



Ted Zeller – Chairperson
Candida Affa – Vice Chairperson
Santo Napoli – Treasurer
Daryl Hendricks – Secretary
Seth O’Neill- Member

John N. Morgan – Executive Director
Dan McCarthy, Davison McCarthy – APA Solicitor

ALLENTOWN PARKING AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Allentown Parking Authority Board of Directors was held at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 17, 2021, at the Office of The Allentown Parking Authority, located at 603 W. Linden Street, Allentown, PA 18101.

The following attended:

Ted Zeller – Chairperson
Candida Affa – Vice Chairperson
Daryl Hendricks – Secretary
Santo Napoli – Treasurer
Dan McCarthy – APA Solicitor
John Morgan – Executive Director
Jon Haney – Deputy Director
Christina Dayton – Deputy Director
Christina Nolden – Minutes
Cynthia Mota, City Council Vice President -Guest

Seth O’Neill – Member (Absent)
Connie Abercrombie – Finance Manager (Absent)

Mr. Zeller called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Ted Zeller introduced himself to the guests that were attending.

1. Cynthia Mota, City Council Vice President – Mr. Morgan asks Cynthia to go first. Ms. Mota presents the Board with a written statement. She states that, “Allentown is our city and to all my fellow parents, I feel your pain. I know what

it's like to have me or my father-in-law ticketed while waiting to pick up my children. Being a member of City Council does not make me immune to financial attacks being waged against our community and that is really the way I feel. Families are already struggling to make ends meet. A \$10.00 ticket could affect how the families are able to eat that day. Multiple tickets can throw the entire month into a frenzy. With food prices and inflation, every dollar counts. We are all counting our money more than ever. This is an opportunity for the Parking Authority to show a little compassion. We understand that holding up traffic causes difficulties in the flow of cars, but there has to be a better way than financially penalizing poverty-stricken families. The Parking Authority can take time to find solutions, and again like I mentioned before solutions with City Council members, solutions with traffic control, solutions with the community. We cannot work alone when creating solutions. Since the pandemic, we have seen the income decrease and a couple of us could use relief. We need to make sure our parking people are not being insensitive in meeting a ticket quota. They should be rewarded for the compassion they extend our citizens, especially during a time of crisis. We are all in the community, but it does not feel that way when we are divided by our financial status. She states that she knows many of the people at the meeting. She says she believes the Board will do what is right by the community. She mentions she has a child at the Charter. She suggests looking at the Charter. She says the solutions may not be right away, but something needs to happen fast.

Mr. Zeller clarifies that Ms. Mota is talking about the Academy of the Arts located on Union Street, that is by Church and Hickory and South 6th Street. He confirms that, as reported in the news, parents are being ticketed while waiting to pick up their children.

Ms. Mota shares that the City Council met in the beginning with the school. She was present at the meeting. She mentions that the school met with the police and the traffic department. The school was mapped out and set up and now she believes there is a miscommunication.

Mr. Zeller mentions what the Board has investigated the parking since the news report. He explains that not everyone understands exactly how the city functions. He states the Parking Authority is an independent authority. The authority is not part of the city. The Board is appointed by the mayor. The authority owns garages, and the authority is charged with enforcement of the parking regulations that City Council makes. He states that it was investigated with both the police and to the city and they said there is no plan in place. Whoever is running things now, does not know of the plan. Even if there was a plan in place, the authority does not know anything about it. Ms. Mota confirms that she was there when they met. Mr. Zeller states that the authority gets calls from city residents about

the traffic flow, which is why there is action to issue tickets. Mr. Zeller suggests that the Board get together with city administration, the streets, city council and come up with a better plan for the Arts Academy. There needs to be investigation for a better plan. He mentions that the lack of communication has been fairly prevalent among the agencies. Ms. Mota agrees with Mr. Zeller. The authority is always an afterthought. The authority does not get to have clear instruction on what exactly to do. The authority has officers out on the street doing the enforcement and it should not be their job to exercise discretion as to whether it is a good idea to give a parking ticket. Mr. Zeller suggests that everyone on the Board to try and look at what's happening. However, in the interim, the authority cannot have people stop in the middle of the street because there are certain safety issues. Mr. Hendricks asks Ms. Mota if the police were at the meeting, along with traffic control. Ms. Mota confirms that they were and that there was a plan. She helped the school from the beginning. She is at the meeting as a concerned parent. Mr. Hendricks asks if there was anyone there from the Parking Authority. Ms. Mota says no. He further asks if anything was ever relayed to the Parking Authority about the traffic plan. Ms. Mota states she does not know that and that there is a disconnect. Mr. Hendricks states that all the entities need to all get together and put together a plan that is functional, safe for everyone, especially for the children.

