



Terence J. Ryan
Parking Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Eileen Donoghue, City Manager

FROM: Terry Ryan, Parking Director

DATE: January 23, 2020

SUBJECT: **MOTION RESPONSE: Motion 1.14.2020 – by C. Nuon** – Req. Parking Director to ensure that Enforcement Officers check parking kiosks while on duty.

On a daily basis the City of Lowell Enforcement Officers check the parking kiosks within their assigned area to verify that kiosks are working. If the officer notices that a kiosk is not functioning they email/text the parking office and kiosk technician providing the kiosk number and issue. The Parking Director and LAZ Parking have visibility into the status of each kiosk, via a web tool, ASLAN. This is the software used by the kiosk manufacturer, Metric, a division of Amano McGann. Customers can also use the phone number provided on the kiosk to call the technician and provide information on issues.

The City currently has 176 kiosks in use throughout the city covering over 1,800 parking spaces. The majority of these machines are 8 to 10 years old and in many cases preventive maintenance has not been performed adequately. Much of the machine hardware is dirty, wires are brittle and circuit cards are at the end of their useful life. In addition, the kiosks are solar powered with replaceable batteries that are old. Additional batteries have been purchased in the past and we are currently purchasing 40 new deep cycle batteries to replace older batteries that no longer hold a charge. A recent upgrade to the kiosks involved the purchase of new 4G Modems with their associated antennas. All kiosks have the new modem installed, but only a small portion of the antennas have been installed. This is not a critical issue and we are installing antennas as we work on machines that have communication issues.

On any given day we may have 20 kiosks in an “Alarm” state, indicating no communications are possible or the kiosk has a dead battery. Other kiosks may be in “Alert” or “Warning” states but are functioning at some level on the street. Each day priorities are set for kiosks in terms of repairs needed, collections required and parts allocated.

The Parking Department has taken specific actions to fix and maintain the kiosks. A troubleshooting guide has been created to diagnose problems and outline fixes, parts required and software settings needed. A new kiosk technician was hired in November and has made great strides in learning the machines and most importantly providing customer support to frustrated customers. The Vendor has been on site twice in January for formal training. We are



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working with MIS to set up MUNIS Field Sheets, a tool to manage work orders and parts inventory. Specific parts are on order to repair problem kiosks that have intermittent issues requiring daily resets. A complete log of the kiosk's configurations, terminal ID's, modem/antenna status and other information is being gathered for maintenance records. The Parking Department has also reached out to University of Massachusetts Lowell's Solar Energy Association for an assessment of the kiosk-top solar panels to ensure that they are positioned in the most optimal way for maximum efficiency. The Parking Department will continue to promote the Passport parking app to allow customers to pay for parking on their phone. For the long term, the Parking Department has started looking at future parking systems and will certainly take any advice provided as a result of the recently awarded parking study grant.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Terence Ryan
Parking Director