

Testimony Presented at
ANNUAL PUBLIC HEARING
ON
PARKING POLICIES, BUDGET, AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Thursday, February 15, 2007 – CSU Room 201
3:00 PM to 4:30 PM

A public hearing was convened by David Cowan, Facilities Services Director, at 3:05 pm in room 201, Centennial Student Union, Minnesota State University. Cowan gave a brief explanation of the paper documents provided to the attendees of the hearing as well as an introduction of the purpose of the meeting. (Names are available on the attached “Hearing Docket”). The Hearing was recorded on cassette tape.

1. **Members of the Parking Advisory Committee (Policy arm of Parking Programs)** were introduced as well as members of the independent. The Parking Citation Appeals Board (Judiciary Arm of Parking Programs). The Coordinator of Parking and Traffic Services was introduced, representing the Enforcement Arm of Parking Programs. Cowan explained how their branches worked within the parking program.

Summer Capital Improvement Plan.

2. An introduction of the proposed \$375,000 summer 2007 Capital Improvement plan was provided by Marty Ross, Planning & Construction Department. (Attachment 1 – “Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Cost”)

2007- 8 proposed Parking Program Budget

3. An overview of the 2007-08 income plan (\$1.4 million) and spending plan (\$1.39 million) was given by David Cowan. (Attachment 2: “2007-08 Proposed Parking Program Budget” and Attachment 3: “Parking Program Personnel Expenditures”). Included in that presentation was an update on personnel costs associated within the program.

Lot 23 Permit Proposed

4. David Cowan, as Parking Advisory Committee Chairperson, opened discussion on the proposal to create a permit for Lot 23 (a.k.a. the Free Lot) and sell it for \$40 a year with a free bus tag. Sales of new permits (\$25,000 annually) would aid in cost recovery for improvements to Lot 23 as well as help in controlling who uses that lot, eliminating people from the non-MSU community. The following individuals testified on the issue.
 - a) **Opposes:** Dale Carsten, 101 South Brook Circle, Mankato, stated that he would be willing to pay more for the Gold permit he uses to help keep Lot 23 free.
 - b) David Cowan entered into record the “Free Lot” responses received from the Minnesota State Student Association’s “Tuition and Fee Survey for Spring 2007”

and e-mails received discussing the general parking. (Attachments 4 and 4A)(Email responses are listed under their associated agenda item).

- c) **Opposes:** Kristeen Giese, 30 Hilltop Lane, Mankato, testified that she would like to see the lot kept free for the students, faculty and staff who use it.
- d) **Opposes:** Tom Heffernan, 220 Marshal Ln, Mankato testified that he would like the lot to be kept free to help low income students on a fixed income and would like to know what other options are available to help these students.
- e) **Opposes:** Casey Carmody, 108 Malin St, Mankato testified that he had concerns about rising tuition and textbook costs already affecting students and the added burden of a \$40 permit.
- f) **Opposes:** Nathan Madden, 451 North 6th St, testified that he has talked to other students who all agree that lot 23 should remain free.
- g) David Cowan read the 2/13/2007 resolution by the Student Senate which makes recommendations to help keep lot 23 free (Attachment 5).
- h) Lot 23 Email responses
 - **Opposes:** Jessica Becker

Paylot Hourly Rate Increase Proposed

- 5. David Cowan opened discussion on increasing the Paylot (Lot 4) hourly rates to \$3 first hour/\$2 per hour thereafter. Existing rates since 2000-01 have been \$2 the first hour/\$1 thereafter.
 - a) **Opposes:** Kristeen Giese testified that raising the price would have a negative affect on bringing in guest speakers and other invited individuals.
 - b) **Favors:** Jodi Orchard, 719 Owatonna Street, West Mankato testified that discounted Paylot passes are available for special invited guests and the cost of those passes would not increase under the existing proposal. Paylot passes are sold to MSU account managers for \$2.50/four hour pass and \$5/all day pass.
 - c) David Cowan read into the record an e-mail from Jodi Orchard (Attachment 6) addressing the congestion building up around the Paylot, and proposing a solution expanding the lot with 20-24 stalls taken from the Lot 4a Gold area.
 - d) Rob McGinn, 217 East Skyline, as Parking Citation Appeals Board Chairperson, testified that the university receives complaints about tickets and lack of space available on cold days. He indicated that he was opposed to the Student senate idea to create 40 Gold Stalls in lot 13, which is a residence hall permit lot. Rob said that there is often confusion about parking in lots where colors are mixed and would like to see that changed to avoid the confusion.

- e) Kristeen Giese further testified that she opposed the rate increase because many student organizations plan events but have little or no money for guests.
- f) Email responses:
 - **Favors:** Jessica Becker

Gold Stall Parking Violations - \$25

- 6. David Cowan opened discussion on raising the existing \$15 standard parking fine to \$25 for violations in Gold Parking (\$20 Early Bird rate if paid within 4 work days). Illegal parking in the Purple and Orange stalls would remain at the \$15 level. Pay box rates for Lot 21 Purple or Orange stalls would remain at \$1 per hour. The rate change is designed to encourage existing MSU permit holders to park in their permit stalls during bad weather days as well as to encourage MSU community members who do not own a permit to buy a permit. Guests and visitors, especially conference goers, have problems getting into the 180 Paylot stalls when they are full of MSU people.(Attachment 7 Fines)
 - a) **Opposes:** Murtaza Rajabali, 730 Maywood, Mankato testified that he feels signs are not properly posted in some Gold area's like in Lot 16, causing unintentional parking violations when different permit color areas are adjacent to one another.
 - b) Email responses:
 - **Favors:** Jessica Becker
 - **Favors:** Barb Wersal, Student Financial Services
 - **Favors:** Shannon Nuy, The Campus Hub
 - **Favors:** Jean Seplacy, The Campus Hub
 - **Favors:** Cheryl Shumski, The Campus Hub
 - **Favors:** Jennifer Chelstrom, 117 Centennial Student Union
 - **Favors:** Darcy Larvick, MSU