Ms. Nadia Alicia from Allentown states that she is not there to talk about that particular incident. She is a resident for 24 years, a graduate of Dieruff and a former ASE employee and a current child and preschool director. She is a parent of 2 children who attend the Arts Academy Elementary Charter School. She is there to voice her concerns about the current practices of the Allentown Parking Authority. She requests that the Board is held accountable and requests that there is an evaluation of the current leadership, the Board representation, as well as the operation and training of staff. On representation, the City of Allentown has a majority population that has been identified as Hispanic or Latino. This population is currently under-represented on this Board. She asks APA and the Mayor of Allentown to appoint representatives that are a reflection of our diverse community, this includes ethnicity, gender and geographical location of residents. On current practices the APA has operated a business that is systematically a process. This is done through excessive and unjust ticketing in targeted areas of the city. Also, a process that discourages residents to appeal tickets in court, which I have experienced and also, holding public Board meetings in the middle of the day which are not accessible to the common folk. On leadership, the City of Allentown has failed its residents by prioritizing the financial interests of the APA rather than the needs of its residents. Furthermore, the two representatives appointed to this Board by the City of Allentown have failed us, the constituents. The Executive Director, along with Deputy Directors of APA have failed to operate a business that also serves the needs of Allentown. They have failed to build a culturally and geographic responsive system, adequate training for employees that have boots on the ground. Quite honestly, we all understand that this entire organization was created to generate revenue and it has become

evident that those who will benefit the most financially are those responsible for building a systematically oppressive system. In the year 2021, this is no longer going unnoticed, it is no longer undocumented, it is no longer unseen or unspoken about. The Allentown Parking Authority has a responsibility to provide a service that is appropriate for our city. The City of Allentown has a responsibility to appoint representatives that prioritize the interest of our residents. So today, I am simply here with my comment to ask both the APA and representatives of the City of Allentown to fulfill those responsibilities. Mr. Zeller asks what areas are you referring to that the APA is targeting? Ms. Alicia responds by saying that she is not there to answer questions but to give comment and she would like to hear the meeting. Mr. Zeller comments that her statement was very general comments. He explains that the Board is set by the Bylaws and its charter, that there is one mandatory appointment from City Council, one person that is mandatory from the city finance department and then he believes there are three other members at-large. Mr. Zeller states that the Parking Authority nor this Board have any appointment power. Mr. Zeller mentions that there will be a new mayor that will take more of an active role that will listen to these minutes. Mr. Zeller does not understand the profiteering comment. He explains that he spends a lot of time with the Board, he is a purely a volunteer and he is not paid one penny. The salaries of all the employees here are in line with all of the employees with other agencies throughout the cities. Even at those rates, the APA is significantly undermanned, and it is tough to attract talent and training. We have job posts of openings. If there is a concern about the composition of the workforce at the authority and you know folks that are looking for a job that you would like to see help steer the ship at the Authority of a more kin composition, please tell them to sign up. We are in desperate need of various levels of hiring at the Parking Authority. We had difficulty before the pandemic and after the pandemic. We have four postings at this time, and we need an unlimited number for event staff. There is a high amount of turnover. The parking business is not a glory business in any way shape or form. The Board will try to be in tune with the changing demographic of the city, supporting that, supporting different cultures, supporting economic growth because it all comes back to dollars. Ms. Affa asks for the percentages of color or Latino employees and in higher positions such as supervisors and managers. Mr. Morgan does not know the percentages, but he does know that our management staff is equal men and women. We have Latino managers, also supervisors and also our workforce is more than 50%. Mr. Morgan is talking about everybody who works for the APA. He mentions that we have in customer service we have two Hispanic people who speak Spanish, a man and woman and two African American. Our enforcement staff alone, if you look at the breakdown between male and female, whites, Hispanic and black, you will see we do not hire for numbers. We hire the ones who have the qualifications for the job. Ms. Affa does agree with Mr. Zeller that we need to be a lot more customer friendly. There needs to be open communication. Sometimes things happen during events, and we do not even know about it. It happens a lot and the Parking Authority always gets the brunt of it. Ms. Affa believes that the Board wants to start helping the

