

## Special Service Area 61, Hyde Park Commission

Minutes, April 22, 2015

Hyde Park Hyatt

**Present:** Anthony Fox, Greg Guttman, James Hennessy, Allison Hartman, Michael McGarry, Charles Newsome, Mary Rogel, George Rumsey,

**Attending by Conference Call:** Jacqueline Jackson, Donna Trainor

**Absent:** James Hanson (excused)

**Also Present:** Eric Reaves, Reginald K. Mannie (Alexander Mannie & Company, PC, Auditor)

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by Chair McGarry. Chair McGarry welcomed the community guests.

**Minutes.** Minutes for March 18, 2015, were approved as circulated.

**2014 Audited Financial Statements Review and Approval.** Reginald Mannie, of Alexander Mannie & Company, presented SSA #61 2014 Audited Financial Statement. He went through the audit in detail. He noted several items for the Commissioners to keep in mind:

- Receivables are recorded when the tax is levied, not when the funds are received.
- The audit includes adjustments to convert reporting from not-for-profit to governmental accounting.
- The “meat” of the audit is the comparison of budgeted to actual spending.
- Commissioners all should have a copy of the Financial and Accounting Guide; in particular, pp. 34-35 explain how to make adjustments to the budget as the year progresses.
- The SSA Commissioners are obligated to spend the taxpayers’ money, but they need to follow specific procedures, which are detailed in the F & A Guide. They should move funds between categories within the budget when necessary. The problem is that most SSAs do not do this.
- Chair McGarry commented that the budget is a living document, and we should make adjustments as we go.
- Director Reeves will send all Commissioners a copy of the F & A Guide.
- Auditor Mannie recommended that financial statements prepared by our accountant should reflect the same categories that the auditors present and that we should review budget vs actual at every meeting.

Mr. Mannie noted that there were no transactions recorded by SSA during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. He also expressed appreciation for the cooperation he received from management in providing documentation and answering his questions.

Commissioner Newsome moved to accept the audit as presented; Commissioner Guttman seconded; acceptance was unanimous.

**Financial Statement Review.** Commissioners reviewed the Financial Statement for the three months ending March 31. Director Reaves reported that payment for snow removal needs to be adjusted more; our contact at Clean Slate has been out of the office. The SSA collected \$135,000 from the City. Cash payments come in February, with the remainder paid in June-July after Spring taxes have been collected. Because of the irregular timing of receiving payments, it may be necessary to consider applying for a bridge loan at the end of the year.

The coding of banner expenses was changed between 2013 and 2014. The City requires a map of where banners will be placed; \$688 was paid to map the poles in the District.

Commissioner Guttman moved to approve the Financial Statement; Commissioner Fox seconded; approval was unanimous.

**SSA District as "Downtown Hyde Park."** Director Reaves sent out eight RFPs to banner companies and received four responses. At the last meeting, a committee consisting of Commissioners Hanson, Hartman, and Hennessy was appointed to work with Director Reaves to select a banner company and make decisions about the cost, number, and location of banners. The committee (which inadvertently omitted Commissioner Hartman) recommended hiring Bannerville, Inc., to make the banners and change them every six months, with a proposed budget of \$19,910. Bannerville, Inc., will get the necessary permits and reapply every 60 days, as required by the City. We can request renewals, but the City may approve someone else to use a particular pole after our permit expires. We will not be using every pole; and we will work with any new permit-holders and request that they put our banners back up when theirs come down.

There is a different type of light pole east of the viaduct on 55<sup>th</sup> Street on which the City does not allow banners to be hung. We will ask for an exception to put them there. We will have 110 banners on 55 poles, spread throughout the District.

The Commissioners were concerned about costs exceeding budget because Bannerville, Inc., prefers certain kinds of hardware on the poles; extra charges for hardware could push the proposed cost from \$19,000 to as high as \$25-27,000. The Commissioners requested clarification that we would not be charged excess, that a cap be placed on the cost of new bracket hardware, and that good banners be reused or sold as a way of keeping costs down.

