKiernan-Raftery – Deputy Comptroller
- Mitch Nixon – City Accountant
- Karlene Deal – Collector of Taxes and Revenues
- Tenley Nelson – Delinquent Tax Collector

Physical location

Judi Rizzuto's and Kim Prosser's last day was December 22, 2022. Judi's files were brought over from the Norwich Intermodal Transportation Center (NITC) to the Tax Office that day. We changed the website to direct calls and payments to the Tax Office in City Hall. SEAT moved back into the NITC on January 9, 2023 and is maintaining office hours of 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. SEAT posted a sign at its NITC office indicating that parking tickets need to be paid at the Tax Office. We cancelled the PPC's phone and fax lines in February 2023. We discontinued the drop box for parking ticket payments located at the Police station and the PO Box in March 2023. Also, the Purchasing Agent is looking to sell the NITC parking kiosks on an online auction site in April 2023.

Parking ticket software

Parking ticket software was switched from Passport Labs to Quality Data Service (QDS) in December. The annual cost of the QDS software is roughly the same as that of Passport Labs.

QDS is the same software company that we use to collect property taxes. This should assist the City in collecting parking tickets and motor vehicle taxes because, after working out some software details, we will be able to report them both to the DMV and to the collection agency that the City uses. Karlene has five years of experience collecting parking tickets when she had worked for the Town of Windham's tax office.

Also, QDS's parking ticket software and hardware allows Pablo to take one or more pictures of a violation and have those pictures uploaded and tied to the violation in the database. Pablo began using the new handheld ticket printer on January 10, 2023. The online payment capability was up and running in early February; which was later than anticipated. We will continue to work with QDS on improvements to software integration with our financial software and with external sources; such as the CT DMV.

Monthly parking

Mitch moved the monthly parking billing process from a manual one to the Accounts Receivable module of our MUNIS accounting software in December. We have gathered email addresses from some businesses and individuals who rent spaces so that we can email bills to them each month. We ask you to consider increasing the parking lot and garage rates by a few dollars per month. These rates were last increased to their current levels of \$48 for garages, \$38 for lots, and \$28 for the Bath Street lot at the PPC's November 15, 2011 meeting effective January 1, 2012. Inflation, as measured by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics Northeast CPI-U, has increased 28.45% since January 2012.

Violation enforcement and disputes

City Council adopted the ordinance regarding the hearing officer for parking violations. Karlene and I met with Attorney Kevin Wickless in early February to work out the details of the first time using this new process which we will start in May 2023.

We would like to get a better understanding of the PPC's philosophy on handling the day-to-day enforcement and disputes. Karlene & I prepared a brief policy document for your consideration.

We also prepared an amendment to the parking ordinance to fix the fine for illegally parking in a handicapped space (the City's ordinances differ with the minimum fine per Connecticut statutes), indicate that the City Manager is tasked with appointing hearing officers, and consider increases in other parking violations. The fines for parking violations have not been increased since January 2015. Inflation has increased 24.79% since January 2015 and the fines appear to be lower than most communities.

Commission Minutes

The PPC had been meeting bi-monthly at the NITC and Judi had been the recording secretary. Since the meetings have been reduced to quarterly, I think that one of us (Karlene, Orla, Mitch or I) should be able to attend the meetings and prepare the minutes.

Budget

Fiscal Year 2022-23

I am projecting savings in Wages and Fringe Benefits for this fiscal year. I wanted to ask the PPC's permission to transfer \$15,000 from the PPC to the General Fund for the work performed by the Finance Department (especially Karlene and her staff) during the transition and after taking over the administrative functions in December 2022.

Fiscal Year 2023-24

I prepared a 2023-24 budget for the PPC to consider at the April meeting. Here is a summary of changes I'd like the PPC to consider:

Revenues

Increase fines for parking violations and parking space rentals – this will allow the PPC to have more funding to pay for facilities improvements.

Expenditures

We ask the PPC to consider increasing hours for Parking Enforcement Attendant. This will give the PPC more resources to enforce parking rules and monitor conditions of parking lots and garages. Increasing hours for the PEA will make him eligible for other fringe benefits and should help retain him as an employee.

Legal Fees – this is an estimate of fees to be incurred by hearing officer.

Parking Repairs & Maintenance – with lower administrative costs and increased revenue from fines and rentals, the PPC will have more funding for repairs and maintenance. Here are some possible projects:

- Energy efficient lighting
- Redesign of lots to accommodate more parking spaces
- Line striping for parking spaces
- Conditions assessment for parking garages/decks
- Security cameras in garages (if cost effective)
- Signage for lots, spaces, etc.