people. Mr. Napoli adds about the profiteering that Mr. Haney did a study a couple of months ago where the Board compared Allentown's violation rates to the rest of the state that includes Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, but also cities like Scranton, Reading, Harrisburg, Lancaster. It was determined, and this is all public record based on violation rates in every city, that the Allentown Parking Authority is by far the lowest across the Board with the exception of one violation, double parking. We were in the bottom 20% compared to every other city in the Commonwealth. It doesn't mean that we are the best, it just means that if we are in the business of profiteering, we are doing a pretty lousy job of it. Also, if you are familiar with residential parking permits that was a program implemented about 25 years ago and the cost sense residential parking has gone up zero. Mr. Napoli has done its best to keep the cost down. Mr. Hendricks mentions the comment of being culturally insensitive. He mentions being on the Board because of his knowledge because he was a traffic Captain for the City of Allentown. The incident was unfortunate and it something that will need work. We do not do enforcement based on the color of someone's skin. It is based on the vehicle and where it is parked and if it is in violation. Mr. Hendricks mentions that he does not get paid to be on the Board. There are many times the Authority takes the brunt from many people, double parking being a big one. Yet it is one of the most unsafe practices people continue to do in the city on North 7th Street. We get more complaints from people about that and that is why we are probably one of the highest. Mr. Zeller confirms that we do target North 7th Street and it has nothing to do with color of anybody's skin. It has to do with that it is the gateway to our community, and we get regular complaints about double parking. Ms. Affa states that she believes we can help our citizens, especially with dropping off children. Mr. Zeller states that we need to support the institutions, schools, churches, hospitals. Mr. Napoli talks about the 7th and Allen project that was a sizable investment to help alleviate double parking and that there are ways to come up with solutions.

Pas Simpson of Allentown introduces himself. He states that it isn't just about ethnicity, but location. Where we put our parking authority makes it shelter certain different ethnic groups. We know that there is a cluster of black and brown people in the heart of center city. He talks to a lot the parking authority people. He states that they do not feel the same support. He states that he has had a number of parking authority people come to him because he is a community outlet. He does have jobs available. He states that these people do not have first adequate training where they feel comfortable, second the areas where they are usually put look like people like us and third, when they do come back to say hey maybe we shouldn't ticket they don't feel like they still have the same power. Those are specifics. Mr. Hendricks asks who he is speaking about. Mr. Simpson states he is talking about enforcement officers. As far as saying it is not racial, how many enforcement officers are deployed in certain parts of the city where black and brown people are the most, not just the arts school but even the parents around Central Elementary. There is a disconnect in both the enforcement officers, the administration, and the community. For us to pretend

that this is not a racial thing would us acting like, you do the number of tickets, the number of enforcement officers, the number of hours they spend in center city and the east side. If you do all those things, what are those numbers going to reflect. He does not think Allentown Parking Authority is the worst. He says there is some room for growth, room for accountability. He mentions that Mr. Hendricks has served for 43 years and that he doesn't doubt that he knows what he is talking about with parking. A meeting at this time, most people who have real complaints can't make it. He mentions that the makeup of the Board is no reflection of this city on the Board. Mr. Hendricks states that he has lived in this city for 68 years and that there is a reflection of this city. Mr. Simpson asks for demographics and who lives in center city. Mr. Zeller mentions that he lives on the outskirts of the city. Mr. Hendricks mentions that he did live in center city on 7th Street. Mr. Hendricks states that yes, the majority of tickets are written in center city because the majority of people and parking is center city. Mr. Hendricks says that probably the area of center city has the most highly populated and also condense, smaller area. It makes sense. You are not going to be writing tickets to the far east side, the south side, or the north end. Mr. Zeller states that we need more parking put in pocket communities to support our communities. The first step was North 7th Street. Ms. Affa states that she has been here for 15 years. She says that she lived on 12th and Chew for 40 years. She just moved two years ago and does not think any differently than she did for 40 years. Just because she lives on the west end her mentality has not changed. She thinks that just because some of the Board outside of the inner city does not make us any differently qualified to help. It would make no difference how the Board would run if there were three people of color on the Board. She states that they are doing the best they can for nothing. They do not get paid to do this and they try very hard to do our jobs. Mr. Simpson states that there has been an increase of people living in the city, but no increase of parking, especially in center city where it affects the black and brown people. Ms. Mota wants to know what we are going to do for the parents of the arts academy. Mr. Zeller states more training for the enforcement officers in getting them up to speed and customer service is always a struggle. He would like to, in open business, discuss what recommendations we would have as a Board in working with the city on the Academy of Arts school issue. Mr. Zeller asks if there is a public safety sub-committee. He further asks if that is something the parking authority, streets and police could take part in and discuss. Ms. Mota states she is the chairperson of public safety. Mr. Hendricks says they will notify the traffic engineering and the police department. Ms. Affa states that the academy has been there for five years. She asks if this is an isolated incident. Mr. Morgan states that we get complaints all the time. Ms. Mota states that people get ticketed what they do is pay because they have to take off of work to fight the ticket or they get found guilty. Ms. Affa asks to know how many people get ticketed at this academy. Ms. Affa asks if this is a one-time thing or has this been going on the last five years. Ms. Affa would like to see the statistics. Ms. Mota asks for more customer service.

