



# Allentown

435 Hamilton Street  
Allentown, Pa. 18101

## Minutes - Final

### City Council

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Wednesday, February 13, 2019

6:15 PM

Council Chambers

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#### Roll Call: Council President MacLean

**Present:** 7 - Candida Affa, Roger MacLean, Courtney Robinson, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Julio Guridy, and Ed Zucal

[15-2775](#)

#### Bill 10

Amending Article 533, Parking Meters by authorizing the Allentown Parking Authority to fix, alter, charge and collect parking rates and charges for on-street parking for specific locations, dates and hours, to promote and allow for flexibility in the fixing and adjustment of parking rates to promote downtown business and the public welfare, to take advantage of technological advancements in the parking industry and, when necessary, account for scheduled events in the downtown business area of the City of Allentown which are better served by off-street facilities and making adjustments to Article 333 to comply with such changes.

**Attachments:** [Bill 10 Parking Meter Rates](#)  
[Bill No. 10-2019 AMDS](#)

Mr. Ted Zeller, Chairman of the Allentown Parking Authority, stated that he has with him this evening John Morgan the Executive Director. He stated that the draft legislation is the second part of the process in making the Allentown the most technological advanced city in the Commonwealth. They were able to obtain an ANIZDA grant for single space meters for parking Kiosks. They are connected to a central server which can vary rates and a programmable rate screen. The machines will be solar powered and will not have a video, but a programmable rate screen. This legislation is not about event nights. There are about 60 per year, plus other miscellaneous shows. It is 90 - 100 nights a year. This is for 250 - 300 other days and nights. You had to have enforcement at 10:00 PM at night. A third of the year it was lagging to retailers. We have a long way to go retail wise. This legislation is about community development and business development downtown. We can drop enforcement to 5:00 PM on weekdays. It keeps people from gaming the system. On concert nights it is \$10 and he stated that you can go to a meter, not put anything in the meter and get a ticket and it is \$10. We propose on event night charge \$2 for the first hour, \$2 for the second hour and the third hour will be whatever the parking rate is for the event. The first 15 minutes will be free. It is license plate recognition software. He stated that the Allentown Parking

Authority will change their website on event parking and publish varying rates in advance. They were going to install kiosks on Seventh Street where the double parking absolutely spoils the gateway to the city.

Mr. Santo Napoli thanked Council for having him. He has been a retailer downtown for 20 years. Most know him from Assembly 88. He polled a cross-section: Dry Cleaning, Liquor Store, couple Restaurants to get a feel where their thoughts were. Overwhelming positive. It was one meter concern. The website is continuing to be updated. He reached out to Brew Works and Jeff Fegley was overwhelmingly for it, Queen City Barbecue, Cork and Cage, John Liquor and the Neighborhood Dry Cleaner. This is a no-brainer. People can pick up their dry cleaning and pick up a pretzel. It is more about restaurants. We want a really successful Main Street. It will give these restaurants a fair shot. The kiosks will be much more effective and gives a message about rates, times, and when it is free parking the screen will say, free parking.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked Mr. Santo if he could take the copy of the Ordinance to the retailers meeting. This will be coming to City Council depending on what happens tonight, next week.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that it still maintains all the retail rights. It is to change what we are doing. He stated that there are open meetings. We are trying to advance the interest of downtown. We want to be flexible with this unique circumstance.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that he will open it up to Council first.

Ms. Candida Affa thanked Mr. Santo Napoli for all the information because Council would like to know how the merchants and restaurants feel about it. She stated that the fact that 100 plus days a year it will be free parking at 5:00 PM. She understands that there is a statistic that we were told that during the Elton John concert, it was sold out, but our decks weren't sold out. When Ozzy Osborne came we had more money from the decks then we did and he wasn't sold out. It will hurt the merchants and the people that need to park there. She stated that if she is that lazy she would put \$10 and go and pay a \$10 ticket. The reason why we have parking decks are to free up parking for merchants and restaurants. Everybody wins all around this. As a merchant, you said it all. This proposal helps moves it in the right direction.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that John Tucker mentioned that he thought about 5:00 PM early enforcement and he thought about keeping his business opened to 6:00 or 7:00 PM. It is about creating spaces in the streets.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that what was most telling that we had a concert with Elton John completely sold out, but our decks weren't. Where are they parking? They are trying up our parking meters. She stated that she is all for this change. The communication so the people out there knows what is going on. She asked Mr. Zeller if there are screens to show people how to work it. She stated that she is all for this change.

