



A Regular Board Meeting of the Missoula Parking Commission was virtually held on **Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at 12:00 p.m.** Those in attendance were Board members Joe Easton, John Roemer, Glenda Bradshaw, Pat Corrick and JR Casillas. From the Missoula Parking Commission (MPC) was Tiffany Brander, Parking Services Director and Jodi Pilgrim, Parking Services Manager. Also in attendance, Linda McCarthy, Missoula Downtown Partnership and Nathan McLeod, Parks and Recreation.

1. **Call to order** – Joe Easton
2. **Introductions**
3. **Public Comments & Announcements** - None
4. **Adjustment(s) to the Agenda** - None
5. **Approval of Minutes**
  - a. Board Meeting held August 11, 2020. John Roemer motioned to approve the minutes. JR Casillas seconded this motion. The minutes from August 11, 2020 were unanimously approved.
6. **Communications and Presentations**
  - a. **Downtown North Riverside Parks and Trails Plan – Linda McCarthy, Downtown Missoula Partnership**

The Downtown Master Plan was finalized and adopted in August, 2019. The Missoula Parking Commission was a strong supporter of the plan. They have been taking a deep dive into the North Riverside Parks and Trails with Dover Kohl. The area covered is on the north side of the Clark Fork River between Russell Street and Missoula College with specific focus on Caras Park, East Caras Park, and Bess Reed Park. It also includes Kiwanis Park and West Lions Park. There are five main goals of the North Riverside Parks and Trails Plan. They are to enhance ecological functions, improve views and access to the river, improve gateways and circulation, develop parks for everyone and for all seasons, and support existing uses and design multi-functional spaces. This has been a year long, community involved, planning process.

They are now starting the adoption process for the Downtown North Riverside Parks and Trails Plan and are seeking multi-agency approval. Today they are asking the Missoula Parking Commission to adopt the plan. The adoption process should be completed around mid-November. Linda played the Dover Kohl video and then asked the Board for any questions.

John Roemer really likes the ideas that came out of the planning. Phase one includes a 15% reduction of spaces which would be a loss of about 63 parking spaces, which could be a loss of \$158,000.00/year of parking revenue. He wanted to know if anyone in the planning process had looked in to that.

Linda stated that, no, she did not believe anyone had looked into what that loss of revenue would be. Nathan McLeod stated that it is a ten year plan that won't happen all at once. John asked what portion would be the ten year plan. Nathan explained that it would be reorganizing the parking, but leaves most of the lots. The long-term vision includes the community center and structured parking garage at the west end of the park. That part is 20 years in the future. Since we will be phasing out the parking over time, there will also be opportunities to replace the parking in other places in the downtown area. The thing that will happen soonest is the Higgins Avenue

Bridge Project and they would like to implement the activities under the bridge now. Parking is closed now for the bridge construction and the goal is to not allow parking to go back in to that space. John appreciates the goal, but is concerned that the parking in that area will be sorely missed.

Glenda Bradshaw seconded John's comments. She wants to know if the loss of revenue from those spaces could be offset by an increase in utilization in other areas of the Downtown, or are all areas 100% utilized already.

Tiffany Brander stated that there is an opportunity for more capacity in other areas. In Bridge Lot, we have already relocated those parkers to the Bank structure due to low utilization. If parking didn't return, we would keep them in that area.

Glenda asked, with Nick Checota's project cancelled or on hold, is there a possibility for the City to keep that as a green space for citizens of Missoula or for more parking instead of selling it. Linda answered no, there is a long-term plan to develop housing, office, parking, and lodging. She knows the developers and knows that that project will come to fruition eventually with or without Nick Checota. Nathan McLeod explained that part of that is park land and will be kept green.

