

# The Mayor Approves the Parking Meter Rate Hike (26)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Gadfly's posts, Parking, Serious Issues October 3, 2018

*(26th in a series of posts on parking)*

Nicole Radzievich, "Bethlehem parking meter rates to rise." *Morning Call*, October 2, 2018.

<http://www.mcall.com/news/local/bethlehem/mc-nws-bethlehem-parking-meter-increase-20181002-story.html>

"Starting Jan. 1, Bethlehem's meter rates will jump by 50 cents to \$1.50 an hour, an increase designed to sock away money for parking garage repairs on the North Side and a new garage on the South Side."

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## The Mayor's October 1 letter to BPA

Ahhh, didn't take the Mayor long to pull the decision-trigger on the BPA request to raise the parking meter rates from \$1/hr to \$1.50/hr effective January 1, 2019.

Take a look at the Mayor's October 1 letter to Kevin Livingston at BPA. In addition to flat acceptance of BPA's basic request, the Mayor added a request that the BPA consider a handful of items in the future.

So the BPA got what it was asking for, and commenters at the September 20 public meeting on the proposal will recognize that such ideas as variable rate or zone parking and a review of hours/location of meters are identified for consideration. (items 1-2 of the handful)

The variable rate idea was one of those "new" ideas in parking management that Gadfly found so intriguing. Yay!

Gadfly worried in his last post about involvement of merchants and the public in the decision-making process, and the Mayor identifies bonuses for both constituencies to help ease the transition to the new rate. (items 3-4)

A separate capital improvement fund suggested by Desman makes sense. But Gadfly is unsure about the statements made about the garages. Sounds like it's been decided that there will be a new Walnut Street

garage (when “replacement is built”). Is that true? Has the Desman recommendation on the issue of repair/replace been accepted? Who makes that kind of decision? The decision-making process on the Walnut is not clear to Gadfly.

And is the Polk St. garage a done-deal? Or is the Mayor saying it just makes good sense to plan on the good chance that it will happen? Again, the Gadfly is not clear on the status of this project as well. (item 5)  
(The seemingly portentous question Gadfly has heard several times now about whether the Polk St. site is actually in the CBD still hangs out there waiting for answer. Will anyone take a crack at that so Gadfly can get it off his to-do list?)

Sorry, maybe just Gadfly’s ignorance since he has been only been recently and newly buzzing around these matters. But there might be people following us on the blog who can fill me in. If Gadfly, who’s trying to pay attention, has questions, he assumes others will as well. Gadfly pleads ignorance on a larger matter. Socrates was always pleading ignorance. And asking questions. That’s what gadflies do. That’s how they learn. Ha! That’s also why they irritate. They can be pesty and pesky.

The larger matter: the Mayor’s handful is a request for consideration in the future.

Gadfly is puzzled by that.

Gadfly doesn’t understand the authority that the Mayor has over the Authority. The organizational chart in the Desman report would seem to indicate that the Authority answers to the Mayor. So, is the Mayor’s request actually a polite way of saying it’s a . . . what? . . . directive, order, command, mandate?

That seems important to know for sure.

And the Gadfly finds the request a bit vague (I guess his English teacher fussiness for detail didn’t retire when he did!). The Gadfly would have been happier with a definite time frame and some stipulation on the

grounds of the consideration. “Consider” implies the possibility of rejection. Is that what the Mayor means?

Gadfly would have rested easier if he saw something like this:

HEAR YE! I HEREBY COMMAND AND DIRECT THE YEOMAN OF THE EMINENT HOUSE OF BPA FROM NORTHSTREET PROVINCE TO PROBE AND EXAMINE THE FOREIGN BUT SEDUCTIVE NOTION OF VARIABLE RATEMENT AND TO REPORT ON ITS UTILITY AND APPLICATION IN OUR BELOVED REALM BY THE IDES OF FEBRUARY IN THE YEAR OF OUR TRUMLORD MMXIX WITH SCROLLS OVERFLOWING WITH PUNGENT EVIDENCE OF THY DILIGENT QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE AND THE ARDUOUS INQUISITION OF WORTHY KNIGHTS ENCOUNTERED ON THE FIELD OF PARKINGDOM IN YON PROCESS, UNDER PENALTY OF HAVING TO LEAVE THEIR SCALP-LINED CARRIAGES IN THE RUINS OF STACKSTEEL AND MAKE PILGRIMAGE UNSHOD IN GADFLY INFESTED HABILIMENTS THROUGH THE PERILOUS VALLEY OF ANTALICUS TO OUR WONDROUSLY FLAGSTONE'D BEGIRT PALACE ON MOUNT CITYHALL, WHERE THY JUST PUNISHMENT WILL BE FORCING COINS INTO BROKEN METERS TILL THY BLEEPING BRAINS ARE FRIED.