Transfer to General Fund – Requesting \$30,000 transfer from PPC to General Fund for administrative functions of PPC.

Capital Budget

The City Manager's capital budget for 2023-24 includes \$150,000 for repairing joints in parking garages. This was identified by Public Works as a high priority for the parking facilities.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE II OF CHAPTER 20 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR CORRECTIONS AND CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY THE PUBLIC PARKING COMMISSION

WHEREAS, Article II of Chapter 20 of the Code of Ordinances, as most recently amended by Ordinance 1831, sets forth the responsibilities of the public parking commission; and

WHEREAS, the public parking commission recommends making corrections and changes to Article II of Chapter 20 of the Code of Ordinances.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORWICH, that the following sections be added or amended in Article II of Chapter 20 of the Code of Ordinances:

Sec. 20-19. Same—Fines and penalties.

Each owner or operator receiving a notice provided in section 20-18 shall pay as a penalty for and in full satisfaction of such violation the following sums:

- (a) Obstructing driveway \$25.00
- (b) Parking too far from curb \$15.00
- (c) Parking too close to corner \$15.00
- (d) Double parking \$25.00
- (e) Parking on wrong side of street \$15.00
- (f) Parking in crosswalk \$15.00
- (g) Parking too close to fire hydrant \$25.00
- (h) Violation of snow regulations \$25.00
- (i) Parking in handicapped zone ~~\$100.00~~ \$150.00
- (j) Parking in fire zone \$25.00
- (k) Parking in posted no parking zone \$15.00
- (l) Overtime parking \$5.00
- (m) Parking at bus stop, taxi stand or loading zone \$15.00
- (n) Parking on sidewalk \$15.00
- (o) Parking in intersection \$15.00
- (p) Obstructing traffic \$25.00
- (q) Left wheel to curb \$15.00
- (r) Other \$15.00

The failure of such owner or operator to make such payment to said commission within 14 days shall render them liable to payment of double the above fines.

The failure of such owner or operator to make such payment to said commission within 30 days shall render them liable to the penalty provided by the Connecticut General Statutes for violations.

Any convenience fees or other collection costs may be passed onto such owner or operator by the commission.

Sec. 20-24. Hearing procedure for parking violations

Pursuant to §§ 7-148, 7-152b, and 14-305 to 14-308, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes, the city enacts the hearing procedure for parking violations described herein.

Commented [JP1]: The CT Statutes provide a \$150 fine for handicapped zone violations.

The other fines haven't been increased since 2015. Should we increase the items that are \$15 or less up to \$20 and increase the \$25 items to \$30?

a) Hearing officers. The ~~parking commission~~ city manager shall appoint one or more parking violation hearing officers to conduct hearings for parking violations. Such hearing officers cannot be personnel who are authorized to issue such violations or who otherwise work for the police department or parking commission.

b) Notice of violation. Within two years from the expiration of the final period for the uncontested payment of fines, penalties, costs or fees for any alleged parking violation, the city shall send notice to the motor vehicle operator, if known, or the registered owner of the motor vehicle by first class mail at their address according to the registration records of the Department of Motor Vehicles or by electronic mail, if the operator or owner's electronic mail address is known. Such notice shall inform the operator or owner:

i) of the allegations against them and the amount of the fines, penalties, costs or fees due;

ii) that they may contest their liability before a parking violations hearing officer by delivering in person, by electronic mail or by mail written notice within 10 days of the date thereof;

iii) that if they do not demand such a hearing, an assessment and judgment shall enter against them; and

iv) that such judgment may issue without further notice.

c) Proof of liability. Whenever a violation of such an ordinance occurs, proof of the registration number of the motor vehicle involved shall be prima facie evidence in all proceedings provided for in this section that the owner of such vehicle was the operator thereof; provided, the liability of a lessee under section 14-107 shall apply.

d) Admission of liability. If the person who is sent notice pursuant to subsection (b) of this section wishes to admit liability for any alleged violation, such person may, without requesting a hearing, pay the full amount of the fines, penalties, costs or fees admitted to in person or by mail to an official designated by the city. Such payment shall be inadmissible in any proceeding, civil or criminal, to establish the conduct of such person or other person making the payment. Any person who does not demand a hearing within 10 days of the date of the first notice provided for in subsection (b) of this section shall be deemed to have admitted liability, and the designated official shall certify such person's failure to respond to the hearing officer. The hearing officer shall thereupon enter and assess the fines, penalties, costs or fees provided for by the applicable ordinances and shall follow the procedures set forth in subsection (f) of this section.

e) Hearing procedure.

