PARKING and TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

CONFERENCE ROOM A

CITY HALL, MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 1 JUNKINS AVENUE

Members of the public also have the option to join the meeting over Zoom
*(See below for more details)**

8:30 AM **July 7th, 2022**

MINUTES

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I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Andrew Bagley called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

II. ATTENDANCE

Members Present:
Chairman Andrew Bagley
Police Captain Mike Maloney
Harold Whitehouse
Steve Pesci
Mary Lou McElwain
Mark Syracusa
Assistant Fire Chief William McQuillen

Absent
Erica Wygonik (Alternate)
City Manager Karen Conard
Public Works Director Peter Rice

City Staff Present:
Parking Director Ben Fletcher
City Engineer – Parking, Transportation and Planning Eric Eby
Associate Engineer Tyler Reese

III. FINANCIAL REPORT

Harold Whitehouse moved to accept the Financial Report dated May 31, 2022, and place it on file, seconded by Mary Lou McElwain. On a unanimous vote, motion passed 7-0.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT (15 MINUTES)

This is the time for all comments on any of the agenda items or non-agenda items.

Carl Diemer of 337 Aldrich Road commented on the speed on the other half of Aldrich Road. They need to address the side of the road where there is no speed table because cars are continuing to speed on that side. Pedestrian traffic has increased on the road, and they are still having speeding issues. They have not done their due diligence on that end of Aldrich Road. The section where there is treatment has been working. The other end needs to be studied and patrolled. There needs to be a permanent fix.

Jim Lee of 520 Sagamore Avenue commented that cars are parking on the northbound lane of Miller Avenue at the South Street intersection. It blocks the northbound side and is creating a hazard for cars and emergency responders. The Committee should make it a no parking section for that part of the road.

Carl Diemer of 337 Aldrich Road commented that a quick fix could be to put a police car on Aldrich Road for enforcement. If they park facing the hill, they will be very busy.

Vice Chairman Steve Pesci requested clarification on if Mr. Lee was looking to have no parking on Miller Avenue consistently. Jim Lee responded that section is the only place people park in Miller Avenue. It is creating a hazard.

V. PRESENTATIONS

None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

(No public comment during Committee discussion without Committee approval.)

A. Market Street, request for crosswalk between Deer Street and Hanover Street, by business owner.

City Engineer Eric Eby commented that the request came in from the adjacent business owner. They have put out a camera and are observing the crossings in that area. They will report back next month.

Harold Whitehouse moved to refer to staff for evaluation and report back, seconded by Mary Lou McElwain. On a unanimous vote, motion passed 7-0.

B. Additional Parking Enforcement Holiday for Juneteenth (June 19th). **Sample Motion: Move to approve Juneteenth as a parking enforcement holiday.**

Chairman Andrew Bagley stated that all federal holidays are parking enforcement holidays, so it makes sense to include this.

Mary Lou McElwain moved to approve Juneteenth as a parking enforcement holiday, seconded by Vice Chairman Steve Pesci. On a unanimous vote, motion passed 7-0.

C. Pannaway Manor, request for speed humps, by resident.

Mary Lou McElwain moved to refer to staff for evaluation and report back, seconded by Vice Chairman Steve Pesci. On a unanimous vote, motion passed 7-0.

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D. Daniel Street, request for 15-minute space in front of #22 Daniel Street, by business owner.

Harold Whitehouse questioned if anyone had contacted the business that this would impact. Chairman Andrew Bagley responded that the business owner has contacted the Committee.

Chairman Andrew Bagley commented that during the Brick Market construction the 15-minute parking spaces were encumbered. They were moved to be in front of Moe's. The owner of Moe's, Cheryl Pagano, is reluctant to move the space back because they have been beneficial for the business. It may be useful to have Staff evaluate the parking spaces and report back.

Mary Lou McElwain commented that she did not think they needed to be evaluated. Their need is clear.

Mary Lou McElwain moved to keep the two 15-minute spaces in front of Moe's and have one 15-minute space at the Brick Market building, seconded by Harold Whitehouse.

Harold Whitehouse commented that this was different than what has been discussed with the business before. They should make sure the business is clear about what is happening before they take action. Parking Director Ben Fletcher noted that the business owner was watching the meeting via Zoom.

Vice Chairman Steve Pesci questioned if the motion as it stood was acceptable to the business owner. Cheryl Pagano commented that they have been challenged with Covid-19 and those two 15-minute spots have been the only good thing. The request is to keep the two 15-minute spots in front of the shop. Customers have gotten used to that set up. It has been very beneficial for the takeout business. They would not be able to operate as smoothly across the street.

