



City of Duluth

411 West First Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

Minutes

Parking Commission.

Friday, November 4, 2022

7:30 AM

Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, City Hall

ROLL CALL

Members Present

- Linda Krug
- Noland Makowsky, President
- Jessica Sterle
- Terese Tomanek
- Robert Woods
- Mark Bauer, Ex Officio

Members Absent

- Em Westerlund, Vice President

Guests Present

- Ari Eilola, Duluth Operations Manager – Interstate Parking Company
- Carl Crawford, Human Rights Officer – City of Duluth
- Robin McLelland, Duluth resident
- Jolane Sundstrom, Duluth resident
- Karen Pionk, General Manager – Sheraton Duluth Hotel
- Laura Weintraub, Chief Executive Officer - Aimclear

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of September 2022 meeting minutes

City of Duluth Parking Services Manager Mark Bauer presented the minutes of the September 2022 meeting of the Duluth Parking Commission. Commissioner Linda Krug motioned that the minutes be approved as presented. Commissioner Terese Tomanek seconded the motion, which was approved 5-0.

ON-STREET ACCESSIBLE PARKING ZONE REQUEST

On-street ADA accessible parking zone requests

Mr. Bauer presented proposals to implement two on-street ADA accessible parking zones. Mr. Bauer stated that he had visited the sites, communicated with the requesting parties, and consulted with the City of Duluth Commission on Disabilities regarding the requests. He recommended approval of both requests. Commissioner Robert Woods motioned that the request for 619 North 18th Avenue East be approved. Commissioner Krug seconded the motion, which was approved 5-0. Commissioner Woods motioned that the request for 364 Pacific Avenue be approved. Commissioner Tomanek seconded the motion, which was approved 5-0.

PROPOSAL TO CONVERT A METER STALL AT 402 WEST 1ST STREET TO A TEN-MINUTE DROP-OFF ZONE

Proposal to convert a meter stall at 402 West 1st Street to a ten-minute drop-off zone

Mr. Bauer presented a proposal to convert a single-stall metered space at 402 West 1st Street, adjacent to the Duluth Workforce Center, to a ten-minute drop-off zone. He stated that the request had been generated by the manager of the Workforce Center, who had stated that many of the Center's clients have short-term parking needs that would best be served by a drop-off zone.

Commissioner Tomanek motioned that the request be approved. Commissioner Krug seconded the motion, which was approved 5-0.

2023 PARKING FUND BUDGET PROPOSAL

2023 Parking Fund budget proposal

Mr. Bauer presented the proposed 2023 Parking Fund budget. Commissioner Woods inquired into the formula used to calculate the annual transfer of funds from the Parking Fund to the City's General Fund and indicated that the transfer percentage seemed very high. Mr. Bauer stated that the calculation and transfer were performed by the City's Finance Department and that the process and methodology were largely unknown to the Parking Services Division. He stated that a City Councilor had also inquired into the process during the Parking Services Division's presentation of the budget to the Duluth City Council's Finance Committee and that an answer from the Finance Department was pending. Commissioner Krug indicated that the details of the process should be known for the Commission to make an informed decision. Commissioner Tomanek motioned that the Parking Fund budget proposal be tabled pending further discussion on the transfer and the Parking Services Division's recommended 2023 rate proposal, which was also tabled for further review and discussion. Commissioner Woods seconded the motion, which was approved 5-0.

2023 PARKING RATES PACKAGE PROPOSAL

2023 parking rates package proposal

Mr. Bauer presented the Parking Services Division's recommended 2023 public parking rate structure, which included increases to public parking rates at most off-street parking ramps and lots but none for on-street parking. Aimclear Chief Executive Officer Laura Weintraub indicated support of rate increases but at a lower amount than those recommended to mitigate the impact on area businesses. Mr. Bauer stated that the primary purpose of the recommended increases was to adequately address issues with ramp safety and cleanliness and structural maintenance while balancing the budget. He stated that even the highest recommended monthly parking rates fell below even the lowest such rates in downtown Minneapolis, where the parking system faces similar challenges and expenses. Commissioner Tomanek inquired into the possibility of a phased increase plan. Mr. Bauer indicated that this was a possibility but that there would likely be consequences to the Parking Services Division's ability to address the safety and cleanliness concerns. Ms. Weintraub indicated that her concern was with the monthly, rather than the hourly, rate recommendations.

Sheraton Duluth Hotel General Manager Karen Pionk stated that the safety and security of the parking facilities was a large concern to the hotel and their guests. Commissioner Krug indicated support for the proposed rates structure, primarily due to the safety and cleanliness issues. Commissioner Tomanek motioned that the rate proposal package be tabled pending further internal and external discussion and be re-presented in the December meeting. Commissioner Sterle seconded the motion, which was approved 4-1 (Commissioner Krug opposed).

PROPOSAL TO ADD SATURDAY AND SUNDAY TO PARKING FEES ENFORCEMENT

Proposal to add Saturday and Sunday to parking fees enforcement
Mr. Bauer withdrew the proposal to add Saturday and Sunday parking fees enforcement for on-street parking, stating that further review and public discussion was needed prior to proposal. He stated that the Canal Park Business Association Executive Board President had expressed support for the proposal.

OFF-STREET PARKING UPDATE

Off-street parking update
Interstate Parking Company Duluth Operations Manager Ari Eilola stated that there were no significant updates regarding off-street parking operations.

ON-STREET PARKING UPDATE

On-street parking update
Mr. Bauer stated that a technical issue had caused a delay in the implementation of the 2022 approved on-street rate structure in Park Duluth mobile payment application in Zone 1829, which included the primary Duluth hospitals. He stated that the City had negotiated a phased implementation of the new rate structures with St. Luke's Hospital to help mitigate the impact to hospital employees. Mr. Bauer stated that preparations were complete for the 2022-2023 Snow Emergency season.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments
Duluth residents Robin McLelland and Jolane Sundstrom expressed concerns regarding the large number of vehicles one of their neighbors commonly parked on-street, near 20th Avenue East and 5th Street. Mr. Bauer stated that parking staff had recently met with the neighbor and that he had agreed to following all existing parking Ordinances and Statutes. Mr. Bauer stated that there was no current law that limited the number of vehicles one party was allowed to park on a city street. Commissioner Jessica Sterle recommended that the Parking Services Division consult with the Duluth City Attorney regarding options to address the issue. Commissioner Krug expressed concern with the City's ability to limit the number of vehicles parked by one party on a city street. Mr. Bauer stated that he would continue to direct the parking staff to address the issue as possible.