



## Vehicle Parking District Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 8, 2020

The Vehicle Parking District committee met in the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce board room, 609 W. Norfolk Ave, Norfolk, NE on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.

### Roll Call:

**Board Members Present:** *Connie Geary, Doug Stebbing (alternate), Stephanie Bates (alternate), James Wapelhorst, Chad Barnhill, Brad Love, Jessica Gordon, Lacey Porn*

**Guests Present:** *Donna Herrick, Lyle Lutt, Maynard Thompson, Gary Jackson, Rohn Wagner, John Airhart, Colby Lind, Travis Webb, Justin Webb*

**Minutes recorded by:** *Jarad Dahlkoetter*

### Call to Order:

1. **Welcome** – *Geary called the meeting to order at 8:05 A.M.*
2. **Attendance** – *Geary took roll call of attendees*
3. **Approval of minutes** – *Love motioned, seconded by Gordon to approve the minutes from December 18. Roll call: Yays: Geary, Wapelhorst, Barnhill, Love, Gordon, Porn. Nays: none. Motion carried.*

### Regular Agenda

1. **Update on dog dispensers order** Lutt said there are 6 dispensers ordered and will be here within the week. The City staff will help place them and install them. The dispensers include a pole with dog bag dispenser, sign, and waste basket.
2. **Consideration of Digital Advertising Contract with Love Signs and the Visitor's Bureau** Geary presented two contracts from Love Signs for renewing our contract for digital advertising. One contract was for a digital sign on highway 81 across from KFC and one contract was for a digital sign on highway 275 across from the Sunset Plaza. Gordon said the switch to 275 would be good because there is just as much traffic. Wapelhorst asked what the price difference would be. Geary said there isn't a price difference. Wapelhorst asked Love to clarify that the Highway 275 sign doesn't get as much facetime, but people are more likely to see it. Love said people are 8 times more likely to read this type of sign because they are anticipating what it is going to say next. *Wapelhorst motions, seconded by Barnhill to approve the digital advertising contract for the sign across from the Sunset Plaza on Highway 275. Roll call: Yays: Geary, Wapelhorst, Barnhill, Gordon, Porn. Nays: none. Love abstained. Motion carried*
3. **Discussion on snow removal** Geary gave a synopsis of the situation, reminding the group of the email received from Shane Wiedner regarding the snow being pushed from private lots into places where the City and VPD hauls away snow. In addition, a chunk of concrete got pushed into a city pile and damaged a plow. She said the easiest thing to ask at this point is for business owners to push snow into piles on their own property. She said she recognizes this does take up space but that is what her businesses do as well.

Justin Webb said we have been doing it this way for many years and that our parking lots serve a purpose to the city as well.

Geary said if we had to start paying for all the extra snow to be hauled away it would most likely add \$10-12,000 to the VPD budget.

Gordon said last year VPD paid around \$30,000.

### Norfolk Vehicle Parking District

The Vehicle Off-street Parking District #1 is a special taxing district, encompassing the downtown Norfolk area, created for the purpose of providing and maintaining off-street parking lots for employees and customers of the downtown businesses.

The Vehicle Off-street Parking District #1 is also involved with downtown promotions and beautification.

#### **VPD Board (9 members):**

- Connie Geary
- Chad Barnhill 8/2021
- Pat Carney 8/2022
- Brad Love 8/2020
- Lacey Porn 8/2020
- Jessica Gordon 8/2020
- James Wapelhorst 8/2022
- Steve McNally 8/2021
- Stephanie Bates (Alt.) 1/2023
- John Stappert (Alt.) 8/2021



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Maynard said at this point many people are sharing parking spaces and helping other downtown business owners and that we all need to share the load. He also said that neighboring businesses that should be using public spaces will use private lots as well.

Justin Webb said we don't want customers to have to wonder where they can park.

Barnhill said the argument here is that the city had a machine broken from a private lot. He said we want to address this problem and know what to do if this happens again because it is someone's fault.

