

JIM THORPE BOROUGH COUNCIL
BUDGET PUBLIC MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 2020
MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm in the Memorial Park Hall, 115 East Tenth Street, Jim Thorpe by President Gregory Strubinger with the pledge of allegiance and moment of silence for the men and women serving our country.

Roll Call of Members & Officials

Gregory Strubinger	Kyle Sheckler	Joanne Klitsch
Thomas Highland (a)	Robert Schaninger (a)	Edith Lukasevich
Mike Yeastedt	Borough Manager Sterner	PSM Yaich (a)
Connor Rodgers, JCP (a)	Police Chief Schatz (a)	
Mayor Michael Sofranko	Secy. McClafferty (a)	

President Strubinger explained the purpose of this meeting is to discuss a **proposed amendment to our parking ordinance to provide for permit parking on West Broadway** in the Borough. He reviewed the process the Borough has gone through over the last few years working on this item. He then opened to floor to public comment.

Betty Lou McBride provided written comments that were distributed to council.

Planning Commission Chairman Lou Hall clarified some points of the proposed amendment, including that this is for parking at night only.

Bill Maehrer – commented on this public meeting; should be 24/7 businesses are taking up spaces.

Dave Miller – it to find spots to park; concerns are guests/family; will affect other streets; parking is a real problem.

Jason Mosher – concerns parking will move to High St.

Cathy McClafferty Megarge – doesn't want to pay for permits, fines or costs for signs; believes there has to be a better way.

Jim Gilmore – cost is only \$1.00 per month; should be 24/7; only people who must park on the street – if they have off street parking on property they should be excluded; temporary permit for visitors; limit of 2 permits per residence may be an issue – maybe 2 max unless another person lives in the home, licensed and has a vehicle.

Rachel Miller – problem has gotten progressively worse of the years and is 24 hours a day; guests are a concern.

Laura Young – suggested a tourist tax to spend on funding and constructing parking; we need to create more parking.

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Jim Pompa – proposed permit is only a chance for a parking space; creates a problem for people on Broadway; there is a problem with parking; issue is during daytime hours also.

Chris Gehres – thanked council for the efforts put into this subject; would like to see 24/7; suggested a hard copy of rules and regulations be provided when obtaining a permit; should allow more than 2 permits if additional people are living in the home.

Mayor Sofranko asked if he has the below summary correct so far:

- 24/7 – yes
- Permit cost – is ok
- Fine amount – is ok
- Guests – police can work on this
- Short-term rentals – no comments

Ray Brader – believes this is stupid; should have been addressed 50 years ago; the block before the Opera House on Broadway should be included.

Danny McGinley – agrees with the permit parking; thanked council for work, needs some tweaking but let's solve this.

Chris Dawson – concerns are his household has 3 cars; 24/7 short-term rentals.

Tom Loughery – stated businesses did not come to meeting and they should have; does not believe people who pay taxes should have to pay for parking in front of their homes; guests; rental houses, long term, landlords should be in charge of permits; try just putting up signs for Resident Parking Only first and see what happens.

Terry Opiela – Broadway shouldn't be excluded; B&Bs should limit allowable number of rooms to be rented to coincide with available parking spaces for property.

Clyde Hill – supported permit parking; Resident Only signs; focus should be on residents; give every resident a permit.

Gene Duffy – thanked council for the work on this; likes the Resident Parking Only sign idea; there is no full proof plans but this system will alleviate some of it; permit systems do work; need to start looking out for each other. Possible COVID closures may be coming and there should be pushback on it.

Don Mertz – doesn't have a problem where he is; park at Packerton Yards and bus people into town; put parking garage somewhere; gave some ideas of locations.

Kevin Herman – train has expanded since he came back, they went from one train ½ hours between runs to 20 minutes between runs to running 2 trains simultaneously.

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Jennifer Dages – guest pass; doesn't agree that someone with off street parking should be excluded; owns a short-term rental and takes this very seriously, always requires renters to park in the driveway of the house.

Sharon McGorry Heath – parking has been a problem; permit purchase – she doesn't see how that will help and the permit should be free, she can't afford any more money.

Heather Broschard – guest passes should be automatically given out, she doesn't have time to get guest passes.

James Dougher – can't just take away parking from tourists, Jim Thorpe Tourism Agency (JTTA) needs it; on behalf of JTTA council should make sure parking is available for tourists and tourism for the borough.

Raquel Martin – short-term rentals make money on their properties that doesn't go into the community; would like to see the signs for Resident Parking Only signs first.

Marycolette Hruskucy – asked how many spaces are available and how many people are there? Unless you figure out where to put a parking garage, you won't fix the problem.

Mayor asked how the costs would be paid for.

Lou Hall stated that there was a parking study done and this is just one piece of the puzzle.

Councilmember Lukasevich stated lifetime residents should be helped.

Mayor Sofranko again asked for summary on points from tonight:

- Should be 24/7
- Residential – 2 passes or 1 for each licensed driver with car
- Guest pass
- Lodging entities – 1 pass
- Permit Fee? – have fee but perhaps allow residents to apply for an exemption on fee due to income guidelines
- 72-hour parking limit – is in place now, will speak with Chief
- Include more streets
- Perhaps form a “think tank” for long term solutions

President Strubinger stated the original timeline was for an effective date of January. Obviously, this will not happen. We don't know a new timeline yet. This will not be on council's meeting agenda for Thursday's regular monthly meeting.

An executive session for personnel will be held following this meeting.

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MOTION by Kyle Sheckler, seconded by Mike Yeastedt to adjourn. Meeting ended at 8:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Maureen Sterner
Borough Manager