



**CITY OF DOVER**

## DOVER PARKING COMMISSION - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting  
Meeting Location: City Hall Second Floor Conference Room  
288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820  
Meeting Date: **Friday, June 11 2010**  
Meeting Time: 8:30 am

Chairman Reynolds called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

### 1. Roll Call

**Members Present:** Charles Reynolds (Chair), Jack Buckley, George Maglaras, Anthony McManus, Otis Perry.

**Others Present:** William Simons, Marn Speidel (Police Department), J. Michael Joyal, Jr. (City Manager)

**Members Not Present:** Carrie Keech

### 2. Review and Approval of May 18, 2010 Minutes

McManus moved to approve, seconded by Buckley. No amendments to draft version. Motion passed 5-0.

### 3. Staff updates

Speidel gave an update on parking space allocation in the Orchard Street Lot as a follow-up to the May 18, 2010 non-public session. Speidel stated that the issue has been resolved successfully. Speidel also gave an update on ongoing work with the Assistant City Engineer to realign several rows of spaces in the Orchard Lot. Striping contractors are scheduled for next week which will provide a net increase of 4 parking spaces.

Buckley asked for a status of the Commission's recommendation to adjust pavement markings in the area of Ocean Bank and Bank of America. Speidel stated he wasn't sure of the status of Central Avenue (Ocean Bank) but would check with the City Engineer. Speidel stated that Washington Street (Bank of America) work was ongoing; the City Engineer was in the process of painting both sides of the street. The application of parking bays, as endorsed by the Commission, requires application of both "long" and "short" lines which are applied by different contracted crews. Washington Street has been partially completed.

Reynolds handed out copies of a Union Leader article on the topic of parking collection efforts in various municipalities.

### 4. Discussion on sign plan

Reynolds opened up preliminary discussion on this agenda item. Speidel produced samples and photographs of current multi-space meter signs. Speidel stated that in his opinion, the signs at the parking lot entrances (Orchard and Belknap) are of adequate size and contain all the relevant information. Speidel stated that most of the other supplemental meter signs are 12" x 18" which was smaller than planned – the smaller size was due to part to the Facilities Grounds and Cemeteries Division using smaller blanks in order to meet the target January 4 go-live deadline. Speidel stated that staff was open to comments from the Commission on wording. Speidel cited Manchester as an example where large reflective lettering was displayed on the side of the meter itself. Speidel cited a concern among merchants of too much parking-related signage and the desire to streamline the sign plan while still providing adequate notice to downtown customers. Speidel spoke about the use of enforcement time placards as separate from the actual sign so that they could be changed without a high cost.

Reynolds stated that the important thing is that the signs be standardized. Speidel referred to the standardization of signs as described in the MUTCD, which shows the white background with green lettering as the currently accepted federal standard for parking guide signs. Speidel stated that this color scheme is



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currently used in the City of Dover in some areas, whereupon there may be extra cost implications of changing our color scheme. Speidel stated that he had researched the type and color schemes in other NH municipalities and found that there was a wide variety. Some have changed to a blue background with white lettering, which is perceived by some as easier to read but at this point is not a generally accepted standard. Reynolds stated that the federal authorities are not always experts on a subject. Reynolds expressed the opinion that the blue background signs are easier to read. He said it was important for the signs to be standardized, and that they should look nice – especially in the parking lots, so the lots also look good.

McManus stated that our sign plan should not be greatly different than other cities. He stated he thinks the current signs are fine. Perry asked about the wording of the “place receipt on dash” sign. Buckley stated that he thinks the “Pay Meter Here” sign assembly looks cluttered and suggested boxing them in. Discussion ensued on the topic of sign posts and brackets. Reynolds suggested that Simons check with other municipalities for types and makeup of signs and stated that we should decide on a consistent sign plan before putting up any more.

### **5. Further discussion on parking time limits for downtown core after meter installation**

Reynolds opened discussion on this item. Reynolds asked whether we can rationalize whether there should be an on-street time limit. Simons asked whether this topic referred to chalking tires to track whether vehicles exceeded time limits on the street, or whether this referred to the amount of time a person can purchase at a meter. Reynolds stated that it was about purchasing time at a meter. He stated that he favors two hours. Buckley stated that if someone wanted to purchase four hours, then left after only two hours, this was bonus revenue. Reynolds asked whether a four hour time limit would provide adequate turnover. Reynolds cited an example of eating recently at a local restaurant and seeing his waitress suddenly leave the building in order to move her car. Buckley stated that there must be studies that have been done on what is appropriate for time limits. McManus stated that in areas where high turnover is desired, there should be a shorter limit.