Scooter Permits

- 7. David Cowan opened discussion on treating scooters and mini-bikes as road licensed machines requiring MSU parking permits, the same as motorcycles. The Parking Advisory Committee recommended to amending existing Article V. Section H parking handbook standard deleting reference to "125cc and larger" and enlarging existing motorcycle parking zones to accommodate scooters and mini-bikes which are now parking at bike racks. The amendment would require scooters and mini-bikes to buy a \$60 permit (\$30 with other MSU permit).
 - a) **Opposes:** Ricardo Muggli, 124 Gwyn Ave, West Mankato testified that requiring permits would discourage the use of these vehicles. He believes the use of these vehicles would alleviate problems with traffic, parking and pollution caused by the use of larger vehicles.

- b) **Favors:** Rob McGinn testified that there are concerns about the use and safety of motorized vehicles blending with pedestrians when the Presidents proposal to convert the campus to pedestrian traffic becomes effective.
- c) **Opposes:** Dan Windley, 105 Heron Dr, Mankato testified his concerns about moving the parking away from the campus core and the insufficiency of alternative modes of transportation in bad weather. He would like to see scooter parking remain as it is.
- d) **Opposes:** Ryan Erickson, 645½ Park view Avenue, Mankato testified that he agrees with Ricardo Muggli.
- e) **Opposes:** Tom Heffernan testified that he feels we should look at the state standards and restrictions regarding scooters. (ex.: Mopeds are less than 50cc, while bigger is considered to be a motorcycle). Expressed concerns about MSU owned vehicles being a bigger hazard to pedestrians than scooters or mopeds.
- f) **Opposes:** Nathan Madden testified that he would like to see MSU provide “Scooter Parking”
- g) Rob McGinn further testified about safety concerns with scooter operation on sidewalks and in other pedestrian areas.
- h) **Opposes:** Ricardo Muggli testified that he agrees with Rob McGinn but feels safety is feasible with scooters. Ricardo feels that below 125 cc is appropriate for scooter classification.
- i) **Opposes:** Oleksiy Lazar, 1751 Collette Dr., North Mankato, testified that he agrees with Ricardo.
- j) **Opposes:** Dale Carsten testified that he feels we should encourage scooter use and that a \$60 permit for scooters would dampen enthusiasm for bringing scooters to campus.
- k) **Opposes:** Kevin Thompson, 1604 Roe Crest Dr., North Mankato testified that he favors scooter use but opposes a permit fee.
- l) **Favors:** Ryan Erickson testified that he felt providing registration with an inspection to verify scooter rating (less than 125cc) would help identify vehicles as scooters.
- m) **Opposes:** Kristeen Giese testified that she favors scooter use. Feels it can be safe and we can well define the difference between scooters and motorcycles before and levy a heavy fine for violators of the size restrictions.
- n) Oleksiy Lazar testified that he feels that the physical size of the scooter is more important than its engine size. Feels a scooter parking area is important.

- o) Ricardo Muggli further testified that he feels that limiting size to 50 cc or smaller eliminates most users who ride the larger scooters because below 50 cc is not considered by them to be a practical size.
- p) David Cowan read some of the e-mail comments he received regarding the general parking issues.
- q) Email responses:
 - **Favors:** Jessica Becker

Open Forum

8. David Cowan opened an “Open Forum” for community input on any parking concerns
- a) Casey Carmody testified that he had a question on the conversion of Lot 7 to tennis courts. The question was addressed by Marty Ross stating that the conversion is being considered but would not become a reality for at least two years. A portion of Lot 7 had originally been a tennis court.
 - b) Rick Straka, Vice President of Finance and Administration for MSU, 211 Willard St, Mankato testified with information on the safety concerns of Blue Earth County regarding Lot 7 access to Stadium Road.
 - c) Kristeen Giese testified that she had concerns about training of Red Eye Shuttle Drivers and their driving habits. David Cowan reminded everyone to please bring us the details of any violations they observe (name of the shuttle driver is not important). This will help us correct the problems and administer any appropriate discipline.
 - d) Dale Carsten testified that he wanted to know why the gold permit lot on the north side of Otto old Lot 5 was never replaced and is now a grassy area. Marty Ross indicated that the old Lot 5 had two entrance/exits feeding onto Stadium Road, a design that had many hazards and was judged to be unsafe. Rick Straka again reminded us of the County concerns with safety, particularly with access from lots along Stadium.
 - e) Oleksiy Lazar testified with a suggested new placement for the sidewalk that was to be removed by lot 12. Marty Ross stated that location is where the sidewalk is presently going to be moved. Oleksiy also wondered why the first hour in the Paylot was more expensive.
 - f) Rick Straka suggested everyone should read the information about parking and fees by going to www.mnscu.edu and looking at 5.1.11, part 4, subpart b “parking fees.” Dave Cowan reminded everyone that part of that info was already written on page one of the parking had book.

4:30 The hearing was adjourned.