

# Transportation & Parking Committee

{Meeting: 2:00 p.m. April 7, 2021 via Zoom}

<http://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/81092104746>

Meeting ID: 81092104746

{Note changes from Fall Term time/ID.}

## **Attendees:**

Rick Ashley, Jeri Baker, Pam Tate, Kirk Felton, Sandra Gabbert, Tommy Lam, James McClain (for Mac Babb), Kristin Link, Ryan Speer, Diane Agud

## **Nomination of Chair/Vice-Chair/CUS representative for next year**

Rick Ashley called the meeting to order and requested nominations for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee as well as for the Committee's representative to the Commission on University Support (CUS). Neither he nor the current Vice-Chair (Ryan Speer) are able to serve another term. Rick Ashley reviewed the guidelines for nominations, and he notes that this issue will be revisited at the May meeting.

## **Discussion of parking lot disruptions due to construction**

Prior to the meeting, committee member Roberto Leon had expressed concerns about the loss of parking in the Perry Street area, and had shared a memo with the entire committee. This document contained a series of questions and a request for data. We reviewed this memo at the meeting and Jeri agreed to collect the data and to share these with the group at our next meeting. In the meantime, she gave a summary of the situation:

- The multi-modal transportation facility was part of the 2015 campus master plan.
- Approximately 770 spaces were previously lost for the construction of Goodwin Hall and the New Classroom Building, with about 1600 more spaces to be lost for new construction.
- A 'reset' of the Perry Street area began in 2019 by limiting the number of student permits sold. At that time, there were more than 1,000 unused spaces each day.
- All faculty and staff spaces have been moved to the garage.
- There will be a continuing push to encourage the use of alternative transportation methods.
- Because of the pandemic, 55% of VT employees are working remotely, with an estimated 25 to 30 percent continuing to do so in the fall. There should be adequate parking for those coming onto campus at that time.
- Jeri Baker will gather and share the data requested by Roberto Leon.

Diane Agud noted that there is a deficit of 509 faculty spaces and 684 commuter/graduate spots. According to the master plan, most of the parking would be remote and shuttle service would bring commuters onto the central campus. Jeri Baker noted at that point that the master plan was written by consultants and is slightly out of date; thus, the campus will look different than as it is described in that document.

Diane Agud asked if there is a way to tell (immediately upon entrance) if there are spaces available in the North End Garage; she also commented that the curbs in that facility need to be made more visible, as someone recently tripped over one. Some discussion on these points ensued.

Rick Ashley asked if permit holders had received email notifications on all of these points. Jeri responded that notifications were sent through the VT News, which is the university's preferred method of communication, as well as the Parking Services newsletter. Signage was also placed in the lots as well. Diane Agud asked if announcements could be additionally be posted in Canvas, but Jeri Baker replied that she has been told that VT News is the preferred medium for publicizing campus disruptions.

Jeri Baker stated that to date only student parking has been displaced from the Perry Street area; she anticipates that there are sufficient spaces in the Perry Street Garage to avoid having to rely on shuttles. This area is also the site of the future Global Business Center. Jeri Baker reminded the group that purchasing a permit does not guarantee a parking spot, but that there will be ample spaces for faculty and staff as well as for some students when the construction project is completed.

In response to a question from Rick Ashley about the shuttle schedules, Jeri Baker stated that there is frequent Blacksburg Transit shuttle service between the remote lots and Burruss Hall, running approximately every seven minutes from 7 AM – 12:45 AM when classes are in session.

#### **ParkMobile appeals issues**

The appeals committee had heard several appeals from students who were under the impression they could use the app to park in any space on campus, to include faculty and staff lots. Jeri Baker stated that a notification is now being added to the app to remind users that they must park in the spaces that correspond to their status at the university. Rather than checking a box, they will have to acknowledge this condition before they are allowed to move forward with the transaction.

#### **Alternative Transportation**

Nick Quint provided several updates:

- A bike share expansion is in the works. The current number of available bikes will double to 150 and additional hubs will be added both on campus and off. The bikes will have electrical assistance to help riders get uphill. There are two choices for using the bikes, a membership subscription (\$9 or \$10/month) or a one-time use option (\$2 to unlock and \$.10/minute) that can be paid through an app.
- Blacksburg Transit is adding five electric buses to its fleet. They will be put into service within a few weeks in conjunction with Earth Day (April 22).
- There were more than 3500 responses to the parking survey. Nick is compiling the data and will share at a later date.

There were no more items to discuss and the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.

**THE NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR: Wednesday May 5<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm**

**{Please submit agenda suggestions to Dr. Ashley by 5:00 pm Friday April 30<sup>th</sup>.}**