

Traffic and Parking Standing Committee Zoom Meeting Monday, October 25, 2021 – 1:00 p.m.

Attended:

Dean Hansen, Sam Patterson, Dr. Greg Snyder, Elisabeth Alexander, Jack Furla, Taylor Kelly, and Lindy Brown; and Cassidy Savage, non-committee member, transcribing minutes

Discussion:

- **Agenda**

Sam welcomed those in attendance. He suggested meeting four times over the course of the year. Members introduced themselves.

- **Summary – Department of Parking & Transportation 2020-2021**

- **Financials** - Sam covered highlights from Traffic and Parking Committee meetings during the 2020-2021 school year, beginning with financials. He explained how financials and operations were impacted by the pandemic. The CARES Act helped the department recover from permit refunds.
- **UM Covid-19 Response** - Sam then explained the department's part in supporting the UM Covid-19 response by collaborating with Student Housing on parking and transportation related needs of students in isolation and quarantine situations. Sam stated that despite low ridership, the department advocated for more O.U.T. transit options, including Safe Ride.
- **Meter Parking Changes** - Continuing on, Sam covered the changes made to meter parking as a result of requests made by students. Upper Terrace was converted to a metered lot, Old Athletics meters were converted to a pay-on-foot station. In addition, there were upgrades to signage, and the department transitioned to cashless operations in the field.
- **New Residential Parking Zone** - The department also consulted with the ASB Infrastructure Committee and Student Housing to discuss the new Northwest permit zone near Stockard/Martin. Sam also mentioned plans to work with O.U.T. on creating a new bus route from the East Residential zone to the Residential Garage.
- **Shark Cycles, E-bikeshare Project** - Sam then covered Shark Cycles, which was implemented through a senior design course in the Electrical and Computer Engineering program to assist with competitive parking on camping. Sam explained that the project has grown quite a bit, and that this e-bike solution is an option we'd like to push going forward.
- **Electrical Vehicle Charging Spaces** - Sam explained about short/long term goals regarding electrical charging spaces. The plan is to expand inventory of charging spaces by 6 in 2021 in addition to adding electrical charging spaces over the course of the next 3 years. Dean Hansen inquired about whether the plan is still for the charging spaces to be at no charge. Sam mentioned flexible payment structures as a possibility in the future.

- ***Movement to Service Orientation*** - Sam went on to explain a movement for the department towards a service orientation, displaying more empathy while balancing the needs of faculty/staff and students with construction obstacles on campus.
 - ***Still Considering*** - Items discussed in 2020-2021 that are still being considered was next on the agenda. Sam disclosed that an assistantship beta parking permit was talked about with leadership but did not get approval to move forward. The permit was to serve as a “commuter plus” per say, giving graduate students access to some faculty/staff lots. The other item of consideration is Parking Logix, which involves parking sensors for counting spaces to show if lots are full before you have to enter and search the lot for a space. Sam stated there was some pushback because of optics on a traditional campus.
- **New Business**
 - Parking and Transportation Brainstorm*
 - Sam asked members in attendance to navigate to <https://easyretro.io/publicboard/jTfVnCgr54MkQ3s0OgqBpR5eyXi2/8311d9b6-c331-4d02-87d9-731249ae32b1> to participate in an ongoing Parking and Transportation Brainstorm Session, where there are multiple questions and ideas presented. Sam encouraged members to vote on these trending topics to address in future committee meetings.
 - Jack Furla opened discussion, allowing that he has noticed more people back on campus, as well as increased parking enforcement. He stated he still thinks the parking space counting would be very helpful, as Commuter parking will always be an issue students will continue to complain about.
 - Sam stated that it has been challenging selling Park-N-Ride permits and stated that there are ideas regarding renaming Park-N-Ride and Commuter permit lots. He stated things still need to be worked out, but mentioned cost restructuring with busier Commuter lots, such as those near the Ford Center and Tad Smith Coliseum. Greg Snyder responded that through promoting, sell the bus as a more viable options, highlighting that parking out and riding in saves time.
 - Elisabeth Alexander brought up the meter parking area in the HFL lot, explaining that faculty and staff are frustrated with the traffic congestion it causes. She also stated that students looking for a meter space in that lot are more likely to park in the Faculty/Staff spaces whenever there is no meter space open.
 - Dean discussed the possibility of Parking Logix being linked to an app that would tell people how many spaces were available. Sam stated the operation would be expensive and comes with a lot of infrastructure, but that it is good to hear students like the idea and that it is getting positive feedback.
 - Greg mentioned using a Qualtrics survey for feedback for the shuttles. Sam mentioned we created some surveys some years back but that was a good idea and something we need to look into for this school year. Cassidy Savage posted

the link <https://olemiss.edu/parking/reports.html> in the chat for anyone that wanted to see past survey results.

- When discussing the future plan of using license plates as permits, Elisabeth brought up the fact that we do not have front license plates for those that back their vehicles in. Sam mentioned that Mississippi States has adopted the operations of selling front license plates for a minimal fee and that it is becoming popular. Greg inquired about whether the technology is smart enough to allow faculty/staff members to operate between multiple vehicles. Sam stated the system will allow it and will ensure only one vehicle registered to someone's account is on campus at a given time. Elisabeth questioned if Parking and Transportation have enough officers patrolling for enforcement. Sam responded that we do coverage in zones and have to find balance from a service standpoint.
- Sam discussed on-demand transit for Luckyday and Residential College South residents, rezoning Rebel Red and Blue, rethinking bus routes, and adding a bus stop at the Khayat Law School.
- Dean brought up the question of e-scooters on campus. Sam explained his experience at a previous university was successful, but that there was much to think about in terms of legal risk creating obstacles. Sam mentioned that the City of Oxford would need to be involved with this implementation. Jack stated that he is confident the student body would think the e-scooters are fun and helpful and would be in favor of them, though he understands the risk management side of it, as well.
- Sam asked for feedback regarding the benefits of texting via mobile with Parking and Transportation notices. Jack stated he thought this idea would be worth looking into and would work well with the student population.
- Taylor Kelly stated that she is working with the ASB to get the Safe Ride route back in business.
- Sam shared some thoughts regarding innovation and growth potential in future autonomous vehicle projects.

- **Next Meeting**

The next scheduled Zoom meeting of the committee is scheduled on December 6, 2021 at 1:00 P.M.