



Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 9/27/2023

Time: 4:00PM

Location: Bethlehem Parking Authority Offices

I. Call Meeting to Order at The Bethlehem Parking Authority Office on Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

A. **Present:** Ms. Lynn Cunningham, Chairperson; Mr. Eugene Gonzalez, Secretary; Ms. Karen Widrick, Board Member; Mr. Jim Broughal, Solicitor; Mr. Leo DeVito, Solicitor; Mr. Steve Fernstrom, Executive Director; Ms. Tiffany Wells, Deputy Director, Mr. Chris Betley, Consultant Buckno Lisicky and BPA Staff

B. **Absent:** Mr. Mark Jobes, Treasurer

III. Executive Session

A. Ms. Lynn Cunningham asked for an Executive Session to discuss litigation matters.

B. Mr. Jim Broughal stated the Executive Session lasted for twenty minutes to discuss potential litigation matters.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Ms. Lynn Cunningham asked for a motion to approve the Minutes from August 23, 2023. Mr. Eugene Gonzalez made a motion to approve the Minutes, and Ms. Karen Widrick seconded the motion. A motion was passed unanimously.

V. Courtesy of the floor

A. Mr. Bruce Haines, Managing Partner of Hotel Bethlehem, expressed his concerns regarding significant pressure from the BPA relative to several issues, which starts with the City and Bethlehem Parking Authority attempting to take over the Spring Street Lot, which the Hotel leases the Spring Street Parking Lot from HBMS. Mr. Bruce Haines stated, in reference to the Hotel and the Spring Street Lot, "We manage it, we lease it, we oversee it". Mr. Haines also stated



that there's been a serious discussion with the BPA about taking over and managing the lot. Mr. Haines stated it is a serious interference in the operation of their business to turn over any kind of management to that lot to the BPA. The hotel uses it for every event, and it has been their Event Parking Lot. It's been like that for 25 years, and the Hotel employees also park in that lot. While ongoing discussions are ongoing, Mr. Haines stated that the angst is caused by the BPA needing to tear down and rebuild the Walnut Street Garage, which would utilize the Spring Street Lot for parking displacement. It is the initiating factor that has caused the angst. He is representing the Hotel, his partners, and his employees over the anxiety that all of this is causing them and the undue pressure from their perspective by the BPA to take over the Spring Street Parking Lot. Mr. Haines stated that he just wanted to say that there has been a lot of pressure being thrown around.

Mr. Haines stated the "straw that broke the camels back" was the Smart Loading Zone sign that was installed in front of the Hotel on Main Street, a City Street. Mr. Haines stated he assumed the BPA made a mistake. He stated he reached out to Steve Fernstrom, Executive Director, and Mr. Fernstrom did not respond. He stated that he took the sign down because it was creating a lot of confusion for him and his guests. He stated that it is the Hotel's layby for the greeting of guests and has been that way forever. He repeated by saying they manage and use the layby, and there's nothing involving the parking authority. He mentioned they have asked for the removal of public parking meters on the city streets layby to assist the Hotel with respect to the bus traffic they receive. He also felt that the camera that was installed was an invasion of privacy to the famous people who come to the hotel. Mr. Haines asked the BPA to rescind the Smart Loading Zone location in front of the Hotel, and if it is not, then consider the consequences. He stated he would appreciate if the BPA could take the pressure off. Mr. Haines asked if there were any questions twice, and the Board responded no.

- B. Ms. Emily Frye from 115 E Garrison Street is asking for notification to the neighbors when postings go up on their block. She asked for the definition of a crosswalk. Ms. Emily Frye was referred to the City of Bethlehem for clarification and to leave her info for the BPA to contact her.

VI. Reports

A. Director's Report

- i. Walnut Street Garage – Recommendation for the approval of the COA for the demolition of the garage, which will go to City Council. Two pre-demolition meetings were held with the adjacent property owners which went very well. The demo team and Boyle Construction were there to answer any questions. The next steps are to finalize the construction easement and pre-inspection analysis on the adjacent properties. A displacement plan meeting was held with members of



the Downtown Business Association. Mayor Reynolds was also in attendance. The first public displacement meeting will be held at the Hyatt on October 11, 2023.

