

Parking & Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday May 29, 2018

9:00 am, OM 435

MEETING NOTES

Present: Mary Ann Armstrong, Greg Hough, Christopher Loar, April Markiewicz (Chair), Cheryl Mathison (for Heather Christenson), Stephanie Norsby (for Lea Aune), Bob Putich, Darin Rasmussen, and Kurt Willis.

Ex officio: Jillian Trinkaus

Guests: Jackson Johnson and Shelby Zimmerman, Student Business Office

1. Approval of May 14, 2018 Meeting Notes

Hough **Moved** and Putich **Seconded the Motion** to approve the May 14, 2018 Meeting Notes. **Motion approved.**

2. Updated Communication Plan for Parking Services

Putich reported that Parking Services has been working to improve its communication with the Western community. Prior messaging they have utilized has not been as effective, leading to misunderstandings or messages not being received. Some messages have ended up in employee's Clutter or Junk folders so Parking Services is working with ATUS to fix the problem. Putich stated they are also using Bullseye to send targeted messages, and have formulated a Communication Plan that is more comprehensive in its content and outreach. The Plan includes the following:

- a. Direct email messages to permit holders using Bullseye to prevent messages going to Clutter/Junk folders.
- b. Changed the permit awarding schedule to early May. This reduces the number of emails that are sent out and ensures that those employees requesting a permit for the next academic year have them before the current year ends. This change has been highly successful with many people making parking permit arrangements now.
- c. Utilized visual communication tools including sandwich boards in the parking lots and walkways to notify permit holders of any changes or to check their email for messages. This has also been effective. Parking Services can monitor the number of "hits" on their website and have seen a spike after sandwich boards have been deployed.
- d. Implementation of a marketing campaign that includes short videos on how to park on campus, use the PayStations, Parking Portal, Park Mobile app, parking after hours, weekends, and holidays. There is also information on appealing citations and how to pay citations online. Parking Services also recognizes that Western needs to be more accommodating towards visitors as its customers so they are working with Donna Gibbs, VP for University Relations and Marketing who is helping them on messaging

and preparing short, 20 second videos specifically for visitors coming to campus. Parking Services staff are helping and provide expertise on parking on campus. Video services on campus are helping with editing the material to keep it meaningful yet concise.

- i. Putich would like to prescreen the videos with a focus group of people with little knowledge or experience in parking on campus and was looking to PTAC members to be part of that focus group. Several members indicated their interest in participating, however the work would be done over the summer, which could exclude participation by faculty and student members. Markiewicz asked that those members check with their constituency group about whether they can participate and not violate any collective bargaining agreements.
- e. Parking Services is also updating its parking lot signs to make them more visitor-friendly and focused. Putich handed out a draft of a new sign and Mathison stated the first bullet did not make sense to her. Putich stated he would like the PTAC member focus group to help review both the draft videos and signage and anticipated that it could be done via email.

Action Item: Putich will contact the PTAC members over the summer who want to be a part of the focus group to review both videos and signage proposed by Parking Services.

Hough asked about those people seeking permits for other lots. Putich stated there will be language on the Parking Services website. For example, those people who park at 32nd Street have a G permit and can use it to park in any unrestricted lot on campus for up to two hours. If the person has a 7G permit, it is valid in the 32nd Street lot. Putich was asked about using the LPR system for data mining, for example count the number of hits on each car to identify where they are 90% of the time. Putich stated the LPR system is still new and the software can only handle so much data. The LPR cannot scan a lot such as 17G and identify vehicles specifically permitted for another lot, e.g., 19G, 32nd Street. It can only scan and identify vehicles as valid or not valid to park in the “G” lot.

3. Items from the Floor

- a. Putich reported on the conversion of parking lot 12A to 12G. That conversion has been held up by Brian Sullivan, Associate VP for Business & Financial Affairs, due to ongoing collective bargaining negotiations. By fall, lot 12A will have full G lot functionality for faculty and staff, however they will continue to pay the 12A rate, not the G rate. Visitors and students will not be able to park in that lot.
- b. Armstrong requested more information about the duties, expectations, and time commitment to serve on the PTAC, as well as the Parking Appeals Board. She is reaching out to WFSE members to serve on these committees in the 2018-19 academic year and needs that information. Putich stated they are currently working on compiling that information and it should be available soon.
- c. Trinkaus stated the location of the retirement party for Carol Berry has been moved to the Solarium. It will still be held on June 1st starting at 10:00 am.

- d. Trinkaus reported there was a 70% response rate for the Commute Trip Reduction survey. As a result the required response rate was met.
- e. Trinkaus requested that the parking rates on Parking Services website be extended out beyond just the 2018 rates. Putich stated he would get that done.
- f. Putich stated he has also been meeting monthly with Trinkaus to combine efforts on marketing parking options including using alternative modes of transportation. The goal is to reduce demand on parking lots, though Putich recognizes that a percentage of people need to drive their vehicles and park on campus. This marketing effort is to target those people who want to drive and may change their minds if provided other options. Armstrong asked how many people carpool. Putich stated they barely sell to capacity. The cost of a carpool permit is split between the two people carpooling resulting in a 50% discount. He wants to market them better, emphasizing the cheaper rate, companionship, and the fact that if one person is eligible for an inner campus lot, both can have access to that lot.
- g. Putich stated he has been checking on Intermittent Use parking permits in which person just pays for actual parking on campus rather than 24/7 parking 365 days a year as is the case for an annual permit. An all hours, all days permit is more expensive, encourages more vehicle trips to campus, and is a disincentive to use alternative modes of transportation.
- h. Willis referenced the University's Strategic Plan that emphasizes increased enrollments, increased on-campus student housing, and increased employee hires. If Parking Services' goal is to reduce parking on campus there is a conflict with the Plan. Putich stated the number of freshman cars has decreased and more cars are being moved to R lots. Trinkaus added her department is informing new employees of alternative modes of transportation. Putich pointed out that parking demand goes down and carpooling (as well as use of other modes of transportation) increase as gas prices go up, which they are currently doing.
- i. Putich reported that the city of Bellingham's grant proposal for a traffic signal at Consolidation will save us \$1 million when improvements are made at the Lincoln Creek Transportation Center (LCTC). WTA also has grant proposal for a bus terminal in the LCTC, however they will not know the outcome of their proposal until June 2019. As a result, Western is postponing its improvement projects for the LCTC until 2020. Western can do the stormwater retention and treatment vaults next year in the north half of the site and do the south end in 2020 when it knows the outcome of the grants.

Meeting adjourned at 10:01 am.

Meeting Notes approved November 20, 2018.