



Michael P. Lawn
Chief of Police

CITY OF WATERTOWN

TRAFFIC COMMISSION



David Sampson
Sergeant
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Thomas F. Rocca, Chair
Ryan Nicholson, Provisional Fire Chief
Gregory St. Louis, Superintendent of Public Works
Steven Magoon, Community Development and Planning
Ms. Kelly Gallagher
Mr. Robert Airasian

July 7, 2022

June 29, 2022 Traffic Commission Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Thomas Rocca, Steven Magoon, Kelly Gallagher, Robert Airasian

In Sgt. Sampson's absence, Officer Charles Samios assisted the Traffic Commission during the meeting.

Traffic Commission members addressed the following items:

Item 1 – Mr. Magoon made a motion to approve the May, 2022 Traffic Commission meeting minutes; Ms. Gallagher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

Item 2 – The Commission reviewed the City's meter rates and meter time limits; the information was presented by Ms. Laura Wiener, Senior Transportation Planner, and City Treasurer Melissa Morrissey.

Ms. Wiener reported that in 2019 a parking management study recommended that the Municipality upgrade to smart meters and raise meter rates to keep with surrounding communities. The report further suggested to modify the meter hours of operations to 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. Although it was recommended to remove meter time limits, the Municipality ultimately expanded the maximum time to 4-hours at on-street meters. In January, 2021 smart meters were installed, but there was little demand for parking due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Wiener noted that current parking demand may not be at pre-pandemic demand levels. Ms. Wiener and Ms. Morrissey compared the most recent 12-month period to 2019 (pre-pandemic). Ms. Wiener reported that revenue is up \$92,000, which is likely due to higher rates. She noted that people still appear to prefer using coins for smaller transactions. Revenue is generally higher likely from credit card purchases (due to the average size of a credit transaction being larger than short transactions). There is no way to compare the raw number of transactions in 2019 to today's use. Ms. Wiener suggested maintaining current hours and rates. Future meter rate and hours modifications should be based on a parking occupancy study.

Mr. Magoon was concerned about the seemingly lack of public knowledge regarding lower meter rates at the Nichols Avenue diagonal parking area and the Wells Ave parking lot. Mr. Magoon was not sure if the lower rates were advertised at the time they were implemented. Mr. Magoon asked for ideas about how to make these parking options better known. Ms. Wiener suggested reaching out to the businesses again and using the City's website. Mr. Airasian reported that he is a member of Watertown Business Coalition and can help spread this information through the Coalition. Mr. Magoon suggested that perhaps something direct to residents and businesses (such as a mailer through Zoning) could be used.

Mr. Airasian asked whether the new hours and rates had any effect on the City's parking violation fees (whether the number of parking tickets increased or decreased). This question was not able to be answered at the time of the meeting.

Ms. Wiener reported that the City also recently launched a pay-by-phone service for the meters.

The Commission was satisfied with the current meter hours of operations and rates.

Item 3 – The Commission reviewed a request by Sgt. Sampson of the Watertown Police Department to remove two “Disabled Child” warning signs on Quincy Street. Officer Samios explained that a neighborhood resident requested to have the signs removed. The Traffic Division was able to verify that the person for whom the signs were posted no longer lives on Quincy Street; the signs can be safely removed.

[Note: the signs were originally requested by Ms. Brenda Manning in September, 2006]

Ms. Gallagher made a motion to remove the two signs on Quincy Street; Mr. Airasian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 4 – New Business

No new business was brought before the Commission.

Mr. Airasian made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Gallagher seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Sgt. David Sampson
Assistant to the Traffic Commission