

The Bethlehem Parking Authority asks for detailed proposal from Council on a free parking pilot program

The Bethlehem Gadfly Parking, Serious Issues December 11, 2019

 137th in a series of posts on parking 

The Parking Authority Board meets today: 4PM at their headquarters.

See the memo below: the exec dir did move immediately after the October 23 Board meeting to contact City Council about the free parking pilot program suggested by Councilwoman Van Wirt.

Gadfly — certainly skeptical of BPA's intention, for the Board has shown nooooo interest in such a program — sees the memo as an attempt to stifle the idea with a daunting homework assignment.

He'd have hoped for a meeting of the Board with interested Council members out of which a cooperative plan for a pilot might have emerged.

Of related interest is the provision for free parking in the Northside downtown for the holidays: see <https://bethpark.org/news>.

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Adam Waldron, City Council President
FROM: Kevin Livingston, Executive Director
RE: City Council/Bethlehem Parking Authority Pilot
DATE: October 25, 2019

Dear President Waldron,

The BPA Board requested I reach out to City Council to get more details on the Councils' request that the BPA consider a free parking pilot program.

Overall the BPA Board is looking for more specific details and clarification on how exactly the free parking program would work. In light of that, below are some of the questions that would help the BPA Board structure a free parking pilot program to the satisfaction of a majority of City Council. These questions are not in particular order.

1. What do you believe the goals of the free parking pilot program should be?
2. What type of public outreach (Merchants, Residents, Visitors) should there be, if any?
3. What would be the streets included? Would streets outside the Downtowns be included? How many meters would be included?
4. What would be the fine?
5. Are you aware of any cities that have tried free parking with increased fines? Are you aware of any documentation that this has been a successful parking management tool?
6. How long do you believe the free parking pilot program should last?
7. What criteria do you believe should be considered to gauge if the free parking pilot program is successful? If successful, how often should we reevaluate the free parking pilot program?
8. How do you believe the free parking pilot program should be managed during festivals? Do you believe there should be an increased fine during festivals?
9. How do you believe the BPA should make up lost meter revenue that is currently in our proformas that was presented to our lenders?
10. Would City Council or the City contribute funds for the hiring of a consultant to research and implement this free parking pilot program?

Once we receive Council's response, we will put a free parking pilot program matter on the next BPA meeting agenda and invite any member of City Council to attend.