



MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # 315-2013

LETTER TO COMMISSION

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TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and
Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: September 5, 2013

SUBJECT: **IN-CAR PARKING METER (IPARK) – UPDATE**

This LTC serves to provide an update of the most recent developments regarding the in-car parking meter (iPark) and its manufacturer, ePark. The iPark is an in-car parking meter that was implemented in 2008, as an alternative payment platform for metered parking.

Last year, the City was notified by ePark of their decision to discontinue the production, distribution, and support of the iPark Model 1.0 (first generation). ePark further advised that a second generation device, termed EOS, was in production and assured us a seamless transition between devices. EOS was promised to have updated technology and enhanced features making its use and operation more user friendly than its predecessor. The 1.0 Model had its shortcomings. Customers had experienced failing liquid crystal displays caused by direct sunlight/heat, and loss of data, including reload values.

Subsequently, ePark advised that they were discontinuing production of the 1.0 Model and that the EOS Model would be available as its replacement; however, it would have the same functionality as the 1.0 Model until such time that the enhanced features were available.

This raised concerns regarding the functionality and reliability of the EOS model. Numerous conference calls were held with ePark regarding functionality and reliability of the EOS. ePark was required to have the EOS undergo environmental testing by a third party laboratory. While the results from the tests were satisfactory, the Administration proceeded cautiously and purchased a limited number of units to confirm these results. Unfortunately, after only several days of sales, we had no choice but to recall the units due to software issues. All EOS units were returned to ePark for corrective action. The sale of EOS units was suspended until such time that its functionality and reliability could be vetted and resolved satisfactorily.

On August 30th, ePark notified us that because of the failure of the EOS units, it can no longer support the device and that they were “shutting down” their operation and business. As a result, iPark users that have an active reload and balance of unused time may continue to use their device as intended. However, no further reloads will be available once the current values are exhausted.

Alternative Payment Platform – Pay by Phone

From an industry perspective, pay by phone service is the next progression in technology. Pay by phone offers more flexibility than an in-car parking meter platform. These enhancements include: freedom from having to purchase, display, or repair a device; and no need to purchase reloads. Additionally, pay by phone subscribers, who are Miami Beach residents, will enjoy the same discounted parking meter rate in South Beach as in-car meter users.

As you may recall, a formal competitive procurement process is underway and an item will be on the City Commission Agenda, on September 11, 2013, seeking an approval for an award for this service. If the award is approved, a pay by phone service is expected to be operational by the first quarter of the 2014 calendar year.

If you should have any further questions and/or inquiries, please contact Saul Frances, Parking Director at 305.673.7000, extension 6483.

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