Reynolds asked whether there should be an incentive to use the lots instead of parking on the street. Perry noted that there is no price difference for metered parking between these areas. Speidel stated that the incentive for those with a need for long term parking is to purchase a monthly permit in the lots, which is cheaper than paying the full meter rate. Speidel also pointed out that one incentive of the pay-n-display program is to allow the customer to pay once; obtaining a receipt that could be used in any other metered location in the downtown. This would allow the customer to run several errands at downtown businesses if necessary.

Speidel cited the difficulty in enforcing timed parking under the current wording of the ordinance, which technically allows users to move from street to street every two hours. This is what enforcement officers see repeatedly occurring among downtown employees. Speidel stated that the economics of paid parking should take care of turnover. Speidel stated he recommends no time limit. He cited the example of some service-based downtown businesses who served clients who may need parking for an entire day but only that day. Speidel stated that it would be difficult to provide adequate signage for these users to know that they could seek alternative parking in a lot. Reynolds stated that we should try to move the merchants to the lots. McManus suggested that we see what other cities’ experience has been. Buckley stated that the typical long term parker is more likely to return to their car frequently to re-feed the meter as opposed to park farther



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away in a lot. Speidel stated that Buckley has a good point: enforcement officers see employee shuffling constantly and many employees want to have their cars close by so they can run short errands during work breaks. Perry stated that the bag-and-tag waste program is analogous; trash disposal used to be free, but with the implementation of fees we saw people change their habits.

Joyal stated that the expansion of metered parking should open up many of the on-street spaces. Joyal suggested that we look at the efficiencies in enforcement and eliminate the need for chalking tires if possible. Speidel noted that the Phase 2 meter plan did not call for a full build-out, which means that there will still be a need to keep time limits in many outlying areas. Speidel also stated that as described in various studies, the program may put more pressure on the surrounding residential neighborhoods like Atkinson Street for which we should plan an expanded residential parking program.

### 6. Discussion on meter installation timeline

Reynolds addressed a question to Joyal about the meter timeline. Joyal stated that staff was in the process of prepping meter pads and that we were ready to go with our sidewalk contractor for installation in several areas. Joyal spoke about the fund balance and the availability of funds. Buckley addressed a question to Joyal about the proposal by the City Council to take money from the parking fund for application to general use. Joyal stated that there are two potential mechanisms for ensuring the parking funds are kept separate: 1) Capital reserve fund, which is used only for one purpose and can be reappropriated only with 2/3 vote of the City Council, or 2) Downtown business improvement district, which has some limited taxation authority. McManus asked about the possibility of creating a Parking Authority. Joyal stated that this was also another option and stated he could have City Attorney Krans look into it. Joyal spoke about the contingency fund, which is intended to be rolled annually into a Capital Reserve, and then allowed to build up again. Reynolds asked Joyal for clarification on the meter timeline. Joyal stated that based on certain assumptions, including the timing of issuance of a bond and an assurance by the vendor that they would work with us on a payment plan, we were looking at an early winter installation date. Speidel stated that the vendor, Parkeon, had already provided verbal assurance that they were willing to allow some leeway on payment after delivery. Discussion ensued.

Perry moved to endorse a plan to have the meters delivered in December, with a target installation of January 2011. Seconded by McManus. Discussion ensued. Speidel pointed out that in the opinion of various experts in the parking field, a mid-winter installation is not recommended for various reasons. Speidel cited the potential for difficulty in keeping the meter pads cleared and prepped prior to installation, and also noted that any bad experience users had with weather could also be associated with the meter program in general. Speidel stated that it was better to let users experience the program over a period of time in good weather so that they were familiar with it when poor weather hits. Buckley stated that he is still looking for a solution to the problem of lighting the meter face, especially if users were expected to feed the meter after 5 PM in winter. Joyal stated that with a mild winter, the target date could be January and if there was an unusually severe winter, the installation could be pushed back to spring. Vote on Perry's motion: unanimous.

### 7. Schedule – Next Meeting: Friday, July 9, 2010

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am.