

Spring Issue - 2004

Parking Spaces

COMMUNICATIONS FROM AND FOR THE MEMBERS
OF THE MICHIGAN PARKING ASSOCIATION



An allied association of the International Parking Institute

President's Parking Space

Jon Frederick



I don't know if the rest of you are feeling this way, but I am having a hard time believing we're halfway through the year already. Where does the time go? So much has happened since our last newsletter. In February we hosted a "free" frontline supervisor training, in April we conducted our annual spring workshop and in May we held a one-day planning retreat for the MPA Board. I am delighted to say that the feedback we received from all of these was very positive.

I want to thank everyone involved in making these events so successful including the board members whose dedication and hard work put the events together, the members who attended and those companies who continually support the organization. I'd also like to extend a special thanks to both Light and Bruening and Traffic and Safety Control Systems for sponsoring the social events at the Spring Workshop. What a good time. I am really impressed with how our organization thrives from within.

Speaking of thriving from within, I can't write this without mentioning that we are always looking for additional help with our ancillary committees and hope many of you will volunteer some time, wisdom and/or suggestions as we continue to put together

events to enhance our member's knowledge of the industry. Please let any of the board members know if you are available to volunteer and help out.

In addition, we are asking everyone to help grow our organization by bringing in new members. We are looking into different ways and incentives to attract new members and keep current ones. We are open to all suggestions and even plan to redevelop the Membership Committee. In the meantime though, please talk to anyone you know who is not involved, who should be, and try to find out what it would take to get them to join.

In closing, I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't remind everyone to mark their calendars and plan on joining us for our annual golf outing, July 22 in beautiful downtown Williamston and the Fall conference, October 6-8 in the wonderful city of Kalamazoo. Most of all, I hope everyone is able to get away from the everyday grind, even if just for a little while, and enjoy the summer.

2004 Upcoming Events

Golf Outing - Brookshire, July 22 (see page 7 for registration form)

Fall Conference - Kalamazoo, October 6-8
More information/registration to come.

2005 Upcoming Events

Tentative dates:

Frontline Training - Lansing, February 9

Spring Workshop - Lansing, Late April

Golf Outing - Brookshire, July 21 or July 28

Fall Conference - Detroit, Early October

Spring Workshop Review

Speaker Sue Graham
 Labor Relations Specialist - City of Lansing
 Effective Employee Coaching &
 Handling Disciplinary Issues

Sue began her presentation by discussing surprise vs. no surprises. Balloons and their likeness to doing one thing at a time were discussed. You can't blow up more than one balloon at a time and be successful – it is best to focus on one thing at a time and permit success. She went on to discuss the following.

Managers do not like to discipline employees. As managers we need to:

- Pay attention to what our employees are doing and saying
- Work with our employees
 - Coach them
 - Reinforce good behavior
 - Work on how to change bad behavior
- Focus on the behavior not the person
- Start with yourself
- Don't think of a confrontation as war
- Treat people equally, fairly, consistently, and unemotionally
- Remember we need our employees more than they need us
- We can't change people but we can deal with behavior
- Consider that the national average cost to replace one employee is \$8,000

It is important to learn how to coach:

- Get an agreement that a problem exists
- Mutually discuss alternative solutions
- Mutually agree on action to be taken to solve the problem
- Follow up to measure results
- Recognize achievement when it occurs

Seven causes of poor performance/possible solutions were discussed from a handout.

1. Employees doesn't know what is expected/Establish standards, expectations and/or objectives.
2. Employee doesn't get feedback about the level and the quality of actual performance/Establish some means of giving timely feedback.
3. Expected performance is difficult, or in some way less desirable for the employee/Identify, remove or reduce the inhibiting factors to correct performance.
4. Employee knows how to do what is expected, but is out of practice/Provide structured practice.
5. Employee doesn't know how to do what is expected/Arrange for training.
6. Something in the work environment interfered with performance/Look at priorities, time expectations, mix of duties, physical environment or availability and suitability of resources and equipment to determine the source of interference.
7. Performing below expectations is easier, or in some way more desirable for the employee/Be sure expectations are known and the consequences for not performing up to the established expectations are also known.

