

Students angry about parking fee increase

By Brian Sharp
Staff Reporter

A parking permit rate increase that was decided almost a month ago has just now caught the attention of UNL students — most of whom say the price increase was approved underhandedly.

But Transportation Manager Mike Cacak said he didn't understand why students were suddenly upset about the change, which Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance John Goebel approved on March 23.

"If people haven't known about it, I guess they haven't been keeping up on the news," Cacak said. "People have seemed to have the opportunity. I don't know whether they just missed it or had something else going on."

With the rate system implementing a per-month charge, permit costs will double for some areas. The amount of the increase depends on whether the permit will be for nine months or the full year and whether it is a student or faculty/staff lot.

For example, an Area 20 permit had cost students \$58 for 12 months. Students now will pay either \$72 for nine months or \$96 for the full year.

The new plan makes similar increases for all permits.

Cacak said previous meetings and forums had brought little opposition. Cacak specifically mentioned a Feb. 23 forum, where reporters nearly outnumbered students and university personnel.

Andrew Loudon, president of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, said whatever had happened in the past shouldn't mean students could not voice their anger now. It also doesn't excuse parking officials from listening to students' concerns, he said.

Loudon said, however, that there was little that ASUN could do.

"Whenever we find out about something like this, it's a done deal. I don't have any specific plan of action because I haven't got all my questions answered," he said. "(The Parking Advisory Committee) did a pretty slick packaging job."

Most students found out about the increase when they received their renewal statements this week.

Mike Witt, a sophomore computer science major, said he had tried to talk to parking officials, but they were never available.

Witt said he wasn't sure buying a permit



Jay Calderon/DN

Lincoln Police Officer Dave Haumont hands a ticket to Dave Heimbuch for parking on 16th street for more than two hours. "You guys (UNL) really do have a parking problem on campus," Haumont said.

next year was worth the money.

"People paying \$300 (for a student reserved permit) is ridiculous," Witt said. "I just live one mile from campus, and I can get a bike for \$300."

Some faculty members were more supportive of the increase.

Steven Dunbar, an associate professor of math and statistics, said even with the increase, parking would be cheaper than in the downtown area.

"It's still a bargain," Dunbar said. "I thought

what they had previously was artificially low. I think what they have now is closer to market rates."

Karla Wendelin, associate professor of curriculum and instruction, said she didn't realize the increase would be this high, but since she lived out of town, she was out of choices.

"A dramatic jump like that ... is astonishing," she said. "That should generate a lot of revenue. I think it would really depend on if they're going to use it (the money) wisely."

Cacak said the money would be going strictly to parking and transportation improvements.

Improvements to the shuttle and busing services, along with paving and lighting of parking lots, were all things that students wanted, he said.

Without raising prices, Transportation Services would have had little funding to improve campus parking lots. Similar improvements scheduled to be done on a student parking lot near the Abel-Sandoz residence hall complex cost nearly \$200,000.

1994-95 Parking Fee Structure

Annual (8/22/94-8/21/95)	120
Fall and Spring	90
Fall	45
Spring	45
Summer	30
Monthly	10
Weekly	5
Daily	2

Annual (8/22/94-8/21/95)	360
Fall and Spring	270
Fall	135
Spring	135
Summer	90
Monthly	30

Annual (8/22/94-8/21/95)	96
Fall and Spring	72
Fall	36
Spring	36
Summer	24
Monthly	8
Weekly	5
Daily	2

Annual (8/22/94-8/21/95)	300
Fall and Spring	225
Fall	112.50
Spring	112.50
Summer	75
Monthly	25

Annual (8/22/94-8/21/95)	36
Fall and Spring	27
Fall	13.50
Spring	13.50
Summer	9
Monthly	3
Weekly	2
Daily	1

Annual (8/22/94-8/21/95)	120
Fall and Spring	90
Fall	45
Spring	45
Summer	30
Monthly	10
Weekly	5
Daily	2

Kai Wilken/DN

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