Mr. Julio Guridy thanked the Allentown Parking Authority for bringing it forward. The kiosk on Seventh Street is excellent. He stated that he was in Florida and use it all the time. He stated that in fact he has the app from Florida and from Easton. In Easton there is a minimum of \$1. Is that the same with this machine?

Mr. John Morgan stated that Easton says it is a \$1 and that is the contract they have.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that the app in Miami is Pay By Phone and there is a sign that you have to put your number on it. You can add it by hours.

Mr. John Morgan stated that we won't have marked spaces. You just put your license plate and that's how you going to access it.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that he was confused. How much you have to put in. He asked a quarter gives you how many minutes.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that the .25 is the convenience charge for the Pay By Phone. If you are paying at the kiosks itself, there is no convenience charge. It is \$2 an hour.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that if someone is going to a concert or an event versus someone that wants to grab a sandwich. You don't want to charge them \$2 an hour. If they want to stay longer, it is better for them to park in the parking garage.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that all Mr. Guridy's points are decisions you can make now based on the new statute.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that he would refrain from charging them \$2 an hour. He suggested a \$1 an hour and if they stay longer, then you can charge them more. He stated that he did not understand the violations. The first 10 days, you pay \$25, then from 10 to 20 days you pay \$50 if you don't pay the violation.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that now it is \$10. For the concert, you go on the street and pay a ticket as opposed to going in the deck and paying \$10.

We are trying to graduate that rate. The \$25 is only when an event is going on.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that is only during the business district quadrum. He asked what happens after 20 days.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that it is part of the statute. We are not changing that. it is not to exceed \$100 - \$125.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that it is excellent, but he would add about the first hour. They don't want to pay an extra \$2 to brag a sandwich. He talked about the timing. He stated that the 260 days it should be free after 5:00 PM

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that they will consider it. he stated that they could do Cinco DeMayo free parking courtesy of Allentown or the Allentown Parking Authority.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that they can do Cinco DeMayo, St. Patrick's Day, or Yom Kippur.

Mr. Jeff Glazier suggested not a holiday, but Hanukkah is better.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if this passes, what are the means of advertising to communicate to the community regarding these changes. She thinks it would be good, but the same time it would not work unless people know how to use it. Sometimes you go to different states and you see different machines and it looks so complicated. She asked if it would be in Spanish and instructions on how to use it.

Mr. John Morgan stated that today on our trial meters there is a button that says for Spanish, you press the button. Everything including your ticket when it is printed out is in Spanish.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that the first step is to make it hard on our website not to find this information. It is too hard. We have to modify our website. He talked about having bilingual pamphlets. They will hand them out and making them available to the retailers as part of the communication. There are three opportunities for the information to be displayed. The video screen is a 17 inch display in addition can provide City of Allentown Public Service Announcements. There will be a instruction card and another screen that will contain this information.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked how will this benefit the community. She asked how much money will the Allentown Parking Authority will be making.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that you will hear people say if they don't have to pay parking meters after 5:00 PM they will reevaluate coming back to downtown Allentown. He stated that this is not a money grab on our part. The technological advancement of the machines will provide more efficiencies. If we all built a better city we will all make more money. It is about building a better city.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked how much will this machine cost again.

Mr. John Morgan stated that APA purchased the first 15 on our own. Through ANIZDA we got funding for installation \$63,000. He stated that we already have five machines in town. The technology itself has been here for a longtime.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that the total grant that they got from ANIZDA is \$630,000 to cover the purchase of additional machines. The legislation is good, but will not take up the entire footprint of the city from Union to Turner from 4th to 12th. Single space meters will always be there.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that it will not cost the city anything.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that we are passing along that savings to the convenience of our citizens downtown for the benefit of our retailers.

