

**PARKING AUTHORITY TO OFFER
DEBIT CARDS TO FOR MUNICIPAL METERS**

Specially issued debit cards will join quarters as legal tender at the 165 municipal parking meters in South Norwalk. The Parking Authority approved a plan on Wednesday, December 19, 2007 to issue parking meter debit cards to motorists who frequent South Norwalk.

The debit cards will hold \$25 in value and deduct that amount in 25-cent increments. Parking Authority members say the cards will offer motorists convenience. "It's going to give people the ability to not have money for the meters. How many people carry coins in their pockets anymore?" said Stephen G. Bentokover, Parking Authority Chairman. "These are new meters that were purchased a relatively short time ago, so they have the technology to allow people to use these debit cards. You buy this card for \$25. When you stick the card in the meter, the first the meter does is tell you what your balance is."

Several years ago, the Parking Authority approved the installation of 165 modern, digital meters on Marshall, North and South Main, Washington and other streets in the SoNo area. The digital meters will accept debit cards as much as they accept quarters. There is a slot on the meter right next to where you put the coins in and that is where you put the card in. If a motorist wants to buy an hour worth of time, you'd deduct 75 cents and pull it out.

The debit cards can be used anywhere and anytime during operating hours. For North Main Street that translates to 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Saturday. For all other SoNo areas, meter-operating hours are 8 a.m. through 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Kathryn Hebert, Administrative Services Manager said she would like to see the debit card program expanded to the Haviland Parking Deck and the North Water Street Parking lot. "What I would also like to see happen is a partnership with the merchants to offer a program to their customers. A program like this (meter debit cards) is a powerful business and marketing tool that can be used by the merchants to offer parking alternatives to their customers."