

Transportation & Parking Committee
{Meeting: 1:15 p.m. October 7, 2020 via Zoom}

Attendees: Richard Ashley, Jeri Baker, David Tribble (for Mac Babb), Eric Martin, Nick Quint, Roberto Leon, Diane Agud, Ryan Speer, Sandra Gabbert, Tommy Lam, Pam Tate, Kristin Link, Ashley Shew, Betty Anderson

Discussion of Parkmobile and Online Daily Permit Sales

- Jeri Baker announced that the Parkmobile parking app should be active in approximately one month. This app will allow every parking space on campus to serve as a metered space. This will be particularly effective with many faculty and students working remotely, and coming onto campus only occasionally. This service was not ready by August 3rd, when parking enforcement began again for Fall Term, so a locally-developed version is being used until the Parkmobile app is available. To date this VT app has been used to sell the following quantities of permits: 409 visitors, 79 resident student, 728 commuter/graduate students, and 278 faculty/staff.

Evening-only Permit Changes and Impacts to Budget

- Based on feedback received, Dr. Pinkney adjusted the cost of the evening-only permit down to \$50 (annual) and \$25 (one semester). Partial refunds for permits sold at the higher initial prices are being processed; approximately \$16,000 will be refunded. Affected permit holders were notified by email, and announcements were also made in *VT News* and on the Parking Services website.
- The Committee then discussed the implementation of Parkmobile:
 - When a customer signs on the app, they must agree to the rules, which includes classifications (faculty/staff, student, etc.).
 - Some interaction/communication will be available between Parkmobile and VT's parking system, but this communication is limited: Parkmobile's privacy features helped facilitate its approval.
 - A small surcharge (ca. \$.30) will be added to each transaction to compensate Parkmobile; and the parking rates will uniform -- at \$2 per hour, with a \$6 daily cap. The \$6 daily fee will "follow" the purchaser as and if they relocate their vehicle during the day.
 - Metered spaces will remain in place for the immediate future.
 - A telephone number is provided for customers without a smartphone so that they can pay for a parking space in that fashion; meters will continue to accept coins as well.
- Total permit sales revenue is at about 78% of that anticipated, pre-pandemic. The cost of the partial refunds for the evening-only permits is manageably small. In this connection, sales of daily permit sales are making up some of the difference, and it was in any case obvious that Covid-19 would have a significant impact on operational revenues. Fall Semester permit sales were quite strong, but Spring Semester sales are hard to predict: Parking Services revenue is currently \$600,000 - \$700,000 below budget. On the other hand, the office is subject to the state-wide hiring freeze and management is working to keep operating costs down. The maintenance and operations accounts are providing an adequate financial cushion for this year.

- The Committee discussed whether the decision to reduce the price of the evening only permits should have gone through governance and, specifically, whether this committee should have been consulted. Jeri Baker reminded us that we are charged only with making recommendations and that, as the university's Chief Business Officer, Dr. Pinkney is authorized to make the decision.

Public Parking Issues

- VT librarian Inga Haugen had been scheduled to present at the meeting, but was unable to attend and shared her discussion item regarding library parking with Ryan Speer. Currently there are spaces reserved for short-term parking, which are designated via flashers, but that appears to be inadequate for patrons' needs. Some departments are leasing spaces, but leads to open (unused) unused parking spaces, which is also problematic.
- Creative solutions are needed in order to provide short-term Library parking access which -- in keeping with the University's Land Grant mission -- convenient at very low in cost. While the self-funding State constraint on Parking Services must be complied with, the Committee recognized other considerations -- e.g., the needs of folks for whom metered parking is a deterrent to Library use -- as well. It was also noted that dedicated parking exists for some other units, such as Schiffert/McComas. Ryan Speer will follow up with Inga Haugen.

Disabled (and Related) Parking Issues

- Invited guest Ashley Shew remarked that this conversation highlights larger issues related to the pandemic, i.e., using old systems during the new reality. She urged committee members to come up with unique means to address these topics, such as free parking for faculty/staff, encouraging more remote work, rethinking carpools.

Virginia Tech Commute Challenge

- Nick Quint announced the VT Commute Challenge, which will take place during the month of October.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 4 at 1:15 PM.