Ms. Graham also included a hand out with eight steps to maximize employee performance.

1. Make the job important in the eyes of the employee.
2. Select the person who has the potential to perform the job successfully.
3. Clarify what is expected of the employee on the job, daily if needed.

4. Train the employee in the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
5. Continually evaluate performance and communicate results to the employee.
6. Help the employee improve their performance.
7. Maintain rapport with the employee.
8. Recognize and praise performance.

Ms. Graham then included information on constructive counseling.

- As managers we need to manage ourselves before we can manage our people.
- Sarcasm doesn't help anyone.
- Don't discipline employees in front of their peers.
- Be specific, consistent and fair with criticism.
- Spend time not just with the problem employees, but also with the top people to keep them motivated and encouraged.

Ms. Graham pointed out that each organization uses different tools to evaluate employees.

Common Employee Problems and solutions discussed were:

- Attendance problems
- Employee balancing issues
- Ways to encourage and motivate employees don't have to be monetary
- Enroll them in a class they are interested in attending
- Utilize employees energy and initiative for progression planning.
- When taking something away from people it is important to plan to emphasize the good and tangible benefits of the change.
- Good union and management relations are the key to relationships that work correctly. Mutuality is important.

Ms. Graham suggested that when an employee perceives that discipline may occur management should:

- Offer union representation – if declined or a non-union representation situation, a second supervisor should be present in the meeting.
- Management should lay their cards on the table including a notice of pending changes and put in writing if they determine they do not require a union representatives presence.
- Performance evaluations should not be used for disciplinary actions.
- At will employment means that either side can end employment for any reason. However, there is a just cause standard.
- It is extremely important that copious notes supporting your position are kept.

Ms. Graham stressed that management's role is to know your organization's policies, be fair and consistent with your employees, use the golden rule and use a positive approach to discipline.



Sue Graham

Spring Workshop Review

Parking Roundtable

Moderated by Khurshid Hoda

Discussion Members:

Tom Conrad – City of Grand Rapids

Eric Glohr – Lansing Community College

Shane – City of Lansing

Gil Rupp – City of Traverse City (DDA)

The base questions for discussion were:

How do we forecast demand to set up parking rates? How do we determine staffing?

How do we work with the business community? Offer validations and/or free parking?

How do we handle special event pricing?

Gil began with a discussion of personnel. Questions to ask while determine the ultimate staffing levels are: What do our customers want? Who is our customer base? What time do we need to staff? Determine the percentage of permit parking vs. transient based upon usage.

To determine rate structure – look at what others charge. What will the market bear? Is the amount proposed politically ok? Traverse City charges \$4.00 for all day parking and \$300 per year for permit parking. Tom indicated that the City of Grand Rapids requires rate increases to be approved by the Parking Commission. Rate increases are based upon CPI increase in a year over year calculation. Meter rates and terms are set more by management philosophy. Grand Rapids does offer 60 minutes free parking in one parking facility to aid downtown development. Eric indicated that rates at Lansing Community College had not increased in the past 12 years. This year they are looking to increase the student rate. LCC faculty pays \$300 per yearly parking permit. This amount is negotiated in labor contracts. LCC has been facing the difficult road of educating people that periodic rate increases are necessary. Shane agreed with Eric that the line of people waiting to park in the LCC ramp is not because of lack of parking – but the rate structure is responsible. Eric stated that LCC is a 100% commuter facility. LCC is working on culture wide changes. They have experienced that students are unwilling to walk more than 300 feet to get to their classes. Students are willing to pay to park but only very little. Work is taking place to educate students on parking facilities during orientation, web information, and pictures. Students wait in line for up to an hour to get into the LCC parking ramps. Jake Jeppeson of Walker Parking indicated that there is a large amount of behind the scene work that needs to take place for rate increases because the process is so political. Parking can provide spreadsheet after spreadsheet to support increases – but in the end it comes down to politics.