Travis Webb said private citizens damaging city property should be responsible for the damage.

Lutt said the city can't prove who did this and that it is technically considered littering when pushing this snow into the street.

Justin Webb said this seems like a silly argument considering the amount of money being invested in the downtown at this time. He also said they have no where to go with their snow.

Jackson asked the VPD board if they figured in snow removal to their budget for this fiscal year and the amount of snow they thought they would have.

Justin Webb said this money is directly tied into the revenue they produce and with the downtown losing small businesses every year, we shouldn't be telling them they need to pay for extra snow removal.

Gordon said the VPD doesn't have all the city funds at their disposal to pay for snow removal.

Lutt said each business has a mill levy rate found at the assessors office or on their website that shows their assessed tax value. He said the VPD is a business district in charge of beautification, trees, advertising, landscaping, plantings, and snow removal in case any of the visitors were wondering.

Travis Webb said snow removal will always be a necessary expense in Northeast Nebraska.

Geary said the VPD needs to be responsible for their budget and also save money to make lot repairs over time.

Barnhill said we need to focus on the key issue here of what if this situation happens again.

Colby Lind, who pushes snow downtown, asked where are we supposed to push the snow?

Gordon asked if they could take up a parking stall.

Justin Webb said their parking lot is 22 foot wide and this would not be feasible. He said he has been doing this for years.

Geary said her business doesn't have a very big lot but they are required to do this also. She also said the VPD didn't know his business had been doing this but if they start opening this up, all the private businesses will want the same service for free.

Wapelhorst said we all care about the community and the downtown and we are on the same team. He said we need to find the simplest solution as the board cannot set a precedence on what is currently being done. He suggested an idea that private businesses pay \$100 extra to get their snow hauled away.

Carney said part of this is education and that private contractors need to be educated that the city had these issues. He said this isn't about saving money this is about finding a common sense solution that is fair. He asked if it was possible to find a common area on each block to push snow but also charge the businesses a certain amount to push there.

Jackson said this is a volunteer board and the city needs to take this information and discuss it further. He said they are not fully aware of everything and need to make the final decision.

Wapelhorst said it sounds the city might be willing to reconsider what was being communicated and they want to come up with solutions.

Lutt said he wanted to provide some more background for everyone. He said it is not uncommon for contractors to push snow onto city areas and for the city to have conversations with them. In this instance, there was damage to equipment and a private citizen brought forward this information. He said Shane and the city are just trying to inform them that technically what they are doing is not legal in city code.

Stebbing said he agreed with James and that private businesses could pay a small fee to have their snow hauled away.

Lind said there is no where else to put the snow and the bigger lots have tons of room to put the snow.



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Geary asked how they are going to keep everyone from taking advantage of this and raising the cost of snow removal. She also said the city needs to put a sub committee together with all these suggestions brought forward for them.

Carney said there also needs to be representation from the VPD at this subcommittee meeting.

Geary said for now everyone is going to continue with what they are doing if it snows.

### Invoices:

**Invoice #21614 to the Norfolk Area Chamber for Quarterly Mgmt Fee of \$945.00** *Carney motions, seconded by Porn to approve this invoice. Roll call: Yays: Geary, Wapelhorst, Barnhill, Love, Gordon, Porn. Nays: none. Motion carried*

**Invoice #1623 to ASPM for liquid de ice and snow removal on 12/9 and 12/15 for \$2,148.00.** *Wapelhorst motions, seconded by Porn to approve this invoice. Roll call: Yays: Geary, Wapelhorst, Barnhill, Love, Gordon, Porn. Nays: none. Motion carried*

### Committee Reports

1. Marketing (Barnhill, Love, Wapelhorst)
2. Loans & Recruitments (McNally)
3. Beautification (Geary, Porn, Wapelhorst)
4. Parking & Traffic (McNally, Carney)

**Consideration for next regular meeting: Wednesday, January 22, 2020 @ 8:00 am**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jarad Dahlkoetter, Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce