

Item 23-1176: Request from Appleton Downtown Inc. for free ramp and meter parking on Small Business Saturday, November 25, 2023

Municipal Services Committee

Mon, Oct 23, 2023 4:30PM

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 02:01

We have no public hearings or appearances this evening. We'll start with our first action item 23-1176 a request from Appleton Downtown Inc. for free ramp and meter parking on Small Business Saturday, November 25 2023. Do we have a motion? Oh, I'm sorry. Do we actually—I should note that this was voted on last meeting and was recommended for approval. I should note that before we move forward,

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 02:34

It was referred back?

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 02:36

Yes, and was referred back at our Council meeting.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 02:39

I'll move for approval.

Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 02:40

Second.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 02:41

So, we do have a motion to approve and a second. Any discussion? Alder Alfheim?

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 02:49

I think the reason it may have been referred back was when we had it at committee, we didn't ask a whole lot of questions, and so I think that some questions have come up in terms of what the actual cost to the city is. I fully understand our goal is to help the businesses downtown, but if we could have a little bit more information on that, please.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 03:07

Should we start with staff otherwise we do actually have someone here—oh, nope, not here to speak? Okay. Go ahead and start with staff then please. Okay. Director Block, did you want to take this one?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 03:22

Sure.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 03:22

All right. Thank you.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 03:25

Thank you, Chair. I'll give a bit of background. On a typical Saturday in November, it's been about \$2,300 in revenue to the parking utility. That's a estimate over the last five years. In 2022. It was \$3,800. About \$3,100 comes from the ramps and \$700 from the meters. And that's for last year's average Saturday in November. In

terms of how many meters are we talking about? In total, the city has 775 metered stalls. There are 768 meters in the central business district. So that's what this request is for—those being free.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 04:15

Thank you. I had planned to refer this back before Alder Hartzheim did because I was really shocked to see that we just sort of move forward with it without much discussion. I support small business. My family owns a small business. But I think we have to be mindful of the revenue for the parking utility, and I doubt any of these people are coming downtown who are only doing it because of the free parking. Any discussion questions? Alder Hartzheim.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 04:51

Thank you, chair. It's my belief that we have policies for all types of covering meters etc. Is there some sort of policy that covers this sort of request? Or if there isn't one, what is something similar to this that might be the agreement that the city makes? Because I know that we do—you know, people are requesting meters being bagged, and then they pay a certain fee for that. I'm wondering if there's something like that in this respect, and if not, why not? Thank you.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 05:27

Director Block, do you want to take this one?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 05:29

Sure can. So, in referencing the downtown parking and meter bag policy, so this was just updated in January of '23, and that update included the new fees—parking fees—that went into effect 1/1 of this year. On page two, there's typical and type of uses for meter bags. The most typical one you'd see is those standard red cloth bags, and those are requests—construction related requests, and they're in full day increments. There's also temporary or plastic meter bags. They can be sold in the half day increment, or full day increments. And I believe it's \$5 for each half day, \$10 total. And these are more for convenience requests. So, it references weekend farmers markets, special events, special requests from ADI and downtown businesses. So that that would be I think, the closest bucket that I could see this fitting into. But we're talking about 768 meters, and obviously, at \$10 a meter, that would be the way that it would typically be charged. It's based on the meter, and then we go out, bag it, and then it's pulled off based on the request form.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 06:59

Is there a reason why we wouldn't have directed ADI to go this route? Or is this they were hoping in place of the policy? I mean, it's atypical in my experience to go around a policy.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 07:15

So, when I looked back at how this has been done in the past, it was requested a few years back, 2014, 2018. And I viewed those municipal services committee meetings, and the policy was not referenced. So, oversight on my part for not trying to figure out which policy bucket this would fit in. I would say for the ramps, we don't have—the closest thing we have that would fit this type of request is for an event holder to purchase validation stickers where somebody then brings in their parking ticket—the ticket you pull—and as they pass through that business or that event, a sticker is placed on it, they scan it on the way out, it shows paid. So, it's like a prepayment on the parking for the ramp. Parking utility remains whole then.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 08:11

Okay. I wasn't here for the previous meeting. When I saw this item on the agenda, I was really shocked to see a free ramp parking. And then I just assumed the meter parking would be done as we've done it in the past part of the policy. So that was really surprising for me. We'll start with Alder Alfheim and then Alder Hartzheim.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 08:33

Could I ask Jennifer question, Chair?