A short discussion ensued regarding enforcing rules and regulations by writing tickets.

How do we hide the cost of parking from the community?

Shane stated that it was important to put a face to parking. Meet with people even on the smallest issues. Make sure that people call your department with a complaint first before going to the mayor or their councilperson. Educate people on how the cost of parking

is hidden in the malls. (i.e. higher prices because the retailers need to cover parking in their rent). According to Tom, the City of Grand Rapids is trying to revitalize an area along Monroe Center Street. Businesses have validation accounts and business customers want free parking. Tom asked the rest of the panel if they offer validation accounts a lower monthly rate. The City of Lansing calculates validation pricing for customers and discounts the monthly billings 50%. Traverse City does not offer any discount on validations. Comment from the audience indicated that peer pressure on retailers and other downtown businesses for validations will get them all to accept the concept. City of Lansing also offers parking tokens at a discount. Individuals receive 5% discount and businesses receive 50% discounts. These are coin type and purchased through a mint. Downtown merchants purchase them from parking. Shane indicated that parking requires business support to make a project work or rate increases effective. Comment from the audience was that validation needs to be accountable. Technology must be reliable and facility attendants keep their eyes open for potential abuses.

Discussion of privatization of parking operations.

City of Lansing indicated that if this happens the city loses the backbone for development of downtown. The ability of the city to gather funds to acquire additional land for parking is gone. Also the City loses control on customer service aspects and rate structures. Comment from the audience is that privatization does not necessarily mean selling off assets – could mean only operations. The decision to privatize operations or the entire operation depends on what your objectives are. It is important to match what you are proposing to do with what the objectives of the system are. Tom indicated that private operations claim they are more efficient. Gil added that you need to listen to your customers, provide excellent service to your customers, and make your customers smile while you take their money. Khurshid indicated that the driving force behind privatization is economics and not customer service.

The roundtable format was very successful and will be included at the Fall Conference also.



Roundtable

Spring Workshop Review

Speaker Andy Miller
Carl Walker

20 Characteristics of Effective Parking Programs

1. Clear Vision and Mission
2. Parking Philosophy and Guiding Principles
 - Parking isn't about cars...it's about people
 - People don't come downtown to park
 - Parking should be a positive experience
 - Parking should be friendly....not free
 - Parking is the first and last experience
3. Strong Planning
 - Direct link between parking and business development
 - Parking is an infra-structure component like sewer, water, gas, and electric
4. Community Involvement
 - Does parking co-sponsor or share in downtown marketing and promotional initiatives?
5. Organizational Effectiveness
 - Does parking have a strong and effective leader at the helm?
 - An effective organization maintains enforcement and revenue collection along with all aspects of on street and off street parking under one umbrella.
6. Active Staff Development
7. Awareness of the Competitive Environment
 - Be aware of your competitors. What are they doing?
 - Are we at a competitive advantage or disadvantage?
8. Strong Communications
 - Required with many groups:
 - Consumer groups
 - Maintenance
 - Security
 - Facilities Management
 - Planning
 - Communications
 - Downtown Development Association
 - Economic Development
 - Urban Renewal
 - Transit Authority
 - City Departments
 - Citizens groups
9. Consolidated Parking System
 - An ideal system controls off street and on street parking. Control includes revenues and enforcement.
10. Strong Financial Planning and Management
 - The parking systems financial expectations should be well defined and understood.
 - Is the system self-supporting?
 - Is the system revenue producing?
 - Does the system use all available options for funding including:
 - Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
 - Payment in lieu of
 - Special assessment districts. These are state enabling districts taxed for parking. Currently this is not available in Michigan.
11. Creative, Flexible and Accountable Parking Management
 - Master the fundamentals
 - Daily operations
 - Policies and procedures
 - Develop an annual report
 - Tell your story
 - Support your positions
12. Operational Efficiency
 - Benchmarking
13. Asset Protection and Facilities Management
 - Emergency preparedness
 - Disaster preparation
 - Well defined and comprehensive facility maintenance plans
14. Effective Use of Technology
 - Technology must be understood before it is used
 - Stay on top of what's new
 - Vendor service and support after the sale is crucial
15. Positive Parking Marketing
 - Create a brand
 - Discuss the ease of parking
 - Tie parking into existing programs
 - Tie marketing into existing programs
 - Guerrilla marketing use low cost methods to create a high impact campaign
16. Quality Customer Service Programs
 - Very important to hire correct individuals for positions
 - Extremely important to provide adequate and comprehensive training
 - Attendants must be friendly, attentive and knowledgeable
 - Make customers believe that we are doing something very special just for them
17. Special Event Parking Management
 - Be on the committee that is tied into special event groups
18. Effective and Consistent Parking Enforcement
 - Must be part of the overall system
 - Need to focus on the dollars
 - Need to focus on vehicle turnover
19. Parking and Transportation Demand Management
 - TDM make small incremental steps
 - Parking rates impact
 - Gas prices impact
20. Safety, Security and Risk Management