Mr. Zeller asks if we addressed everybody's comments to get on with other business.

Mr. Hendricks made a motion to approve the October minutes. Mr. Napoli seconded it. The Board voted and approved the October meeting minutes.

The Board broke for an Executive Session at 1:14 p.m. The Board ended their Executive Session and the regular meeting resumed at 1:49 p.m.

There were no motions during Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Morgan mentions we covered the RCAP application.

Mr. Morgan gave the report about the North 7th Street project. He mentions they are working on the driveway entrance. Mr. Morgan said it is paved. Plantings are next week. Then striping and then it will be opened. Mr. Morgan reports that two ladies were hired to make face-to-face contact with residents and businesses on the 500 and 600 blocks. They have signatures from people that they talked to. The families have two cars, three cars. The people who were most interested were businesses for their employees. Everyone has been notified even those who were not there received a paper.

Spiral Deck – Pennoni should be finishing up the engineering report on that this month so that next month there will be a report to look at as to what needs to be done. So far, nothing structural.

Mr. Morgan turns it over to Mr. Haney. Mr. Haney states that the numbers dropped in October for our targeted enforcement of 7th Street. Part of that is because we have had a nice increase of hiring on the enforcement side. We pulled some officers to assist with training during the month to get these officers trained and out for their shifts. So, there were only 46 double parking issued in October. September was 93 so it is obviously a big drop. However, year to date through October we were sitting at 979 tickets which is 332 more than last year and that's at the end of October. There is still November and December to go. Mr. Haney states there were 1,322 requests for enforcement in the month of October. That is a little down for September 1,533 for a dip of 211 calls. However, year to date through October we have taken 12,715 calls for enforcement. Mr. Haney mentions that the Board had made the decision to drop the hourly rate on unit blocks of 4th Street and 12th Street from \$2.00 an hour to \$1.00 an hour. The change was made yesterday morning through the mobile app. It went into effect at 8 o'clock yesterday morning.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mrs. Dayton gave the financial report in Mrs. Abercrombie's absence.

Total Revenue for the month of October was \$927,000 (25.9% ahead of budget). YTD Total Revenue was \$8,693,000 (17.9% ahead of budget). Operating Revenue was \$897,000 (23.4% ahead of budget). YTD Operating Revenue was \$7,942,000 (9.22% ahead of budget). Total Operating Expenses for the month of October was \$598,371 (26.8% over budget). YTD Operating Expenses was \$4,278,000 (9.4% below budget). For the month of October, the total revenue exceeded total expenses by \$329,000 (24.4% ahead of budget). After transfers from the sales of assets, transfers to capital to the city and the debt service fund, the general operating fund shows an excess of \$100,259. Overall, for the ten-month period ending in October, total revenue exceeded total operating expenses by \$4,414,000 (66.7% ahead of budget).

Overall, for the ten-month period ending October, total revenue exceeded total operating expenses by \$4,414,299 (66.7% ahead of budget). After transfers from the sale of assets, transfers to capital projects, the city and debt service, the excess for the period is \$1,849,693. Without the PPP grant income, the excess is \$1,268,293.

Not shown on the Operating Statement are the work-in-process costs incurred for capital projects, currently at \$358,883 year-to-date, resulting in an excess of \$909,410.

Project costs of \$9,040,871 for the Maple Street Garage are not included in this calculation because the costs are not paid from operating revenue.

This meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

The next Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 26, 2022.