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 08:37

Sure. If Jennifer Stephany would like to approach the podium and speak and take your question.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 08:45

Hey. A couple of questions. One, it's been a tough year for the city downtown with their changes in lines. Is there any particular reason that you asked for the parking this year where you haven't in the last couple of years?

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 09:02

We actually have in the past. Obviously, we didn't in 2020. We did come back and have some discussion 20—I'm gonna say it was probably '22 with the mayor, but we were—it wasn't on the radar to get the letter in advance as far as we need to, to get through the process of making the official ask. As you can see, it takes some time to get through that process. We have a printing deadline that we're trying to make. So, we were not in time to take that through a formal process. So, we were not able to make that ask.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 09:43

And do you believe that the—I mean, what's the what's the incremental change there in general on our business, small business Saturday's? What's our normal uptick in revenue for our businesses without the parking? Any guesstimate?

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 09:56

I don't know if I could actually answer that. I think there's probably some good statistics out there about a national average increase for Small Business Saturday. We don't have that on the local level. I'm sure if you spoke with some of the small business owners, they will tell you that that is a pretty significant day in downtown Appleton and one that we're proud to have the city of Appleton as a partner on. If you haven't seen the piece that we put out, it prominently has your logo on it, and we very much appreciate that partnership.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 10:32

So, this ask is coming to you not within a typical process of a special event. Within a special event where we need to get meters, we would go through the process and pay for those meters like we have for many, many events. This is a special ask that we're making of the City of Appleton to extend your partnership with us to help to make that enticement for somebody to come in downtown. Have we had some impact from the lane reconfiguration? Yes, there's definite discussion amongst the business owners about things that they're hearing from their customers. We tend to see a very positive impact from that so far, so I'm not saying that it's a negative. I think there's some conversation within the community about coming downtown and how that looks and feels as a driver who maybe hasn't experienced that yet. There are some people that probably only come during the holiday season to downtown Appleton, unfortunately. We want to change that for sure. So, this really is a special request. This does go above and beyond the partnership that we currently have in place, and a little bit different than when we would be coming for a special event permit.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 11:55

One second. I just—so was there a discussion with the mayor this year on this item?

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 12:00

No. I—we had enough time to go through the process. We are cutting it tight.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 12:07

Okay.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 12:08

We had to call the printer today.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 12:10

Okay. Alder Hartzheim, you had a question.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 12:13

Thank you, chair. Might I ask a question of director Block and then make a potential follow up slash suggestion in that regard?

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 12:21

Sure. Go ahead.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 12:23

Can you give me an example of what the typical Farmers Market meter covering cost might be for ADI?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 12:33

I was just dropping down in my notes. Are meter bags charged for farm market as part of their special event permit.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 12:41

They are not.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 12:43

But they do—but ADI does pay a special event fee that allows for that, correct? So somehow, it's sort of—

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 12:50

We do pay a fee for the permit.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 12:52

Okay.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 12:54

But I can't speak to whether or not that covers the parking costs.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 12:59

Thank you. I am not interested in penalizing the small businesses in downtown Appleton. But I am interested in sort of following some rules. And especially because this parking utility is not exactly in the most, you know, floating on top of the water making money right left and hand over fist. Might I suggest that the committee

might want to entertain something to the effect of "from a certain hour to a certain hour the gates will be lifted in the parking utilities and no charges will be taken at meters in exchange for a certain fee of some sort." That's just a suggestion on my part. Thank you.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 13:38

Yeah, I somewhat agree. I also have a little bit of concern that my friends and family on Small Business Saturday actually make it a point to visit small businesses. So, I wonder why we think that the free parking is an enticement of some sort when people are already coming downtown. Any other questions or discussion from the committee? Alder Doran.