Chairman Andrew Bagley questioned if there was a timeframe where the spaces were used most frequently. Cheryl Pagano responded that they were open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The spaces are utilized the most from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Mary Lou McElwain agreed with keeping the 15-minute spaces in front of Moe's. It is just a takeout shop and it's an advantage to keep that. Mary Lou McElwain questioned if the 15-minute spaces were 15-minute spaces for the full 24 hours. Parking Director Ben Fletcher confirmed that was correct. Vice Chairman Steve Pesci clarified that these were public 15-minute spaces, so other businesses on that street would benefit as well.

City Engineer Eric Eby commented that there used to be more 15-minute spaces on that street, but they were not all being utilized. They were reduced to 3 spaces on the street. The distribution of those spaces is determined by how they will best benefit the businesses on that street. The primary factor is to not have the spaces sit empty and unused. If they are being used in those locations, then that makes sense. They can

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monitor the spaces with a camera to see how they are being utilized. The configuration could stay as it is now, and staff can report back.

Mark Syracusa questioned if they would be able to monitor and report back by the next meeting. City Engineer Eric Eby confirmed they could.

Mary Lou McElwain commented that she did not think they needed to study it. It's been that way during the temporary use. There should be 2 in front of Moe's and one at the Brick Market. Parking Director Ben Fletcher noted that this discussion needs to take place because they are out of ordinance right now. They were moved temporarily, so they need to determine where they should be permanently. The discussion is how they should be distributed to best benefit the businesses on the street.

Chairman Andrew Bagley commented that he has seen the spaces in front of Moe's utilized, but he has only observed it during peak time. They should not be designated spaces to one business specifically. They should get the data to ensure that those locations make sense.

Mary Lou McElwain moved to refer to staff to collect usage data of current configuration and report back with recommendation at August meeting, seconded by Harold Whitehouse. On a unanimous vote, motion passed 7-0.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Osprey Drive, report back on speed study. **Sample Motion: Move to place on file.**

City Engineer Eric Eby commented that they monitored the speeds again on this road. They are still the same with an average of 23 mph and 85th percentile of 27 mph. The speed limit is posted at 15 mph, but it's not a true legal speed limit. It should be 25 mph, so these average speeds are in the legal speed limit. That is why the recommendation is to place it on file.

Vice Chairman Steve Pesci commented that this was a perfect example of a speed limit that sets false expectations.

Harold Whitehouse moved to place on file, seconded by Mary Lou McElwain. On a unanimous vote, motion passed 7-0.

VIII. INFORMATIONAL

A. Monthly Accident Report from Police

Police Captain Mike Maloney commented that there were 67 crashes in May. Of that, 34 of them were reportable. There were no accidents involving a pedestrian or bike.

B. Parking Enforcement Holidays

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Parking Director Ben Fletcher commented that this was posted on the City's web site. It is an enforcement holiday not a payment holiday. Instead of changing it every year the division has made the decision to use the actual calendar day that it falls on.

Chairman Andrew Bagley commented that an enforcement holiday means no one is writing tickets that day. It's not really free parking. They don't advertise it on the meters because people who are from out of town or not paying attention will pay. If people do pay, then they are not entitled to a refund because it is not a free parking day.

Vice Chairman Steve Pesci clarified that the parking meter fee was not enforced but the time limits were different. Parking Director Ben Fletcher responded that the time limits were still enforced when applicable.

C. Construction Projects Update

City Engineer Eric Eby commented that there was an informational letter at the end of the packet. South Street is being paved. Marcy Street and New Castle Avenue will be resurfaced after the gas line work is complete. Cate Street and Bartlett Street are undergoing the final configuration.

Vice Chairman Steve Pesci commented that it was noticeable how many pedestrians were using the Cate Street intersection. It would be helpful to add orange cones or other signage to help guide them through the construction.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS

Mary Lou McElwain commented that she has had to back up a couple times to allow for tour buses to make a turn onto narrow streets. Mary Lou McElwain questioned if buses were restricted from going on certain streets in the City. City Engineer Eric Eby responded that Ceres Street was the only street that had that restriction. This Committee can put this on the agenda to look at it. Mary Lou McElwain confirmed they should put it on the agenda.

Chairman Andrew Bagley commented that there was a drain issue at the second speed table location on Aldrich Road. That is why it has not moved forward. There should be an update on that at a future meeting. The parking on Miller Avenue is technically legal, but it may make sense to have staff look at it. City Engineer Eric Eby commented that parking was allowed on a street unless it was prohibited. It could make sense to look at this area again. Police Captain Mike Maloney commented that they were aware of the situation and have spoken to the homeowner in the past. It is legal and they put it out there in an effort to slow traffic. It would be worth looking at.

Harold Whitehouse commented that they have had limited summer meetings in the past, but it would make sense to continue through the summer this year. Chairman Andrew Bagley responded that he anticipated meeting in August.

X. ADJOURNMENT

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Mark Syracusa moved to adjourn at 9:15 a.m., seconded by Mary Lou McElwain. On a unanimous vote, motion passed 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Frey,
Secretary for the Parking, Traffic, and Safety Committee

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