i) Any person who requests a hearing shall be given written notice of the date, time and place for the hearing. Such hearing shall be held not less than 15 days nor more than 30 days from the date of the mailing of notice, provided the hearing officer shall grant upon good cause shown any reasonable request by any interested party for postponement or continuance. An original or certified copy of the initial notice of violation issued by a police officer or other issuing officer shall be filed and retained by the city, be deemed to be a business record within the scope of section 52-180 and be evidence of the facts contained therein. The presence of the police officer or issuing officer shall be required at the hearing if such person so requests. A person wishing to contest their liability shall appear at the hearing in person or by means of electronic equipment, and may present evidence in their behalf. A designated official, other than the hearing officer, may present evidence on behalf of the city.

ii) If such person fails to appear, the hearing officer may enter an assessment by default against them upon a finding of proper notice and liability under the applicable statutes or ordinances. The hearing officer may accept from such person copies of police reports, Department of Motor Vehicles documents and other official documents by mail and may determine thereby that the appearance of such person is unnecessary. The hearing officer shall conduct the hearing in the order and form and with such methods of proof as he deems fair and appropriate. The rules regarding the admissibility of evidence shall not be strictly applied, but all testimony shall be given under oath or affirmation. The hearing officer shall announce their decision at the end of the hearing. If the hearing officer determines that the person is not liable, they shall dismiss the matter and enter their determination in writing accordingly. If the hearing officer determines that the person is liable for the violation, they shall forthwith enter and assess the fines, penalties, costs or fees against such person as provided by the applicable ordinances of the city.

f) Notice of assessment and judgment. If such assessment is not paid on the date of its entry, the hearing officer shall send by first class mail a notice of the assessment to the person found liable and shall file, not less than 30 days or more than 12 months after such mailing, a certified copy of the notice of assessment with the clerk of a superior court facility designated by the Chief Court Administrator together with an entry fee of \$8.00. The certified copy of the notice of assessment shall constitute a record of assessment. Within such 12-month period, assessments against the same person may be accrued and filed as one record of assessment. The clerk shall enter judgment, in the amount of such record of assessment and court costs of \$8.00, against such person in favor of the city. Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, the hearing officer's assessment, when so entered as a judgment, shall have the effect of a civil money judgment and a levy of execution on such judgment may issue without further notice to such person.

g) Appeal. A person against whom an assessment has been entered pursuant to this section is entitled to judicial review by way of appeal. An appeal shall be instituted within 30 days of the mailing of notice of such assessment by filing a petition to reopen assessment, together with an entry fee in an amount equal to the entry fee for a small claims case pursuant to section 52-259, at the Superior Court facility designated by the Chief Court Administrator, which shall entitle such person to a hearing in accordance with the rules of the judges of the Superior Court.

Purpose:

To correct the fine for parking in a handicapped zone and identify the city manager as the person who appoints hearing officers.

[Sponsor(s)]

Item 7.b.

POLICIES FOR PARKING PASSES, PERMITS AND VIOLATIONS

PARKING PASSES:

- DAY PASSES – Day passes can be issued for Main Street Garage for \$5 a day. These permits can be purchased at the Taxes and Revenues Office.
- LONG TERM STREET PARKING – Monthly parking passes can be issued for work vehicles outside of the Main Street Garage. Passes are issued at the same rate as in the garage. This is intended to be used for construction vehicles that do not fit within the garage. These permits can be purchased at the Taxes and Revenues Office.

PARKING PERMITS:

- RATES FOR PARKING PERMITS – The current rates for public parking areas are as follows:
Taxable - \$38/month for the lots and \$48.00/month for the garages
Nontaxable - \$35.73/month for the lots and \$45.15/month for the garages
- PRORATION OF PARKING PERMIT – When an individual is initially requesting a parking pass, the first payment will be prorated by the number of weeks remaining in the month. For example: if a customer is requesting the permit and only two weeks of the month remains the cost of that first month would be \$24 instead of the full month of \$48. This proration will not be applied at the termination of the parking permit contract.
- CANCELATION OF PARKING PERMIT - If a permit is no longer needed, it will be surrendered to the Taxes and Revenue Office by the end of the month paid for. Billing will continued until notified otherwise. No refund will be issued.
- REVOKE PERMIT – The Taxes and Revenues Office reserves the right to revoke a permit for any reason.
- REPLACEMENT OF PARKING PERMIT – If a parking permit is lost or stolen there will be a replacement issued for a fee of \$10.
- COLLECTIONS – The Taxes and Revenues Office will send out statements quarterly to permit holders who are delinquent on their payments. Permit holders who are more than three months in arrears will be forwarded to the City’s attorney or collection services company. Permit holders may work with the Taxes and Revenues Office to set up a payment plan to get current on their past due balances.