Mr. Miller pointed out that the best parking systems are healthy and financially sound with systems that work and meet customer expectations. The parking industry needs to work to raise the bar on customer expectations.



Andy Miller

Spring Workshop Review

Speaker Paul Blossom, PhD
CyberNET
Process Improvements in Parking

Dr. Blossom began by explaining that the fundamental working assumptions are:

- Organizational improvements are necessary for long-term survival
- Process improvement leads to quality improvements
- Many small improvements will eventually produce a very large improvement

Three basic ideas in process improvements are:

1. Delight customers and remove waste in internal processes
2. Stress team efforts at all levels of the organization
3. Use data and scientific reasoning to guide improvement efforts, experiment with a process

Improvement means different things to different organizations and is a long-term, strategic effort.

Dr. Blossom provided the following definition for process - a particular course of action intended to achieve a result (the same thing done the same way every time).

Process is important because it provides a constructive, high-leverage focus. The benefits of using a process are: improved scheduled and budget predictability, improved cycle time, increased productivity, improved quality, increased customer satisfaction, improved employee morale, increased return on investment, and decreased cost of quality. In parking when technology was used to enforce best practices the results were: improved cycle time for payments by 99%, reduced delinquency rates by 90%, decreased staffing needs by 3%.

Dr. Blossom then discussed personal process improvement:

- We really cannot separate process improvement from quality improvement.
- Process is what creates the product or service. Quality is the result.
- Improving the process means improving quality.
- Quality (process) improvement is not just an institutional assignment, it is a daily personal priority obligation.
- One of the basic tenets of leadership is that you don't ask others to do what you are not willing to do yourself.
- You will make progress faster by leading and showing the way than by drawing maps and telling people where to go.
- Personal perspective on process improvement strengthens: understanding of general principles, ability to recognize and eliminate waste in processes, understanding the key role of customer satisfaction, and the use of simple tools of data analysis.

We improve our own personal processes through a checklist.

How continuous improvement is practiced was outlined by Dr. Blossom as a Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle:

- Plan: Specify the problem
- Do: Identify causes of the problem
- Check: Develop a list of potential solutions, analyze the potential benefits and choose a solution
- Act: Implement the solution
- Persistence is key in continuous improvement

Suggestions were made for a successful process improvement:

- Find the best practice
- Develop measures of process effectiveness
- Revise and update existing processes
- Install new/revised processes and integrate into existing processes
- Publicize new processes to increase understanding
- Remove outdated processes



Paul Blossom



2004 MPA Board Meeting Schedule

June 15 - 2:00 pm	Phone meeting
July 20 - 11:30 am	Face to face meeting
August 17 - 2:00 pm	Phone meeting
September 21 - 11:30 am	Face to face meeting
October 19 - 2:00 pm	Phone meeting
November 16 - 11:30 am	Face to face meeting
December 21 - 2:00 pm	Phone meeting

Articles of Interest

GVSU Upgrades Parking & Transportation Services

By Lisa Haynes

Grand Valley State University is taking further steps in its continued effort to provide students, faculty and staff with the best parking and transportation services. Increasing student demands for parking and shuttle bus options, completion of new housing and academic facilities, decreasing availability of leased lots in Grand Rapids and rising administrative costs led to the University's decision to enlarge the system and make three significant improvements.