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 14:08

Thank you. Jennifer, you're mentioned last year you didn't actually get the request in. So presumably people that came downtown and Small Business Saturday paid the regular ramp fees and paid the parking meter fees. Did you hear any feedback from businesses that that was a deterrent or maybe led them to seeing potentially smaller revenue that day? I know you can't necessarily tie them directly, but did you hear any feedback about that?

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 14:35

They were not happy with us. I will say that—that we didn't make the formal ask in time. Did we hear that it kept people away? I wouldn't necessarily say that, no.

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 14:49

I don't disagree with our my colleagues concerns about the financial status of the parking utility. I've shared those concerns for a couple years now also. I think the hard part in this one is, is looking at, you know, what it would cost for ADI to pay for the meters alone is more than the revenue we actually recover on a November Saturday, plus then the cost of ramps. You know, if there might be some agreeable sort of solution there to help the city a little bit too, I'd be open to that. I'm just not sure what that might be. And I, as much as I don't like, you know, passing on that opportunity to generate revenue for the parking utility that needs it, you know, this is something we have that Council and the city has allowed in the past. Not saying a standing practice needs to continue that way, but just for context, I think it's something we've done before also, in trying to be a good partner, you know, with our small businesses in downtown. So, for what that's worth, that was part of my reasoning for supporting it last week as well.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 15:59

Yeah, I think it's a little late for us to try to make a policy with the deadlines and things and having this comeback already once. But I think that there is likely a happy medium here in the meantime. I saw that Alder Meltzer had a question or concern?

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 16:20

Well, I have a comment. I actually—I do think that this is a really good incentivizer. I think that when people intentionally go out to patronize small businesses on Small Business Saturday, having to you know, put more money back in the meter and that kind of thing, you kind of end up with a smaller horizon plan for your day. And I think that these free parking days, encourage people who come downtown to stay downtown longer, maybe, you know, discover or check out a new store that they haven't been into before, or take advantage of the fact that they don't have to go back to the meter or move their car to inter—interject eating at a restaurant in between shopping at different businesses. So, I think that there's definitely a way in which this is a very valid incentive. It's—and maybe if we're looking at it from the perspective of like, "is this what makes people come

downtown?" No, that's not what the incentive is about. It makes people stay downtown longer and have a more robust spending opportunity during that that excursion downtown.

Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 17:25

And I think also, there's a lot of just kind of—the promotional aspect of it, I think also encourages people. I think, right now, there's a big competition. You know, people want to patronize small businesses. And that's actually something you can do, sitting on your couch on their website without actually going into their brick and mortar. So, I think that this free parking stuff kind of helps people to press themselves to engage more in that more physical relationship with the businesses that they're supporting, which is an important part of them being able to be exposed to whatever else is going on downtown.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 18:06

I agree. But I also wonder what makes this request different from other requests that ADI makes regularly. I agree that there should be some sort of standardization in how we handle these requests. I'm just wondering if staff would have any suggestion on maybe a happy medium in this regard. Anyone want to take that? Anyone have a suggestion for committee?

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 18:39

I have an idea.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 18:40

Alder Alfheim has an idea. Saved by Alder Alfheim.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 18:44

I'm not sure about that. But—and this might not be this year's solution. I think we're all trying to accomplish what we're doing here. But from a budget standpoint, I don't think we went into 2023 with the expectation of losing that revenue, and that realistically is the problem. So, for future issues—and I'll ask Director Homan—don't we normally—there's a grant process that we help out ADI during the year?

