



Date 4 June 2010

City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor Compton & Members of Council

Fr: Karen Brown

Re: Parking Meters

Recommendation:

That Council hereby authorizes, for a trial period ending September 13, 2010, the sale of daily parking meter passes to local businesses to be provided to customers only on a free of charge basis for use while at those businesses; and

That Council hereby exempts vehicles with a daily parking meter pass from tire chalking and the resulting time limits on those meters for the trial period; and further

That Council hereby requests the Harbourtown Centre Committee to review the parking meter issues, with a final recommendation back to Council by August 31, 2010.

Background:

During the recent Harbourtown Centre Committee (HtCC) meeting, a number of concerns were expressed with regards to the two hour parking limit and related chalking of tires in the downtown core. Specific concerns included:

- Customers who are attending a business for service, such as a salon, where the customer will be in treatment for longer than two hours. In these situations, the customer will either receive a ticket, or will be required to disrupt their service to go out and move their vehicle.
- The restricted time allowed for visitors to our City who would like to park downtown and visit / shop for the day, or at least an extended period beyond the current two hour limit.

Some of the suggestions included moving to three or even four hour time limits, with reference being made to economic development literature that suggests a minimum of four hour parking be made available. It was noted that visitors to our City can stop at the Tourist Information Centre and get a parking pass, although the pass is also subject to the two hour restriction.

At the same time, it was recognized that other businesses want to see a higher turnover at the parking meters, rather than having vehicles parked at their stores for greater periods of time. It was noted that the Land Titles office will soon become a Service Ontario office, providing for driver's license and health

card renewals. It has been estimated that this facility alone will generate about 200 visits per day.

In the past, the City has had various limits on parking meters, ranging from one hour to four. Only recently the one hour meters were extended to a two hour limit. This was coincident with stricter enforcement of the by-law, which included chalking tires to enforce the time limits to stop people from plugging the meters. As a result of this change, the City was required to resign and reprogram all the one hour parking meters. A change to the time limits on the meters represents an expense to the City for new signage, reprogramming and staff time. Between the ordering and installation, the process takes some time to complete.

The issue becomes two-fold. Time should be taken to determine a suitable long-term parking solution for the meters in the downtown core. At the same time, summer is upon us. Members of the HtCC recognized both that a long term solution needed to be determined, while at the same time the situation needed to be addressed as soon as possible to ensure Kenora visitors were not impacted.

At the HtCC, a recommendation was made that the City consider selling meter passes those local businesses where customers may be required to stay for longer than two hours. Service businesses will know which customers require the passes based on the type of service booked and will be able to provide those customers with a parking pass for that day. For visitors that are simply visiting a variety of downtown businesses, they can be referred to the pavilion where they can obtain a parking pass from the tourism department. Vehicles with passes would be exempt from chalking.

There was some discussion at the HtCC of eliminating chalking altogether until a longer term solution is determined. At this time, it is expected that exempting vehicles with a parking pass from chalking may be sufficient.

While an interim solution has been provided, a longer term solution is required for the parking meters. It is recommended that Council request the HtCC to look at the parking issue, with a final report and recommendation to be made to Council on this matter by August 31, 2010. This will also allow some time to gauge the success of the temporary solution as well as to be aware of the issues encountered over the summer.

Budget:

It is anticipated that lost parking meter revenues will be offset by the sale of the passes to local businesses. The City will track the number of passes sold, as well as monthly meter revenues, to estimate net impact.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

The Harbourtown Centre Committee will be advised of Council's decision on this matter.