First, for the 2004-2005 academic year, new parking options will be available on both the Allendale and the Pew Campuses. In Allendale, five new parking lots with 600 spaces represents an 8% increase in total parking. On the Pew Campus, the university's first parking ramp will open in August 2004 and will provide 940 parking spaces. This represents a 28% increase in the total number of parking spaces available on the Pew Campus.

Second, the university's relationship with the Interurban Transit Partnership (ITP) to provide shuttle bus service continues to be successful and popular. Since the implementation of the shuttle service in Fall 2000, ridership has increased 423%. As a result, expansion and improvement of all services remains a high priority. The Campus Connector route between the Allendale and Pew Campuses has expanded from 20-minute service to 15-minute service and now includes a Sunday schedule to provide service 7 days a week. The Allendale Off-Campus Apartment Shuttle service has also expanded to provide service until 11:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and the CHS Express makes four trips per hour between the Pew Campus and the Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences. All transportation services are free for students, faculty and staff with valid Grand Valley State University ID's.

Lastly, effective Fall 2004, all commuting or resident students choosing to park a vehicle on either the Allendale or the Pew Campuses must purchase and display a Grand Valley State University parking permit. The cost to a student with seven or more credit hours is \$95 per semester; for those taking less than seven credit hours the fee is \$50 per semester. The resulting revenue from this user fee provides funds for the continued improvement of all parking and transportation systems.

Grand Valley State University remains committed to providing excellent parking and transportation services to students, faculty, staff and visitors. These efforts are part of an ongoing continued improvement plan that attempts to address issues and make enhancements as needs change. The success of these efforts is critical to the seamless integration and efficient operation of both the Allendale and Pew Campuses.

Another Motown Parking Professional Hangs up His Parking Space

Tyrone Mack, long time MPA member and past President retires after 30 years in the parking industry. He worked the last 18 years with Wayne State University's Department of Parking and Transportation Services. Tyrone implemented the first debit card system on a college campus. He has also served as a QUEST facilitator, on the Board of Directors for the International Parking Institute and on the Board of Directors for the Central Association of Auxiliary Services. For those who would like to touch base with Tyrone, you can email him at ac8395@wayne.edu

From the Opinion Page

Livingston County Daily
Press & Argus
05/14/04

City of Brighton:

Leave room for customers to park downtown

Shop owners must already recognize the most important person in their store isn't themselves. It's the customer. So to those owners and employees who decide to park in the prime spots in downtown Brighton, we ask: What the heck are you doing?

Most customers want to find a convenient place to park, take care of their business and return home. Maybe it's a short errand like picking up some fresh baked bread, or a longer excursion of lunch and casual shopping. Either way, customers shouldn't have to search hard in Brighton. There's plenty of parking.

A group of downtown merchants are upset because certain owners and employees continually park in the prime spots downtown which include on-street and the spaces closest to stores. To be fair, one of the offenders most mentioned was this newspaper, the Livingston County Daily Press & Argus. And we need to take the lead in helping to resolve the problem.

These shop owners are ready to take matters into their own hands by copying down license plate numbers, confronting offenders and calling the police to issue tickets. They're fed up, and they're tired of what they say are the same people taking up the best spots on a daily basis.

Merchants want to avoid having the city start giving out parking tickets to everyone who violates the 2-hour time limits because this would ultimately result in customers getting tickets. If a customer gets a ticket, that customer might go elsewhere in the future. Bad move.

So merchants made a wise choice to send out maps and letters to all downtown businesses telling them where they should park. It's in the perimeter area of the public parking lots. We encourage shop owners to set the example and park in places such as the Pierce Street lot. It has plenty of spaces that rarely get used. It's a short walk. If owners do it, they then can demand their employee to do the same.

