

## Item 24-0392: Bird Rides Update

### Municipal Services Committee

Mon, Apr 08, 2024, 4:30PM

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:04:04**

We have our information items this evening. 24-0392 the Bird rides update. I understand that there may be some issues with us receiving our payments from Bird. Director Block, did you want to talk a little bit about this?

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:04:23**

Yeah. Thank you, Chair. I wanted to provide two updates since the drafting of this memo. The two outstanding invoices have been paid. So the commitments from 2023 are paid in full from—

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:04:40**

Okay great.

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:04:40**

For the rides. There's also another update. It looks like the bankruptcy process has been completed as of April 4, and the restructuring is complete. So Bird as a company still exists. They are under the umbrella of Third Lane Mobility. Third Lane Mobility overseas Bird and also Spin which is another mobility company across the country. So that process is complete as of April 4.

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:05:20**

Okay. Any questions, discussion on this item? Alder Meltzer?

**Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:05:26**

What's the timeline for the next vote that Council is taking on their contract?

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:05:31**

Currently, I'm holding contract negotiations until those items were resolved. The last remaining item to resolve is for Bird to come up with a solution related to parking of the scooters. They have, in a conversation today, talked about restricting park—parking to certain areas that the city would designate. Those would be public parking areas. The one concept is taking up a parking stall and striping it for scooter parking-only is one idea that they had. It does not sound like they're interested in owning or maintaining any of their own parking locations—private parking locations, if you will. They also talked about implementing a restricted parking feature on the scooters that if not placed within those locations it would keep charging the user. It won't prevent the scooter from being dumped somewhere; the user would just be charged. So there would be more fees that Bird would collect, but the scooter would still remain the problem. While a solution, I don't know if that would solve the community's concerns with scooters in the right of way.

**Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:06:55**

Nor do I think it would actually make the time spent on this issue less. Alder Alfheim?

**Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:07:02**

Apologize. Would the fees then have the ability to pass through back to the city?

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:07:07**

Our fees right now are—were previously structured just on a per ride basis. It's 10 cents per ride.

**Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:07:15**

An additional fee tacked on. Would we have the addition—the ability to grab that?

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:07:20**

I could ask that question to Bird.

**Aldersperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:07:23**

It will make them pay attention to the system more if we're making all the dollars on it.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:07:29**

Alder Croatt, I saw.

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:07:30**

Thank you, chair. May I direct to Director Block?

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:07:34**

Yeah.

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:07:34**

Okay. I think you mentioned that now that the two things are resolved, contract negotiations are going to continue. I didn't hear when we might see a contract before us again.

**Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:07:48**

I was not comfortable with moving forward with Bird on any contract negotiations. I still don't feel like the parking in public parking spaces, given our parking conversation we just had, should be used up by scooters. So I wasn't comfortable with that as a solution. If the committee wants to direct me to continue negotiations with Bird I will, but I have not done so to date.

**Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:08:15**

Okay.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:08:17**

Alder Meltzer.

**Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:08:18**

I'm comfortable with no more conversations with Bird.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:08:24**

Anyone else? Alder Wolff.

**Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 1:08:30**

I agree with your assessment on the situation and agree with the direction you're headed. Sorry, chair, to the director. I agree with where we're going with this. I agree with the memo, and I think that we're on the right track. And that is as a person who really wanted bird scooters, but I can see that this isn't where we should be, and they're not working well with us. So I'm also okay with not talking with Bird.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:09:01**

Alder Fenton.

**Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 1:09:02**

Thank you. I think I agree with what I've been hearing here, and I can speak for everything I've heard from my district. When we first welcomed Bird and the scooters into the city of Appleton, we were told that it was, you know, a great transportation option for that last mile. And I liked that idea. But in practice, I've seen it much more as a recreational outlet. And, you know, I've ridden them; they're fun, but the—with the company having problems, with the parking problems, they've generally become much more of a nuisance than a benefit, at least to the people in my district and what I'm hearing. So I would be absolutely fine with not continuing discussions with them. Thank you.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:09:55**

Alder Hartzheim.

**Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 1:09:58**

Thank you, chair. I concur. We had a very nice time trying to figure out how to make this work in our community, and it just hasn't—both for them and for us. So the view hasn't been worth the climb, and I would be satisfied to stop making negotiations with them as well.

**Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:10:15**

Thank you. Anyone else?