Director Kara Homan (Community And Economic Development) 19:08

Number five. So, the city through the Community Development Department has historically funded assistance for special events out of our budget, to ADI and creative downtown Inc. It's not a grant program.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 19:24

Okay. So, my follow up then would be in future years in terms of a system, could we build in an in-kind for this event in the future? So, in essence, we're accounting for it. I think that that—again, the whole point of building a pedestrian friendly downtown restriping is to get people downtown. And it is true that those that—I mean, I always go but I get to walk downtown, and we're trying to continue to lure people in that perhaps aren't using it. So, I like the idea of doing this. I understand questioning the math on it. And I think in future years if we deal with how we take care of ADI and part of that being an in-kind, same with parking, that can be built into the future discussion so we don't have to go through the bag tag on it. But we are investing in our community when we do this. And as somebody that has probably 40% of the businesses are in my district, I will stand that we should do this. But I think it's fair to say that our process is not necessarily flowing nicely, and if we have a remedy by doing the in-kind kind of situation next year, then we can deal with it moving forward. And it's not trying to match up as we're doing everything else because it is different.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 20:38

Do we have any community funding available for something like this this year?

Director Kara Homan (Community And Economic Development) 20:46

No.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 20:47

No? Okay. All right. Any other questions, discussion, ideas?

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 20:58

My opinion is the biggest thing that it's going to cost in term is the labor of bagging all of these meters. And that's the problem.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 21:08

Can I quickly comment on that? I don't think we've ever bagged them, first of all.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 21:12

I was gonna say, I don't think it's bagged.

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 21:13

So, we don't bag them. We just let them go and tell everybody "don't pay them."

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 21:18

Director Block?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 21:20

So what I could find in history and watching the past meetings, in 2018 a portion of this request was approved only to include meters and not the parking ramps. So, parking ramps were still charged; meters were free. There was no meter bagging, because it's labor intensive. So, it was up to ADI to distribute that information on the free parking. You know, we didn't post it free parking or anything like that. So, there's nothing on the meter that would make somebody aware of free parking if they if they weren't already through the mailings or advertisements. And in 2014, the entire request was denied all together. Those were the two that I could find on municipal services committee when I was looking back. Perhaps it was under a different keyword that I was not searching correctly, but that's what my research found on the compromise that was made previously.

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 22:24

If I may? I actually like the idea of leaving the park—or leaving the meters as pluggable but opening up the ramps, because I think if we can help people find the ramps and realize that it's not a long walk in the long run, that's our best thing to do. Use the ramps; they're good for you. So, if we could—maybe the compromise in this year's situation is to lift the gate on the ramp. That way those long-term parkers that want to spend four hours there can, but we still have the movement in and out of the shoppers, which I think is better for the businesses.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 22:57

I actually agree. I think that's an excellent—an excellent point is that we do want people using the ramps. Any other questions? Yes.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 23:09

If we were to pick one or the other, we would agree, and we would pick the ramps just for all of those excellent comments of getting more people comfortable utilizing the ramp, staying longer so they're not running out

every two hours or feeling like they do and not blocking up that short term parking then in essence to keep that flow like you said, so.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 23:34

Alder Hartzheim.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 23:35

Thank you, Chair. I keep going back to we have these farmers markets every Saturday. What—there is a fee involved with that correct? And ADI does pay that fee. What number are we talking about for one Saturday?

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 23:51

Director Block? Can you?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 23:53

Just a clarification, one Saturday in the ramps or one Saturday for—

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 23:56

No, no, no. A Saturday for the special event permit for having College Avenue closed for the farmers market.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 24:04

I don't believe that I have the information related to the meter bag charges associated with the entire special event permit that covers all the meters along the closure route for the farmers market.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 24:18

Just looking for a number of please, if you know it. Like—

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 24:21

I do not know it, and I don't know if it's actually charged or if ADI is just paying the special event fee. There's not an additional meter bag.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 24:32

Do you know what the special event fee though is, that number?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 24:36

I cannot say.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 24:37

Okay.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 24:38

That goes through the City Clerk's office.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 24:40

Here's what I see happening right now. So, I think that we have a good compromise on the table. I think that we do we have to have some sort of policy. I just think if we had done this last week, we would be in a position where we could put something like that together, but since this committee did not do that, I think what we have to look at right now is a compromise. And I think the compromise I see that is agreeable is that we would offer the free parking in the ramps. And so, I would go ahead and make an amendment—

Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 25:16

I'll second it.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 25:17

—to have the ramp parking be free and meter parking as normal. So, we have a motion and a second. Discussion on the amendment. Alder Hartzheim, go ahead.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 25:30