Voluntary compliance is the way to go, and we encourage everyone (ourselves included) to get out of the way of customers.

FOLLOW-UP RESPONSE - SAME PAPER & SECTION

Employees should leave prime spots for the customers

Imagine you're a downtown shop owner, and every day you take the time to park far out from the downtown. You want to ensure the good parking spaces are available for customers.

It makes perfect sense.

Then imagine watching other shop owners and their employees park in those prime spots every day. It's enough to boil your blood.

Downtown Brighton merchants upset with this situation have decided the best way to deal with this problem is by policing themselves. It's a good idea and we hope it works.

They have sent out notices and maps to all downtown merchants asking them to park in the perimeter parking areas. The maps clearly show them where those spots are. It's an honor system approach we hope works, because no one wants the alternative.

If merchants continue to park all day in the prime spots, there's been talk of having police start handing out tickets. Many of the prime and on-street spots are limited to two hours.

Articles of Interest

From the Opinion Page continued

We have no doubts that some customers would end up receiving tickets, too, putting a bad taste in their mouth for shopping in downtown Brighton. Customers could decide to take their money elsewhere. It's not a pretty picture.

So we hope all merchants take a moment to think about this. Shop owners should set the example by parking in the perimeter spots and encourage their employees to do the same. Some friendly reminders from fellow shop owners, a little peer pressure, also wouldn't hurt.

Automated Parking

Sterling Group in Detroit has been researching automated garages by Robotic Parking. Robotic sites the advantages as optimized space utilization allowing more cars in less space, multiple movements in the structure on various floors for maximum speed of retrieval, elimination of any vehicle damage, theft or personal injury, and heightened security as no one goes inside the structure. The automated garage also has lower development and maintenance costs.

Frontline Supervisor Training

On February 4, 2004 the MPA hosted a free Frontline Supervisor Training for its members at Lansing Community College. The training was done by Kirsten Dolan of Advanced Parking Solutions LLC. Topics included were: Critical Steps to Being a Successful Manager, Learning Styles, Revenue Controls (basic auditing, monthly parking, transient parking, validations, cash flow), Event and Valet Parking, Diversity and Oversell, Dealing Effectively with Employees and Customers, Developing a Training Plan and Customer Service. The feedback received from the training was very positive with comments from our members including: *the training was interesting and helpful, it was a great workshop, Kirsten did a great job with tons of information, I have learned more today than I have in 3 years of supervising, very effective seminar, this opened my eyes to new ideas.* The MPA would like to thank Kirsten and Advance Parking Solutions for conducting this training. Another Frontline Training opportunity is tentatively set for February 9, 2005 in Lansing. Additional information will be included in future newsletters and on the MPA website (www.michiganparkingassociation.org).

MPA Annual Golf Outing ~ Thursday, July 22, 2004

BROOKSHIRE INN and GOLF CLUB

205 West Church St. ■ Williamston, MI 48895 ■ 517-655-4694

Registration Form (GUESTS ARE WELCOME)
Registration Deadline is July 13, 2004 ~ Cost: \$85.00 Per Person

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Organization: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION – DEADLINE JULY 6, 2004

Sponsorship gifts are needed to make this event a success. Each sponsor will be recognized by a sign displayed at each hole, contest, event, meal, or bar. A list of sponsor opportunities is available upon request. We sincerely appreciate your support and look forward to your contributions. Please fill out the form below and return to Rob Puhr as soon as possible.

Name to appear on sign: _____ Donation Amount: _____

Give Away or Door Prize Items: _____

Checks Payable To:
 Michigan Parking Association
 Return Form with Payment to:
 Robert Puhr
 Traffic and Safety Control Systems Inc
 48584 Downing
 Wixom MI 48393

For more information please contact:

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MPA Website:
www.michiganparkingassociation.org

Dated Material - Open Immediately

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