

Parking & Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday February 13, 2014

9:00 am, OM 435

MEETING NOTES

Present: Barbara Lewis, Joan Hoffman, Ira Hyman, Bill Managan, Doug Adelstein, Kunle Ojikutu, Kurt Willis, Brian Sullivan, Darin Rasmussen, April Markiewicz, Julia Gassman, Carol Berry, Paul Mueller

1. Approval of January 30th Meeting Notes

Doug Moved, Kurt Seconded to approve the Meeting Notes. **Motion Approved unanimously.**

2. Feedback from WFSE

April met with representatives of the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) and presented the first draft of the proposed Color-Coded Zone Parking that the PTAC has been discussing. She conveyed some of the benefits the PTAC recognized in moving to a color-coded model and how it will also facilitate differentiating permit rates based on demand. Rate increases would be the next topic the PTAC would be addressing once the color-coded zones are finalized and updated financials are provided by Brian. She had also pointed out to them that the Lincoln Creek Transportation Center has been added as a zone and the PTAC will be considering parking fees to park in that zone as well. One concern expressed at the meeting was that parking permit rate increases unfairly targeted classified staff, since they typically earn the least. They suggested the PTAC investigate a sliding scale for parking rates based on income.

This has been investigated in the past, however, employee income is not necessarily an indicator of household income. Moreover, a successful transportation management program is based on revenues sufficient to cover the actual cost of the administrative services supporting the program, the expenses related to parking and transportation infrastructure repair and maintenance, and the forecasted needs in response to campus growth. Employee compensation levels do not play a role in dictating the cost of a parking space.

WFSE representatives were also concerned about charging those employees working at off campus locations less for a parking permit since they get to park next to the building in which they work. They perceive this as not fair since those who work on campus and want to park next to their building in which they work, have to pay a higher price. April reiterated that the zone parking model the PTAC is discussing is based on demand and supply. There is ample parking at off campus locations, but very little demand, resulting in low utilization rates. To encourage parking in lots that have capacity, i.e., low utilization rates and lower demand, price is used as an incentive. Lower rates at the periphery and off campus help to alleviate high demand on core lots. The employee can then decide whether s/he wants to pay

a cheaper price to drive and park her/his personal vehicle on campus, walking a further distance to her/his office, or (coupled with seniority) pay the higher price to park next to her/his office building.

Some committee members expressed concern that demand-based parking paradigm decreases the value of a seniority-based system of allocating parking spaces.

3. Zone Parking

April handed out the latest version of the draft color-coded zone parking spreadsheet. Ira pointed out that the spreadsheet doesn't clearly present current and proposed color-coded zones.

Action Item: April will redo the spreadsheet to clearly depict current color-coded parking zones versus proposed. April will email it to PTAC members once she has the new draft prepared.

Once the PTAC has finalized the color-coded zone parking it is recommending, it will then address parking rate increases or decreases to create a more clearly defined zone pricing matrix that matches the color-coded zones. It will do so in the context of addressing Parking Services operating/administrative deficit, lot maintenance, repair, and replacement, and stormwater runoff issues from both paved and unpaved lots.

Ira expressed his concern about discussing parking rates without a clear set of financial information documenting the size of Parking Services deficit. The information should include a set of actual financials, as well as a complete set of planned budgets. This financial information should also include the information of maintenance needs that the committee is awaiting. April stated that Parking Services' detailed financial information for 2012 was distributed to the PTAC in spring of 2013. April will send out that budget information again that the PTAC can use as a starting point in its discussions.

Brian stated that by our next meeting the consultant hired by Rick Benner, chair of the PTCI (Parking and Transportation Capital Implementation Advisory Committee), should be done assessing the condition of each parking lot on campus. With that information, Brian will be able to cost out exactly how much money is needed per lot for repair, maintenance, and replacement, as well as provide an accurate estimate of the actual cost of each paved and unpaved parking space.

April asked the committee whether seniority should still be used as the primary criterion by which to assign an employee a parking space in a parking zone. The consensus of the PTAC was affirmative, with exceptions provided based on job needs identified by the employee's administrative unit. April will add this to the draft recommendations of the PTAC.

Action Item: April will prepare a draft of our recommendations and circulate them to the PTAC before the next meeting on Thursday February 27th.

4. Buses and Bikes

In discussing the impact of raising parking permit rates, April stated that people who still drive to campus have the option of parking further away from campus in cheaper, lower demand lots or using alternative forms of transportation. April deferred to Carol to provide any additional details related to sustainable transportation options. Ira expressed his concern that many of these alternatives are not really available to many employees at WWU because of the limits to alternative transportation. The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing the challenges of bike riders to and from campus, as well as the inadequacies of WTA bus service to areas outside of the core of Bellingham. April recommended that the PTCI and university's Central Health and Safety Committee be engaged in the discussions regarding bike access/bike lanes and dismount zones/times, respectively at a future date. April reiterated that these are important and part of the "transportation and access" component of the PTAC, our charge is to address parking policy, procedures, and finances for now. Capital improvements to support and enhance transportation are currently under the umbrella of the PTCI, but there are plans to integrate that component into PTAC in the next year.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

Meeting Notes approved unanimously on February 27, 2014.