Thank you, Chair. I don't mind that amendment at all. I was just curious about the number that came with the special event fee because I was wondering if that was something that we could short term make that a policy. So now ADI would pay this special event fee to have the gates open on all of our ramps on Sat—on Small Business Saturday. That's why I was looking for what that number might be.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 25:51

Understood. I just think that if we—since we don't have that information, that we need to be decisive as a committee and move forward with some sort of compromise.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 26:00

I think there's a benefit—oh—

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 26:01

Go ahead.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 26:02

I think there's a benefit to this city as well is trying this method. If our general revenue on a Saturday is would you say \$3800? \$2800

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 26:10

\$3100 for the ramps.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 26:11

\$3100, which is a big number that we are sacrificing this month, but our goal is to advertise it so more people use it in the future. So I think it's a double benefit for us pushing people to the ramps, and we may get some of that revenue back in the long term because people realize it's a viable option. And we can use—we'll get more business in future years after they discover it's a short walk.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 26:32

I agree.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 26:34

Multiple hands.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 26:35

Okay.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 26:35

That's a bad sign.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 26:36

We have multiple hands. Let's start with the attorney. Wait, hold on. Can we start with the city attorney because I feel like that's the most important.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 26:48

The city attorney was telling director Block to go first.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 26:51

Okay, great. Go ahead, director.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 26:53

I need to know who moved and seconded on the amendment.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 26:56

I moved. Second was Alder Meltzer.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 26:57

Okay. And there's probably a clarification question.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 27:00

Okay. No problem.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 27:01

Yes. To clarify a time duration for Small Business Saturday. Is it the entire day, 24 hours?

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 27:10

We'll ask Jennifer. Does ADI have posted hours for Small Business Saturday?

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 27:18

We do not, no. We have businesses that run all day long. So, we typically don't post a timing of that.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 27:27

So, a typical day of metering is on Saturday, eight to—is it seven? I actually don't recall. I park in the ramp. So

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 27:40

Parking meters on—I believe 6pm. Nine to 6pm

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 27:46

But the ramp, typically—

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 27:48

Gates are down 24/7

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 27:48

Correct. Okay.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 27:49

So, it would just set the time that staff comes back and to lower those gates.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 27:52

Okay. So, we would need a timeframe for the ramp unless we are considering an entire day. Yes? You are Director—District Four.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 28:13

Thank you. I'm reminded of an emailed question that Alder Meltzer recently posed, which is when's the repair work on the yellow ramp going to get done? And this might become relevant to the discussion here because on the one hand, we're inviting people to come use our ramps this fall. And there—the yellow ramp is currently up for repairs and we're hoping to start some repair work on the green and red ramps to yet this year. So, in an effort to avoid a situation where we have—we're inviting people to come in and showcase our ramps and then have them run into a bunch of closed parking stalls. I just wanted to remind the committee that we have that ongoing work, and at this point, I would anticipate that the yellow ramp repair work will continue through the date of Small Business Saturday, and we may have started some work on the red and green ramps as well. Just fair disclosure.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 29:07

Well, thanks for making it easy for us, everybody. Really appreciate it.

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 29:11

I love orange barrels everywhere.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 29:14

That's true. Any other questions or discussion? Alder Doran?

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 29:19

I guess, if we're talking about the time, why don't we just make it to match the meter time and just make it nine to six for the ramps to be open? I think generally it would cover most of the business hours downtown. And certainly, restaurants and things are open later, and I get that, but just for—I'm not sure that it makes it easier to market that way or not. But.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 29:39

If I could just ask Director Block the logistics of that. So, does that mean that at six o'clock anybody who's inside needs to pay to leave? How does this—how would something like that work? Okay.

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 29:52

So, then we're gonna have to make it later. And then it might need to go on the—thank God we haven't gone to the printer yet.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 30:02

Alder Meltzer. Did you have a question or suggestion?

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 30:04

I was I was wondering if we could ask Jen Stephany for a recommendation as far as the time that the ramps should close.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 30:13

So how does it work if you've been in there all day, and then you go to leave and you don't have a ticket?

