



Memo

TO: Chair, Committee of the Whole

FROM: Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 9th, 2024

SUBJECT: Need to Regulate Public Parking Spaces

Background

Public parking spaces are provided for the benefit of the general public and not for the exclusive use of any business enterprise. The appearance or the perception that parking is provided to satisfy the interest of any one business would be inappropriate.

It is obvious that each summer parking becomes a serious problem that is made all the more acute when parking restrictions are flouted. It was apparent especially so last summer. Our contractor tasked with parking controls also indicated that the buses that were ferrying customers were choking traffic flow in the Saywell parking lot.

The issue of concerns over public parking was first raised in the early 2000's when staff recommendations were relied on to place time limits on public parking. In 2016 a staff report recommended the establishment of parking charges. However, the costs of the implementation of parking meters were exorbitant at the time and the matter was shelved. The issue continued to be raised and in 2019 fines were levied when time limits were not adhered to.

The issue of parking meters was not raised in a vacuum. Staff have looked at different options through a consultative process over the last number of years. With the costs of meters and parking apps becoming more affordable staff opted for meters as the tickets issued could then be easily monitored. There is a similar system at the marina which apparently works well.

As the parking issue is a seasonal concern, staff propose that the meters be removed at the end of summer. It was a bit of a surprise that the request for the purchase of the meters was given short shrift with no further discussion given that this was a time sensitive matter.

Council members may have personal evidence on municipal issues but those certainly cannot be relied on to support seemingly "expert advice" on such issues



that pertain to parking or traffic flows in the absence of formal experience or knowledge on these matters.

Staff Recommendations

Public parking comes at a cost to the taxpayers, and it would be unreasonable to expect them to fund the additional costs of ensuring that parking restrictions are complied with. Public parking is not “free”. It costs the taxpayer money to construct, maintain and operate the public parking facilities.

Parking fees allow the Town to create a more orderly parking environment for visitors during the summer months. Hence the following should be instituted:

- i) No business shall have the exclusive use of parking facilities unless prior arrangements are made whereby the Town is fairly compensated.
- ii) Parking on South Shore Road will be limited to 2 hours and at no cost and the public parking will be limited to that duration failing which vehicles may be subject to towing and fines.
- iii) Parking in Saywell Park and the adjacent Lakeview Avenue will have to adhere to the 2-hour limit and the fee for that time period would be \$4.
- iv) No business shall close any road, sidewalk, or boulevard or park temporarily or otherwise to facilitate its operations.
- v) Bus access to Saywell Park will be strictly prohibited. An alternate 15-minute bus drop-off point will be created at the entrance to Point Ideal Road.
- vi) Parking on Point Ideal Road will be permitted from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at a per day cost of \$10.
- vii) Parking at the public parking lot by the pharmacy will be limited to 2 hours and the parking lot by Community Services will be available on the weekends albeit limited to 2 hours at the \$4 rate.
- viii) Continuation of the 3-month arrangement for the use of the parking facility at Centennial Park that may require a fee adjustment.
- ix) Authorize the purchase of two parking machines at a cost of \$35,000 plus taxes.

With the foregoing, the Town will then not be seen as catering to the needs of the visitors at the expense of the local taxpayers. After all the local residents have to conform to the requirements placed on them by other local jurisdictions when they visit them. Payment for parking is a means by which a free-market economy is able to maintain a resource that is in short supply.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph A. Fernandez', written over a horizontal line.

Joseph A. Fernandez