

Depoe Bay City Council/Planning Commission
Joint Workshop Meeting
Thursday, March 6, 2008 – 7:00 pm
Depoe Bay City Hall

PRESENT: Mayor J. White, P. Cameron, P. Taunton, G. Romans, D. Davilla, D. Zimmerman
C. Connors, E. Hough, V. Sovern, B. Taunton

ABSENT: J. Brown, B. Bruce, D. Goddard, S. McGavock

STAFF: City Planner L. Lewis, City Superintendent T. Owings, City Recorder P. Murray

Mayor White called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and established a quorum.

Discussion: Proposed 4 Hour Parking Time Limit

White asked Connors to open the discussion with a brief background on the Planning Commission's recommended zoning code text amendment to impose a time limit on parking along Hwy 101. Connors explained the Planning Commission reviewed zoning code parking requirements, and tried to make changes to be fair. The commission decided to institute a 4 hour time limit on parking because most businesses are open 10 am to 5 pm and sometimes many of the parking spaces are taken before 10 am, leaving limited parking for others. Having spaces available for turnover would help businesses. Connors feels the city should be proactive in dealing with issues and working to solve problems.

Discussion followed, with many comments and thoughts brought forward, including the following:
Short term parking won't bring more income to the businesses in the city. People find a place to park if they want to be here. Salem recently instigated a 2 hour parking time limit which works for some and not for others, there may be things Depoe Bay could do to avoid the problems Salem is having. The problem is some businesses are not being good neighbors. Bigger, better signs are needed to inform locations of parking lots. Parking lots should be safe and appealing. Turn over is good, but we want people to stay in Depoe Bay. If there is no funding to support enforcement, then there is no reason to enact the parking time limit. The city should get a police officer first, then implement time limit parking. If the ordinance is adopted, it must be enforced, to do otherwise is less than a professional effort. It is hard to regulate good business practices. The city does not have to enforce its' ordinances, signs informing people of the time limit will do the job. It's the fishermen that are the problem. Office personnel at the Tradewinds Charters do not encourage their customers to park off the highway (to leave those spaces open for others). Fishermen are not aware of the parking problem. Charter offices could encourage their customers to park off the highway, signs and guidance from business owners could help to solve the problem. The downtown area is the only area there is a problem. Fishermen are not going to park over the hill, they often have a lot to carry, such as coolers, etc. Fishermen bring business to town, most fishing trips are from 6 am to noon, with afternoon trips being rare any more and most of the shops don't open until 10 am.

The city could pursue grant funding for parking and enact a fee in lieu of providing parking spaces for development to help fund parking facilities. If public lots go private the problem will become worse. The same rules should be applied to all public parking, if there is going to be a time limit on parking, it should be on all parking areas including the harbor. The city needs to take a hard look at the entire picture before taking action. The worst thing that could happen is that no one will come to Depoe Bay, we want the fishermen here, but there are problems, the Planning Commission has let the Council know that something should be done. Signs don't mean a thing, people either don't read them, or ignore what they say,

everybody knows there's no enforcement. Enforcement is a concern, why add another ordinance that can't be enforced. Fishermen using all the parking spaces is not fair to the other businesses, if the fishermen were done by 10 am, it would be helpful. The city needs law enforcement to enforce parking regulations. Signs can be effective for some, a small percentage will always disobey the law. The city is growing and with more businesses the problem will get worse. The city should look at ways to make parking in a parking lot more attractive, such as providing ice. Parking problems are in other areas besides uptown, moorage holders often can't find a parking space at the harbor. Maybe the city could provide a golf cart valet service to/from parking lots. Should the city create a parking task force? The Planning Commission has already reviewed the parking issue, creating another group to review again is not going to solve the problem. A code enforcement officer is needed besides a police officer. A police officer won't enforce city codes, only laws. Fishermen don't bring business to town, they don't shop here, they are only part of the backbone of Depoe Bay. Often times the remote parking lots are empty, fishermen use the community hall parking area instead of the leased lot on Bay Street.

A letter from Rich & Val Allyn was referred to which presented a suggestion to limit parking only on the east side of the highway in the downtown area. A map showing the area ODOT would likely approve for time limit parking was referred to, it was noted the area of possible approval is the downtown area. (these items are attached to the original of these minutes as well as a letter from Juergen and Teri Turner and a memo from Terry Owings). The city can't enforce time limited parking until the city has a police officer or a code enforcement officer. The city should talk to the owner of Tradewinds to encourage cooperation. The city needs ODOT's answer on the application for time limited parking along the highway before making a decision. Before ODOT can proceed the city needs to answer their question of the city issuing residential parking permits. The city needs ideas to make parking lots attractive, maybe add lighting, planters, fresh paint. There should be discussions with business owners to try to change parking habits. Urban renewal is coming up, parking should be included in project activities. Charter boats are businesses too, its not just one business (a charter office). Parking areas are empty when there is no fishing. Fishing and the economy are changing, as things change they need to be addressed. What would be an incentive for business owners and employees to park off the highway.

White summarized that the city will wait for the answer from ODOT on the time limited parking along the highway before taking any action on the proposed ordinance and he will speak with the owner of Tradewinds to encourage cooperation. The question of the city issuing residential parking permits (to respond to ODOT) will be scheduled on the next regular city council meeting agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Mayor Jim White

Pery Murray, City Recorder