Mr. John Morgan stated that their experience revenue wise in replacing the single space with those kiosks has been very beneficial.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that it would be nice to make sure that the retailers are people of color to get in contact with African Americans and some Latinos to get their feedback.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that he did reach out to Romero Bravo from Taco Y Tequila and unfortunately he was out today.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that it is free the first 15 minutes. She asked how much the extra 45 minutes going to cost and said she thought it was a \$1.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that in some zones it is \$1. It may cost \$2 unless we decide to lower it.

Mr. John Morgan stated that one of the proposals is the first 15 will be free. The remaining cost of the first hour will be \$1 and then \$2 for the second hour. If they decide to stay for 3 then it will be \$5.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that it is expending \$1 an hour. It will be a \$1 an hour with the first 15 minutes free.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that they wouldn't be doing this if it wasn't making money for the Parking Authority. When the arena came, they put up parking decks owned by the Parking Authority. The issue is that people are parking at meters because it is cheaper for them to pay the ticket then park in the parking deck. He stated that his solution would be lower the parking garage fee and they will park there. If they paid \$7 versus \$10, then they would probably park there. He stated that you talked about after 5:00 PM lowering the rate to a \$1. Why not have it on Saturdays and Sundays, zero. He stated that he never saw a city using its power to keep people away rather than bring them in. He stated that it is probably a good idea, but not for the betterment of the citizens. This is for the benefit of the Parking Authority to increase their revenue. He suggested that if you want to do something for the citizens, make it zero. He asked about enforcement after 6:00 PM on nonevent nights.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that they are required to enforce up until 9:00 PM now.

Mr. John Morgan stated that the reason they don't is because they don't have the manpower.

Mr. Courtney Robinson thanked Attorney Zeller, Mr. Morgan and Mr. Napoli for their words so far. He asked about 530.03, stated that the plan is to keep it zero on Sunday. How are we going to handle that? He stated that what we are doing here just removing the word Sundays would potentially allow latitude to charge on other Sundays. He asked for a tweak and say Sunday of events at the PPL Center. He talked about Section 533.04 on amended by ordinance and if it is referring to this ordinance or future ordinances. He asked why the Parking Authority is adding the extra two blocks from 10th to 12th Streets. He asked if the Parking Authority is looking to raise the rates from 10th to 12th Street to \$2 an hour.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that if there is a hockey game in the afternoon the time will be 1:00 - 9:00 PM. This ordinance will allow us to do. However, there are Saturdays and Sundays where Disney on Ice will come and will have three shows from 10:00 in the morning until 8:00 PM at night and we will extend it. He stated that APA does not set the rate. That is the consortium, ANIZDA, Brooks Brothers, and the people that run the arena. He stated to have the bill for the future. He stated that the tried to build something that is sustainable.

Mr. Courtney Robinson asked about Section 5 - the Marking of Space and Mr. Morgan stating that we would not be marking of spaces at all. He asked

if they are concerned that it would create a less usage of the block.

Mr. John Morgan stated that in the Parking Industry that does not mark the parking spot. If you look at the MUTCD (Municipal Unit on Traffic Control Device Flow which most states use as their bible for traffic control. The average US car today is 15.4. By not having marked spots you will pick up additional parking.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that the city stopped marking parking spaces a long time ago.

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that sometimes you run into a less efficient parking system. He stated when you are looking at 533.07 - Section 2, the language reads are dates and parking rate may be adjusted to no charge and about raising the rates. He asked what is the criteria that you are going to use to make the determination and who will make the decision about raising the rates and lowering the rates.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that the Parking Authority has open board meetings that they discuss with public comment. It would be transparent. He stated that as long as he is Chairman, he will rely on the professional.

Mr. Courtney Robinson asked if there will be board meetings once a month.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated correct.