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 30:21

Director Black? Could you?

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 30:25

That's a—

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 30:25

I mean, not having a—

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 30:26

\$50 fee according to the sign.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 30:29

Yeah, if as I recall.

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 30:30

Could we just close them at 7am on Sunday, and make it clear that no one can be there overnight? Well, I mean, no matter what, we have to get people out.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 30:43

It's never easy, is it?

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 30:57

Is there any infrastructure in place with ADI to do the—I'm not sure that there is—but to do the reimbursement for if you visited a small business today, you would have some sort of code or something to exit the ramp?

[Somebody answered off microphone]

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 31:30

Yes. Does the tag, though, come from the small business, which means somebody would have to get it to the small business. That's what I'm trying to understand.

[Somebody said something off microphone]

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 31:56

Okay.

[Somebody said something off microphone]

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 32:03

I think I just want to express a little frustration that we don't have a recommendation to work with, and we're all just kind of rolling with things up here. You know, I think we all want to do what's right for our parking utility and for ADI, but I feel like the committee has been put in a really tough situation where, if we want to compromise, we have to decide on making a new policy. I think it would have been nice to have a suggestion from staff to help us—help guide us in a way that we could do this where everybody's happy this year, and then work with

things next year. That is not where we are, but I felt it was important to say that. Any other questions, discussion, ideas, on the amendment?

Alderson Chad Doran (District 15) 33:00

Why don't we just make it midnight then, just so it's the day, just Saturday. So, the ramp—the gates go down at midnight on Sunday?

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 33:10

Let's hear from Alder Hartzheim, too. I saw your hand was raised.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 33:14

I actually was gonna say something to the effect of 10 o'clock. I mean, I don't know whether Ms. Stephany would have any specifics as to how long many of her business—many of the businesses in ADI are open for business. But I would expect that people would be clearing out of these places, with the intent of having shopped for Small Business Saturday.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 33:34

I mean, I expect retail would be over by—

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 33:36

I don't think that solves the problem, though. Because there are people that will come at nine, gate will be up. They'll try to leave at 11 or midnight, because our businesses are open until two in the morning, and they do use those ramps. So, I don't think it solves the problem.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 33:53

I don't think anyone's going to the bar for Small Business Saturday. No offense.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 33:56

I understand that. But that's still the reality of the environment is that people will come at all times. So, at any point when that ramp arm comes down.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 34:08

And if we have five people get a \$50 fine, those five people would do more harm than—

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 34:13

If I can just remind the members of the committee to be address—yeah to have me address them prior because I—alder Hartzheim was speaking first.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 34:24

Thank you, Chair. This does bring up a bigger problem because if we are offering to allow this with no policy whatsoever, which this committee already did last week and pushed it to Council and then we refer to back, we'd have this same question come up to us as a city, would we not? We don't know what the

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 34:46

I think of what we were hoping for is we could find an interim agreement until

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 34:51

I don't disagree with you. What I'm saying is that if we said—if we approve, just as the committee did last week and the Council just rubber stamped that last week, then we'd still be having this question—what happens if someone is stuck in the ramp and the arm comes down, and now they don't have a ticket?

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 35:08

Right.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 35:09

This is a big problem.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 35:10

I concur.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 35:10

I guess we would have to address that with the hotel as well, because of overnight guests. Yikes.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 35:19

Attorney Behrens?

Attorney Christopher Behrens 35:21

District Three,

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 35:22

Yep, go ahead.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 35:24

I'm gonna speak on behalf of Director Block because she's relatively new. But there have been several comments about frustration about not having a policy. There is a policy. Staff follows that policy. This deviates from the policy in place, which is why the matter was brought before all of you to make a decision. So, in her defense, there shouldn't be frustration directed back towards staff, because staff didn't have a policy from which to make this decision. It's your decision to make.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 35:57

A decision though. It's not a yes or no, in every regard. So.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 36:02