- ii. The last car count was completed for the feasibility study in September. The car counts will continue in the Spring Street Lot during the holiday season. Through February, the max occupancy for the Walnut Street Garage was 42%, with 450 open spaces. In the North Street Garage, 38% was occupied with 498 open spaces. The numbers stayed consistent up to the month of September.
- iii. Smart Loading Zone – A grant was received from Automotus towards the end of last year for \$100,000. Automotus program incentivizes turnover by adding a progressive rate. The cameras will only take vehicle and plate data. The disclaimer is also on our website that claims this information. We have identified 10 to 15 zones across the City. Signs and cameras are being installed and will be going live soon. A public meeting was held, and only two people showed up. A few weeks ago, someone from Automotus came from California and walked around with Ms. Tiffany Wells. They went door to door, explaining the process and giving out pamphlets. QR codes were also handed out so they could be passed onto the drivers. Numerous DBA meetings were also attended, informing the businesses that the Smart Loading Zones will start soon. Good feedback was received. Mr. Steve Fernstrom stated that all the revenue generated will be donated to the DBA on the north side and revenue from the southside to the Southside Arts District.
- iv. Lease Default – Mechanic Street Development Associates have defaulted on their lease for 117 spaces in the Polk Street Garage.

A. Solicitor's Report

- i. None

B. Financial Report

- i. Mr. Chris Betley reported for the month of August 2023 there was \$4,043,917.70 in unrestricted cash and investments. In fixed assets under the Construction in Progress for the Polk Street Garage Project, there was \$16,822,528.93, and for the Walnut Street Garage Project, \$247,522.28. Mr. Chris Betley said we are beginning to capitalize for the construction in the Walnut Street Garage. Net income for the month of August 2023 was \$1,497,141.29. Debt Service payment is due October 1, 2023, for 1.6 million. Ms. Lynn Cunningham asked for a motion to approve the Financial Report for the month of August. Mr. Eugene Gonzalez made a motion to approve the financials, and Ms.



Karen Widrick seconded the motion. A motion was passed unanimously.

VII. Old Business

A. none

VIII. New Business

- A. Mr. Scott Shearer from PFM Financial Advisors suggested a non-binding RFP be put out in the next week for the construction of Walnut Street Garage. The financing timeline would be September 26, 2023, with a presentation and authorization to proceed from the Board. Late September, release bank loan request for proposals (RFP). On October 18, 2023, present the results of the RFP to the Board. November 15, 2023, accept a proposal and adopt a borrowing resolution. In mid-December 2023, closing on the loan. Ms. Lynn Cunningham asked for a motion authorizing the issuance of the RFP condition upon Mr. Mark Jobes. Mr. Eugene made a motion, and Ms. Karen Widrick seconded the motion. A motion was passed unanimously.
- B. Mr. Kevin Carrigan from THA Consulting reported since December 2021, we have been performing quarterly assessments of the Walnut Street Garage. Every time an assessment is made, we've come across new steel repairs, concrete spalls ready to fall from the ceiling, and issues with the brick façade. In the most recent assessment that was done a few weeks ago, we found some issues with the brick façade along Walnut Street, with potential brick that could fall onto the sidewalk. The sidewalk has been taken out of service. We've also found broken welds on the end of some beams that are part of the lateral resistance of the garage. The garage is getting to the end of its service life. There are two options I have outlined. The first is to demolish the garage at the beginning of the year and build a new garage, costing roughly \$23,000,000 and lasting sixty to eighty years. The second option is to put everything on hold for roughly twenty years. Repairs would need to be made to the garage, like the standpipe system, the vertical transportation system, the elevators, the electrical system, the lighting, etc. The garage would still need to be replaced in twenty years. Mr. Jim Broughal asked if the garage is safe until it is demolished in January 2023. Mr. Kevin Carrigan mentioned portions of the garage had been taken out of service due to the costly repairs.
- C. Investment Transfer – Mr. Steve Fernstrom reported that an investment of \$1,000,000 into PSDLAF was made at 5.4% interest. Ms. Lynn Cunningham asked for a motion to ratify the action taken by the Executive Director and the Treasurer. Mr. Eugene Gonzalez made a motion, and Ms. Karen Widrick seconded the motion. A motion was passed unanimously.
- D. Capital Budget Transfers – There's an interested party for the Lehigh Street Lot for one hundred spaces. Conditions with the letter of intent from that party is to make some improvements to the lot, including lighting, emergency call box, and



pedestrian signage. The cost of improvements is \$30,000. Mr. Steve Fernstrom asked for a motion to approve a capital transfer of \$30,000 for parking lot improvements for the Lehigh Street Lot. Mr. Eugene Gonzalez made a motion to approve the transfer and Ms. Karen Widrick seconded the motion. A motion was passed unanimously.

- E. North Street Garage – Mr. Steve Fernstrom asked for \$100,000 to make improvements in lighting and signage in the North Street Garage. Ms. Lynn Cunningham asked for a motion to approve the transfer of \$100,000 for improvements to the North Street Garage. Mr. Eugene Gonzalez made a motion, and Ms. Karen Widrick seconded the motion. A motion was passed unanimously.

IX. Adjournment at

- A. Ms. Lynn Cunningham asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Karen Widrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Eugene Gonzalez seconded the motion. A motion was passed unanimously.