Mr. Courtney Robinson asked if he will be making determinations for an entire month.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated correct or until we cancel or City Council tells us.

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that he is in support of the idea of being more flexible with the rates for merchants and restaurants. He stated that the Parking Authority's meetings are in the middle of the day so it is difficult for people to attend. He stated that it is very rare that the Parking Authority has members of the public attend meetings. He stated that he can't support it until he sees a policy to what the discussion making process is going to be.

Mr. Ted Zeller asked what was the policy that City Council used before.

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that he is looking for something to chance at least on a monthly basis. He stated that he is not saying that they don't feel confident handing over the authority, but the citizens of Allentown expects

us to do our job.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated whenever the rates were increased or changed it would come to City Council.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated by ordinance how anything could happen right now if we raise the rates it could come to City Council and they can tell us no in the way this is structured.

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that you have it worded in a way that says at the next regularly scheduled Council meeting. It would make more sense for our police to have the rates will be this and if you choose to raise those rates based on economic needs we can do that at a yearly meeting.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that they are looking for an efficient way to address it in the current ordinance.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that right now the Parking meter rates are established by city ordinance. If this was to go into effect, we would have to change that \$25 ordinance. Is there anything in the ordinance because this is the maximum it could be charged. Is there anything that prevents it to be lower than the maximum?

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that he is not worried about a policy on a lower rate. He is talking about raising the rates. He doesn't think it should be that difficult from now and next Wednesday to put together a policy that states, and if it couldn't be approved by your board yet, but a policy on pricing. He asked about the fines.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated during the elevated hours. He talked about the city being notified with a 30 days in advance notice. He stated that should be in the statute, not in a policy.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked Mr. Robinson if it would be better addressed by an amendment to this ordinance. On 533.07 A1 after two hours it may be adjusted for Hamilton and Walnut Streets between 12th. If it is already said in here what it is then they can charge lower, but they can't go higher.

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that he doesn't have a problem with that.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that it is what he thought that the Parking Authority was doing all along.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that he is not putting a dollar amount in there, he is deferring to whatever the event parking rate is.



Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that the problem is that Council doesn't control what the rate is.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that we control on whatever they charge.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated that put in Section A with a simple thing after 30 days written notice to City Council.

Mr. Courtney Robinson asked if the Mr. Napoli is talking to merchants in the 9, 10 and 1100 Blocks. Since the 10th and 11th blocks are going to be affected by this. He stated that he believes it is a good idea and a good bill.

Mr. Santo Napoli stated that he was unable to reach out to them today. During the retailers meeting, he will try to reach out to them.

Mr. Mike Hanlon suggested that Council vote on the intent of what you prefer, not the specific language. During Committee of the Whole you could vote on an amendment.

Mr. Courtney Robinson stated that he will not be voting on it without a Solicitor present.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated to Mr. Robinson that you are bringing the possible amendments up for discussion to see if you have a possible second to send it to the Solicitor's office.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that he doesn't mind. It doesn't matter to him.

Mr. Courtney Robinson discussed the possible amendments. Instead of striking out, we will add Sundays of event days. Council will get written notification 30 days in advance of any event as to what the parking rate would be.

Mr. Ted Zeller stated instead of striking out, it would be to add the language of Sundays of event days. Council will get written notification 30 days in advance of any events of what the parking rates will be. It would remove the zero amount of on the parking meters and the Parking Authority will post on their website and on social media.

Ms. CeCe Gerlach raised concerns about the impact on the residents in the area. She stated that this would increase the penalty fee.

Ms. Ibolya Balog said that she volunteers for a board downtown and this

could have a negative impact on her parking.

THE CAMERA SYSTEM WENT DOWN AFTER 1:05:56.

**A motion was made by Ed Zucal, seconded by Courtney Robinson, that this Ordinance be tabled. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 7 - Candida Affa, Roger MacLean, Courtney Robinson, Cynthia Mota, Daryl Hendricks, Julio Guridy, and Ed Zucal

**ADJOURNED: 8:12 PM**