Commented [JP1]: Consider a \$2 rate increase effective 7/1/2023

- PARKING PERMIT – The Taxes and Revenues Office will issue parking permits per the number of parking spaces being used and paid for. If a permit is lost or stolen a signed form must be submitted to the Office as such and a replacement permit will be issued.

PARKING VIOLATIONS:

- PARKING VIOLATIONS – Parking tickets will double after 14 days from date of issue. Payments can be made online, in person or by mail. If mailed the postmark is taken as date received.
- GRACE PERIOD FOR PARKING VIOLATIONS – If an individual is within the vehicle or returning to the vehicle, no parking ticket will be issued by the Parking Attendant. Overtime parking area will be given an additional 15 minutes for any parking area restricted to one hour or less and an additional 30 minutes for any two hour parking area. No ticket will be issued prior to this grace period.
- TOWING OF VEHICLE – If a vehicle has five or more open tickets or a balance over \$100, the Taxes and Revenue Office reserves the right to contact a towing company to have a vehicle impounded until the parking violations are paid in full.
- PROTESTS – Protests must be filed within 48 hours of date of issue with the Taxes and Revenues Office. This process can be done in writing or online through the website for tickets issued by the City of Norwich Parking Attendant. For tickets issued by the Norwich Police Department, any protest shall be filed and responded by the Norwich Police Department.
- COLLECTIONS – The Taxes and Revenues Office will work with the Hearing Officer to send out notices of violations for delinquent tickets quarterly in the months of March, June, September and December.
- LIVING ON ROAD WITH TIMED PARKING – The Taxes and Revenues Office wants to maintain consistency with issuing and collection of parking violations for everyone who receives a parking ticket. When a ticket is issued for people who live on timed streets, below are two options for a policy –
 1. All registrations that exceed the tickets for overtime will be held responsible for the violation.

If a registration receives a parking ticket for overtime parking on the street which the owner/renter can prove residency they will not be held responsible for the violation. In the

case that the ticket would be waived our office the name on the registration would need to match the land records or signed lease.

Commented [JP2]: Which option does the PPC prefer?

Public Parking Commission			2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2021-22	2022-23	2022-23	2023-24
			Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Projected	Proposed
Revenues									
28544300	45226	Parking Tickets	41,030	32,100	33,000	33,865	32,000	35,000	38,000
28544300	46101	Interest	1,982	696	600	334	250	2,500	3,000
28544300	47204	Parking Rental Income	182,347	139,496	195,000	166,597	160,000	155,000	168,000
28544300	48990	Miscellaneous Revenue	51	230	100	68	50	4	50
Totals			225,410	172,522	228,700	200,864	192,300	192,504	209,050

Expenditures									
28544325	51610	Regular Employees	104,274	107,271	120,000	110,158	95,000	87,000	30,523
28544325	52000	Fringe Benefits	40,928	47,107	48,000	45,227	42,000	37,000	34,294
28544325	53022	Legal Fees	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,500
28544325	53510	Software Updates & Maintenance	8,389	7,145	12,000	9,978	10,000	10,000	10,000
28544325	54310	Equip & Furniture Maintenance	508	442	1,000	528	1,000	500	1,000
28544325	54410	Utilities	24,215	25,622	32,000	25,058	30,000	28,000	29,000
28544325	54430	Parking Repairs & Maintenance	0	0	1,000	136	1,000	3,000	60,000
28544325	55521	Liability Insurance	1,980	2,103	2,500	2,113	2,300	2,300	2,415
28544325	55530	Communications	3,777	3,622	4,000	3,665	3,600	3,500	2,383
28544325	55532	Postage	1,039	841	1,200	1,356	1,200	1,200	1,300
28544325	56600	Uniforms & Clothing	0	0	300	111	300	150	150
28544325	56610	Supplies	3,255	1,141	4,000	2,543	3,000	2,000	2,000
28544325	56627	Vehicle Fuel	683	780	1,000	1,104	1,200	800	1,000
28544325	59100	Transfer To General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	15,000	30,000
Totals			189,048	196,074	227,000	201,977	190,600	190,450	206,565

Staffing

Parking Administrator	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Parking Administrative Clerk	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0
Parking Enforcement Attendant	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	1
TOTAL FTE'S	2.58	2.58	2.58	2.58	2.58	2.58	1.00

Salaries

Parking Administrator	58,812
Parking Administrative Clerk	39,774
Parking Enforcement Attendant	30,523

Total Salaries Paid by City Consolidation District Fund

Parking Administrator	0
Parking Administrative Clerk	0
Parking Enforcement Attendant	30,523

TOTAL SALARIES	30,523
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