And if you if you want to amend the policy in the future so staff has direction for situations like this, you can. But keep in mind the difficulty you're all having right now trying to envision the scenario in which it's going to work if you ask staff to do that in the future.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 36:19

I just meant in terms of we weren't, we weren't directed with anything as far as even policy. There was no, "This is the policy. This is how we typically handle this." And you know, the last time I recall—I think we had wrote down 2018. I was not on the Council in 2018. So, I don't have any—I don't have any ideas. I think were at all just trying to workshop this. Director Block?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 36:49

I presented it in the same way it was presented in 2018 and 2014.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 36:53

Right, I agree. So, I agree. And it this isn't a frustration with you not following what was there before. This was an overall frustration. This isn't with you specifically. I mean, I'm frustrated that we did this before, and there's nothing I can look at personally, to say, "Hey, this is what we did. This is a great idea." Alder Hartzheim.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 37:16

Thank you, chair. In light of all of this discussion and knowing that there has to be some much more well thought out policy in the future, I would like the committee—and of course, what I like doesn't matter. But what I would suggest the committee do is do just as what was done in 2018. The meters being would be available for no fee during the day and the ramps still be managed as they are, just to get through 2023, and then somewhere along the line, some alternate solution that does all the things that we—the great things that we talked about today, which is encourage people to use the ramps, etc, etc. This would be the band aid that would get us through this year, and then we could ask staff and work with staff to move forward with something more concrete for future years.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 38:08

Let me ask this of staff and then I'll ask Jennifer as well. Does staff have a recommendation on if we had to choose either the ramp or the meters? Do they have—do you have a suggestion on which staff would prefer as a happy medium?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 38:32

Staff would recommend or staff would prefer that the parking meters be free during Small Business Saturday versus the ramp. Logistically, it's simpler. It's cleaner, and we would do it as we did in the past and no special signage would go out other than the advertising that was done by ADI in the past. Keeps the ramps clean, so to speak, and management.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 38:55

Thank you. And Jennifer, given the issues we're having trying to figure out how we don't strand customers in the ramp, do you have a suggestion? which do you prefer?

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 39:06

I would definitely agree with Director Block. In talking through the logistics of the pay as you exit system, it does create some issues.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 39:18

With that, if Alder Meltzer would be open to removing their second?

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 39:24

Yep, I'll withdraw my second.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 39:25

And I will withdraw the amendment.

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 39:27

And then I'll make an amendment to do it the other way with the meters and no ramps.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 39:36

And also just clarifying there would be no bags on the meters.

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 39:40

Yep.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 39:41

So people would be free to use the meters if they so choose.

[Somebody said something off microphone]

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 39:50

I guess, the meters operate until six o'clock usually right? So, for the duration of their operation on Saturday.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 39:59

And do we have a second?

Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 40:00

Second.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 40:00

So, we have a motion and a second. Any discussion on the newest amendment? Alder Hartzheim.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 40:09

Thank you, Chair. I appreciate that, and it sounds like a great compromise. I still would like to entertain somewhere along the line—and this is not for this year necessarily—but there being a fee involved for this just because it follows the same sort of pathway that policy takes elsewhere. Thank you.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 40:27

I would agree with that. And I'm certain I'm not the only committee member who agrees with that. Any discussion on the amendment? All right, with that we'll vote. All those in favor say aye. Aye. Any opposed? Motion passes five, zero. Now the item as amended. Yes, Alder Doran.

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 40:49

Thank you. I was just waiting for this part to mention that I've been asking all of the staff in our budget process for reviews of fees and things like that. One of which I've had conversation with the clerk's office about is the special event permit and how we—the city is not coming close to recouping its costs for special event permits. And I think this is part of that reason and will be part of that future discussion that I think we'll be bringing forward in some form or fashion. I've had conversations with the mayor about it as well, just trying to figure out the best way to address that as a whole.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 41:24

Yeah. It was my understanding from safety and licensing that that was that process was currently under review. So, I expect that we'll see that come back. Any other questions discussion on the item as amended? All right, with that we'll vote. All those in favor say aye. Aye. Any opposed? That motion passes five zero. Thank you.