Joe Easton asked Tiffany for the number of spaces in the Bridge Lot that have been relocated. 31 spaces. Joe asked Nathan if it is his expectation that if the Parking Commission approves this plan that we agree that parking spots should not return to the Bridge Lot in the near term. Nathan doesn't know for sure the processes, but hopes that they would have MPC's blessing to not kick it down the road and be able to proceed without having to fight for it. Because it is the community's vision and what the community wants to see, if we could figure out what to do about parking without putting them back under the bridge and having to fight to get them out again later, that would be ideal.

Joe believes there is some opportunity to edit or add some language to the parks and trails plan and that it needs to be added to properly put in to context the role of MPC and the timing of replacement or restoration of parking spots and parking access. In his opinion, parking needs to be provided somewhere else before a lot is taken up. Joe noted that the language on page 88 "then as some of the parking areas in the park are transformed into green space and other park amenities, new temporary and shared parking options nearby can be provided." Should have the clauses reversed to read, "then as new temporary and shared parking options nearby are provided, some of the parking areas in the park are transformed into green space and other park amenities." It is irresponsible to risk that the parking used by businesses and customers might be taken up without replacing the 114 spots next to the tent or the 155 spots next to Dragon Hollow. This is not an effort to diminish the efforts of the committee, but so many things have to happen to replace these parking spots. In his opinion, that is not accurately represented in the draft.

Linda stated that it's hard to change renderings, but text changes can be done. Joe stated that he is asking for a text change. The Bridge Lot is a temporary change that we were able to move, but his concern is the order for the larger lots. Linda noted that the Riverfront Lot on the East side of the bridge would continue to be used as parking. The New Park Lot needs to be reorganized. The trees need to be removed and sidewalk redone so that it can be a gateway from Front Street to the water. They see that being reorganized, but they see it happening later. The Caras Lot long view would be to relocate that parking into structure parking. This plan ties to the Downtown Master Plan and the long-range Transportation Plan which calls for 50% of Missoulians to be biking, walking and bussing. They are trying to align with other community goals as well. She does not want to lose a bunch of parking either, they just think it can be reorganized better and relocated

to other areas so that the waterfront area can be a space for people. Joe agrees that surface parking is a poor use in that location. He is interested in the Board's opinion on adding language that the Parking Commission has the responsibility to replace or add spots when a surface parking area is removed.

John Roemer agrees with the need for added or changed language. Joe wanted to clarify to Nathan that abandonment of the Bridge spots would not be a fight. We just need to be deliberate about how to relocate those spaces. It gives us a chance to set a process, perhaps, for when we turn our attention to relocating 155 spaces.

Linda offered to add a paragraph or something somewhere in the plan to address this process. Nathan asked if the Board would like him to put together their changes. Joe said that they will put it together in the action items and have it redrafted if necessary.

## **7. Financial Statement – Jim Galipeau**

Jim referenced page 6 of the incomplete draft of August financials. He explained that this is a comparison of this year August to last year in August. Our parking ticket revenue is down about \$9,000.00, our meters are down \$35,000.00. Altogether, short-term parking is down about \$40,000.00. This is a total of 28% down from August in the prior year. If you look back at July, we are down about 50%. August has recovered a fair amount for short-term revenues. Leased parking was also down, but only by \$5,000.00 from last year and down \$15,000.00 year to date. Overall revenue is down about \$52,000.00 for the month of August.

Expenses on page 9: total general expenses are down about \$18,000.00 for August and down about \$58,000.00 year to date. Income from operations is down about \$33,000.00 from last August. We are down about \$85,000.00 for July and August. We're down quite a bit, but coming back in August. The other expenses do not change due to COVID, lack of use, or any other reason. They are City Contract, Bank Interest, Bond Interest and Depreciation/Amortization. They are non-operational items. So, overall, MPC is down about 1/3 on net income from operations.

On the Parking Commission dashboard comparative balance sheet, our cash and investments are \$1,480,000.00, but there are things that are already spoken for – City contract, accrued merchant fees and interest, and bond payments. There is actually more like \$1,000,000.00 available to be used for operations. The income statement shows big variance in short-term parking. Expense wise, we are below budget in a lot of expense areas.

