

CITY OF CHARLEVOIX
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, May 31, 2011 — 5:30 p.m.
210 State Street, City Hall, Council Chambers, Charlevoix, MI

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Norman L. Carlson, Jr.

I. Pledge of Allegiance

II. Roll Call of Members Present

Mayor: Norman L. Carlson, Jr.
City Manager: Rob Straebel
City Clerk: Carol A. Ochs
Members Present: Council members Shane Cole, Lyle Gennett, Dennis Kusina, Jill Picha, Greg Stevens, Bryan Vollmer
Absent: None

III. Inquiry Regarding Possible Conflicts of Interest

None.

IV. Requests, Petitions and Communications and Actions Thereon

A. Discussion Regarding Collecting Fees for the DeWitt Parking Lot

Police Chief Gerard Doan briefly reviewed the six options provided to Council in their packets. The Chief still recommends leaving the DeWitt parking lot as a free parking lot, open to the public. The City Manager reviewed that, after talking to the Treasurer, they estimate the revenue from putting a machine in the lot at \$2,000 a season. The initial cost of the machine is \$15,000. Annual revenues from parking are approximately \$25,000 a year, with an additional \$8,000 from parking fines, though some of those fines are due to winter overnight road parking.

Councilmember Lyle Gennett stated that he was surprised this topic had come up in his absence, especially since nothing has been budgeted. In his opinion, any option that costs money is absolutely out of consideration.

The Mayor opened the item to public comment, invoking a two minute limit.

Dale Boss spoke in favor of removing the meters from downtown altogether. He stated that when they first came up with the idea of petunias, it seemed like a crazy idea, now people come from all over to see them. He thinks eliminating the meters will be a notable way to attract more people to town, and may even result in some good press for the City.

DDA Executive Director Keith Carey spoke on behalf of his board as well as his own personal opinion. He thinks he has a good handle on the opinions of downtown users and merchants. Mr. Carey addressed Council's desire to generate revenue. He feels like installing any option other than leaving the lot free outweighs the benefits. The lot is serving its purpose well. It is an attractive, user-friendly parking opportunity where one did not exist before. Mr. Carey also addressed Council's concern about competing with private spaces. He stated the best way for government to help free enterprise is to get out of the way. Changing the lot or even a handful of spaces sets a dangerous precedent. Mr. Carey also stated that those individuals with the private spaces could have addressed this issue when the lot was created. Mr. Carey stated that the lot is doing what it was designed to do, which is to encourage employees to get off Bridge Street to allow for visitors to conveniently make purchases.

Chamber Director Erin Bemis spoke representing the retail committee. Most downtown merchants are all opposed to having the lot metered. The lot has served the purpose of getting the employees and employers off of Bridge Street.

Bob Timms stated that he thinks they should take the meters out from behind the drug store too. If the DeWitt lot is free, the rest of the lots should be too in order to serve all the employees. Everyone likes free.

Nancy Suzor, owner of Elements, stated that her employees use the DeWitt parking lot. She proposed that Council consider removing all the meters in the future. Many customers cut their shopping short due to the meters. In the past she has paid customer tickets; she feels it is a small price to pay for a customer making a larger purchase. She proposes chalking tires instead to prevent employees from parking in certain areas.

Kirby Dipert, downtown merchant, stated that it is best to leave DeWitt unmetered. He proposes unmetering the back lots and leaving Bridge Street metered in order to have the cars turn over. He said that, due to lot being financed by the parking fund, the City hasn't had to incur a lot of expense that it needs to recoup.

John Yaroch from Prudential Realty said that in the past he has placed typed notes on coworkers' and downtown employees' cars in the downtown district, asking them to stay off of Bridge Street and leave the parking open. Mr. Yaroch reviewed his knowledge of the privately owned spaces, stating that often those spaces are given out along with rented space as part of the tenancy. Right now there are a lot of vacancies downtown. The occupancy will come back soon and there will again be a need for those spaces, which allow for overnight parking. There is no overnight parking in the DeWitt lot.

Council did some calculations, determining that at 25 cents an hour, per day parking comes to \$2.25. Multiplied by 90 days, each space would bring in \$202.50 for the season. Council discussed the possibility of taking out all the meters, and eventually asked the Manager to be sure that this option was brought up at budget time next year so Council could consider the loss of revenue.

Council discussed the responsibility for maintaining the DeWitt lot. The Manager said that maintenance would ultimately be the City's responsibility.

Motion by Councilmember Lyle Gennett, seconded by Councilmember Greg Stevens, to support Staff's recommendation and leave the DeWitt parking lot as a free lot.

Yeas: Cole, Gennett, Kusina, Picha, Stevens, Vollmer
Nays: None
Absent: None

B. Consideration of a Resolution Waiving Parking Fees at Ferry Beach Boat Launch for Michigan B.A.S.S. Federation Tournament
The Mayor reviewed the request to waive parking fees at for the upcoming tournament. Action by resolution.

V. Resolutions

- A. Resolution Waiving Parking Fees at Ferry Beach Boat Launch for Michigan B.A.S.S. Federation Tournament
Motion by Councilmember Jill Picha, seconded by Councilmember Shane Cole, to approve Resolution 2011-05-03 as follows:

**CITY OF CHARLEVOIX
RESOLUTION 2011-05-03**

WAIVE PARKING FEES FOR MICHIGAN B.A.S.S. FEDERATION NATION TOURNAMENT

WHEREAS, the Michigan B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Tournament will be held on June 5, 2011; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Tournament are requesting that parking fees be waived for the tournament;
and

WHEREAS, the City Code permits the City Council to waive parking fees for special or public events; and

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHARLEVOIX hereby waives parking fees for the Michigan B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Tournament to be held on June 5, 2011.

RESOLVED, this 31st day of May, A.D. 2011.

Resolution adopted by the following yea and nay votes:

Yeas: Cole, Gennett, Kusina, Picha, Stevens Vollmer

Nays: None

Absent: None

VI. Audience – Call for Public Comment

None.

VII. Adjourn

The Mayor stated if there were no objections, the meeting would adjourn.

There were no objections.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Carol A. Ochs

City Clerk

Norman L. Carlson, Jr.

Mayor