Commissioner Hennessy made a motion that Commissioners Hanson, Hartman, and Hennessy continue to work with Director Reaves and Bannerville, Inc., to move forward with the banners with a \$26,000 budget; Commissioner Fox seconded; approval was unanimous.

**Bike Racks.** Director Reaves presented a design for new bike racks in the District that would continue the theme from the banners and badging designed by Otherwise, Inc. The style of bike rack selected is called the "Chicago hoop" and accommodates two bikes per hoop. The plan is to put four hoops together as a group, with branding on the two end hoops. The end badges will be

powder-coated for durability. The price is \$300 per hoop and Director Reaves commented that the SSA will probably purchase 20 at a time.

A map is being prepared to show where bike racks currently are located. Some of the extant hoops are parallel to traffic and will need to be turned when the new bike racks are installed; the hoops should be perpendicular to traffic. An effort is being made to remove the clutter from the streets, including abandoned bikes and newspaper boxes not being used.

Commissioner Rumsey requested that placement of the racks be consistent with ADA requirements to allow 6-foot clearances for wheelchair traffic. This is particularly an issue in areas where restaurants have created outdoor seating on the sidewalk.

***Sidewalk Cleaning.*** The proposal from Advance ProClean for power-washing of the sidewalks was originally sent with the wrong coordinates. They will clean the actual footprint of the SSA, which is slightly smaller than the area in the proposal, so the price will be a little less. Director Reaves noted that gum oil on the concrete disappears with repeated cleanings. The total cost is \$22,200; \$22,800 was budgeted.

Commissioner Hennessy moved that the contract with Advance ProClean be approved subject to Commissioner Rumsey's approval that they are cleaning the proper coordinates; Commissioner Fox seconded; approval was unanimous.

***Farmers Market.*** Director Reaves reported that June 4<sup>th</sup> is the opening day for the Farmers Market in Harper Court. There were 16 vendors last year; eight have confirmed for this year; letters will go out to 100 potential vendors. Efforts are being made to find a cheese vendor.

The current plan is to close off Harper Court at the entrance from 53<sup>rd</sup> Street and at the north entrance from Harper. The south entrance from Harper will remain open for deliveries and services, though Valois has been asked to reschedule deliveries to reduce traffic during the Market. Commissioner Rogel requested that some type of barrier close off the east end of the street that is being left open so that traffic will not inadvertently attempt to drive into the Market.

Director Reaves advertised for a Market Manager and received 20 applications the first day. Financing for the Market will come out of SECC funds, with the hope that next year the Market will be part of the SSA budget.

The Market will operate from 6 a.m. until 2 p.m. from June 4 through the last Thursday in October. An effort is being made to coordinate marketing about the Market, including direct mail advertising, so that there will be a big kick off in the new location. Chair McGarry recommended that businesses be informed so that they may also participate. The SSA is not allowed to reimburse for parking or to make parking deals, but Director Reaves is working with the vendors so that they can park their vehicles behind their tents.

***Downtown Hyde Park Activities.*** "Downtown Hyde Park" will be unveiled Friday, May 29, at 6 p.m. The flower baskets will be hung; more information will follow.

Downtown Hyde Park/Fashion on 53<sup>rd</sup> will take place on August 28-29 in Harper Court and down old Lake Park Avenue. The kick-off will be a fashion show in the Hyde Park Bank, which was a lovely venue last year. Harper Avenue will be renamed Honorary Oscar Brown Way. This event was originally scheduled for May, but it has been rescheduled for August.

Chair McGarry opened the floor for public comments. A question was asked about Divvy Bikes appearing in the District without the knowledge of the SSA. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:46 p.m. The next meeting will be May 20 at 7:00 p.m. at the Chicago Innovation Exchange.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary J. Rogel  
Secretary, SSA 61