Joe Easton asked if there were any questions for Jim. Tiffany stated that, looking into September and the end of tourist season, we can expect to see more drops in meter revenue and continued lower lease revenue. Joe asked how Tiffany feels about her expense budget at this time and when is a proper time, even in the interim before Board meetings, to review income and expenses so that we as a Board have the opportunity to make some tough decisions about expenses. Or, does the Board feel that a loss of, making up a number, \$300,000.00 in the year is acceptable? We have 1,000,000.00 in cash so we can absorb it, but it is a dramatic absorption. Pat Corrick thinks we can't control revenue, so the expense side of the equation is where we need to focus unless there are ways to manage growing revenue. Joe asked what Tiffany's short-term expectation of financial losses and possibly readdressing expenses or revenue sources. Tiffany thinks it would be safe to start the discussion in the December or January meeting, giving us time to get through and analyze our first quarter, and we can make some projections from there. We will have additional salary savings for a bit longer, so that will be helpful. If we shoot for the December or January Board meeting, if we need to start making tough decisions, it would be appropriate to start having those conversations then.

John Roemer watched over the last year our MPC team keep the doors open. He will check in with Tiffany later about why waiting for December makes sense. Tiffany mentioned that the City is working with year-end still, it's not realistic to be able to discuss it sooner.

Linda McCarthy mentioned that the losses we're seeing seem consistent with what they are hearing from other businesses Downtown – everyone seems to be down 50-55%. With the loss of Grizzly football and the loss of fall conference and MDA events, some of that loss may be attributed to those things. She thinks the COVID losses will go on for another 6-18 months at least. She does think people will come back to Downtown, their offices, and events.

Glenda Bradshaw agrees that we should do some baseline forecasting for the worst case scenarios for the next 12-18 months. Looking at the data month over month, when we had a pretty normal January and February for example and those months will probably not be normal this year. She is curious to see what we think is going to happen and wrap our arms around how we would like to respond to that. Joe believes that is reasonable.

Joe asked Tiffany and Jim about sending out some interim numbers, for September for example. He just doesn't want to wait for December and have it be worse than they're expecting and have to scramble to make changes at that time.

Jim commented that the numbers as they are on the dashboard and detailed financials when we are looking month over month and year to date, the next few pages are comparisons between where MPC is at with the current budget. For this year, MPC is actually ahead of that budget. The numbers are way down, but are positive compared to what we were budgeting. Going into December, it will be harder for the City in the middle of the audit to get the numbers out.

#### **8. Director's Report – Tiffany Brander**

Tiffany stated that construction started on the Higgins Bridge on October 5<sup>th</sup>. All of MPC's Bridge Lot lease holders were moved over to the Bank Street structure and the transition was as smooth, even more so than we could have expected.

On the Action Items, we have a contract for Library Lot enforcement that I will be asking for approval on. It would be exactly what we were doing in the old library lot, only moved over to the new location. It is not leases or paid parking, just timed spaces at the new lot.

Update on our staffing, since we last met, there has been an open Admin II position. We had one recruitment already, and it was a failed recruitment. We have another active recruitment which closes on October 28<sup>th</sup> and interviews for the Admin II will be the week of the 9<sup>th</sup>. Jodi is handling all of those. We are also doing a recruitment for a Parking Enforcement Officer. The recruitment closes at the end of this week on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Interviews for that position will be for the last week of October. We would like to have both of those positions filled by mid- to late November.

John Roemer asked if the PEO is a replacement or an addition. Tiffany stated that it is a replacement.

Joe asked for more questions. There were none.

#### **9. Action Items**

##### **a. Adoption of Downtown North Riverside Parks & Trails Plan**

Tiffany stated, based on the North Riverside Parks & Trails Plan document that each Board member has and based on the presentation given earlier, she is looking for a motion to adopt the plan.

Joe Easton asked Linda McCarthy to reintroduce the plan, the work that has been done and the work that needs to be done to go forward.

Linda stated, on behalf of the Downtown Missoula Partnership and Missoula Parks and recreation, we are here to seek your official approval of the North Riverside Parks and Trails Plan as a deeper dive connected to the Downtown Master Plan, which was approved by this body and the Missoula City Council in 2019. In reference to the request for a language change, Linda asked to present a proposal. In reference to page 88 of the plan document, and as a replacement to the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence in the paragraph, Linda requested the following change to the sentence, “With guidance from the Missoula Parking Commission and the opportunities to move surface parking to other areas, surface parking can be transformed into green space and other park amenities.”

Joe asked what is meant by guidance. Linda stated that MPC is responsible for the parcels where parking takes place. It doesn't make sense to move the plan forward without MPC support, engagement, contributions, management, etc. Joe thinks the language sounds sufficient. His overall comment is one of support and admiration for where this goes. His concern is only in managing how the Commission treats our inventory and what it takes to replace parking in the context of this plan. He believes Linda's change addresses the concern.

Glenda Bradshaw mentioned that she is concerned that the main parking parcels that are being changed are on the North side of the river while the plan to replace parking is on the South side of the river. Linda stated that the North Riverside Plan only addresses changes that would be made on the North side of the river. The new structures that are referenced in the plan would be built in the future, one adjacent to the Clark Fork Manor and the other at the Riverfront Triangle.

Joe has a concern that he doesn't want individuals and entities that have worked on this plan to think that the plan is achievable without some of those mechanics Jim mentioned. He realizes it is just a plan, but he doesn't want to imply to the community that this is doable without some heavy lifting.

Linda responded that this is a community vision, and some things in this vision will come to fruition and some things likely won't. A lot of the details being talked about here are the details of implementation and would have to be addressed when we get there. You take advantage of the opportunities when they arrive. When they get there, they navigate the details. That's more what implementation is about. They're currently asking for approval of the vision, not specifics of implementation.

Tiffany Brander mentioned that a lot of this was discussed with the Downtown Master Plan that it is a plan and not a policy.

John Roemer motioned to approve the plan subject to the chairman's approval of the language changes proposed to the document. Joe asked for the motion to be restated with the sentence to be change.

On behalf of the Missoula Parking Commission, we recommend approval of the North Riverside Parks and Trails plan with a couple of modifications, specifically, to the language on page 88, we would like to add the sentence “With guidance from the Missoula Parking Commission and the opportunities to move surface parking to other areas, surface parking can be transformed into green space and other park amenities.”.

Glenda Bradshaw seconded the motion. Joe asked for comments on the motion. Jodi performed a roll call vote. The motion to approve the North Riverside Parks and Trails Plan was unanimously approved.

**b. Contract with Missoula Public Library for parking lot enforcement**

Tiffany Brander shared the contract on her screen. As stated in the Director's report, it is not much different from our current agreement with the library. They are responsible for all the maintenance, signing, striping, and snow plowing in their lot. The only thing we are doing is enforcing time limited parking for 3 hour parking. They will be enforcing the parking for their employees. MPC will receive revenue from any citations that are issued. The agreement has already been approved by the City Attorney's office. The Library Board approved the arrangement back in May, and the contract is reflective of that conversation. Today, Tiffany is asking for a motion to approve the Agreement for Motor Vehicle Enforcement in the Missoula Public Library Lot.

John Roemer has read the document and has no questions. He motions to approve the agreement. Pat Corrick seconded. Joe asked for questions. Jodi Pilgrim performed a roll call vote. The motion to approve the Agreement for Motor Vehicle Enforcement in the Missoula Public Library Lot was unanimously approved.

**10. Non-action Items**

**a. New Business** – None

**b. Old Business** – None

**11. Setting of next meeting** (November 10, 2020, Jack Reidy Conference Room or via virtual meeting) **and adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi Pilgrim  
Parking Services Manager