

Special Service Area 61, Hyde Park Commission

Minutes, February 18, 2015 Chicago Innovation Exchange

Present: James Hennessy, Allison Hartman, Michael McGarry, Mary Rogel, George Rumsey, Donna Trainor

Present by Conference Call: Greg Guttman, James Hanson, Jacqueline Jackson

Absent: Anthony Fox (excused), Charles Newsome (excused)

Also Present: Eric Reaves

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Chair McGarry. Chair McGarry welcomed the community guests.

Minutes. Minutes for January 21, 2015, were approved as circulated. It was determined that the requested removal of the word “of” from the section entitled, *Building Relationships with Other SSAs*, was not needed.

Beautification Contraction Extension. The contract extension that was tabled last month was discussed and approved. Commissioner Rumsey moved that we ratify the extension of the flower basket contract with Brickman through the end of March 2016. Commissioner Hartman seconded, and the motion carried unanimously, subject to Commissioner Rumsey being content with the answer to the question of whether the plants provided by Brickman have been treated with neonicotinoid insecticides. It was recently reported that this particular insecticide may significantly harm honey bee colonies. Brickman will provide exactly the same service as in the current contract except that there will be 84 baskets instead of the 86 original baskets, which erroneously included two outside the district. Director Reeves commented that a new RFP is required for an existing service only after 3 years have passed from the approval of the original contract.

SSA District as “Downtown Hyde Park.” Otherwise, Inc., provided a redesign of the “Map” logo/brand mark, which some of the Commissioners found difficult to read. After discussion, it was requested that Otherwise, Inc., produce a further modification by recessing the map into the background and making the letters more legible. No additional tag lines were suggested by Otherwise, Inc. Commissioner Hennessy moved that the design be approved subject to recessing the mapping; Commissioner Rumsey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

Tall banners will be installed throughout the district. Extra hardware for short banners will be removed from the poles. Banners will be ready in April when the flower baskets are hung, at which time a kickoff is planned throughout the district. Banners will be changed quarterly.

Snow Removal. Clean Slate will not be paid for snow removal because they did not meet the terms of the agreement. For the next RFP, we will investigate snow removal companies being used by other businesses within the district.

Financial Report. Director Reaves reported total net assets of \$76,960 as of the end of January. Most of the expenses were for programs from the previous year. The actual surplus is \$83,038.

The \$5000 check that was questioned last month was actually payment for three separate invoices for three different budget items and had not been coded properly. Vendors were giving bills with different budget categories in the same invoice. To prevent confusion, Director Reaves has instituted a new procedure with better checks and balances to ensure that bills are coded correctly. Chair McGarry has seen the actual invoices and has made suggestions for improving the financial reports. Actual expenses will be used in the financial statements rather than accrual.

2015 Budget. Director Reaves reviewed the 2015 budget line by line. The City requires that we say exactly what we will do, including the probable vendor we will use. All budget items can be reallocated as the year progresses.

The 2015 budget is allocated in the following way:

1.00	Customer Attraction	27%
2.00	Public Way Aesthetics	26%
3.00	Sustainability and Public Places	6%
4.00	Economic/Business Development	19%
5.00	Safety	0%
6.00	SSA Management	7%
7.00	Personnel	15%
8.00	Loss Collection	0%

Some of the suggested strategies enhancing business in the SSA district include: May rather than October street festival, social media outreach, solar panels for holiday lights, replacing the large number of trees lost to emerald ash borer, a façade enhancement program, signage to direct people to and from public transit, bike racks, planning for public wifi in the district, economic impact study, strategic planning, and continuation of the branding process.

The carryover is \$3000 greater than expected when the budget was submitted to the City. The entire \$3000 will be put toward the Brickman contract to complete that line item in the budget. After official approval of the carryover by the City, Director Reaves will send a letter to the City explaining that this is how we want to use the extra carryover.

Director Reaves reported that 50 abandoned bicycles were removed from the district last year. Commissioner Hartman suggested that abandoned bicycles and parts be given to the Bike Workshop at Experimental Station in the future. Director Reaves is exploring various kinds of bike racks to maximize density. He will ask the power wash vendor to concentrate on cleaning the viaducts. Commissioner Rogel requested clarification on the amount budgeted for Otherwise, Inc. It is listed as \$45,000 in the 2015 budget, but the minutes from January recorded

that there would be a \$15,000 expenditure from Phase I, with no mention of Phase II activities. Director Reaves will investigate.

Commissioner Hartman moved that the 2015 budget be approved; Commissioner Rumsey seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Chair McGarry commented that it may not be possible to further reduce the SSA Administration expense. He added that this is what it costs to run this Commission. Director Reaves reported that the City wants us to start working on the 2016 budget.

General Sharing. Director Reaves reported that Commissioners McGarry, Newsome, and Rogel should receive their reappointment letters soon.

He also reported that he has spoken with two companies about replacing the deteriorated tiles at the intersection of 53rd and Lake Park, and he has requested repairs again from the City. Commissioner Hanson reported his experience dealing with the City with regard to sidewalks. It is prohibitively expensive to do work privately on the sidewalks. The City requires that an architect be hired, and it does not want to be responsible for repairs done by anyone not them. Their attitude is that you now own that piece of sidewalk forever. He recommended talking with CDOT to make the repairs.

Director Reaves reported that the Farmers Market will be in Harold Washington Park again this year, where it has been in recent years. SECC will remain in charge of the Market since it is outside the SSA footprint, and they will work with the City to make parking at the Market easier.

On February 19, Director Reaves will teach a workshop for small businesses at 6 pm, under the auspices of the SSA and the SECC.

Public Comments. Louise McCurry commented that 10% of trees die annually and suggested putting that figure in the budget annually. She also commented that people remember trees, banners, and flowers.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. The next meeting will be March 18 at 11:00 a.m. at the Hyatt.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary J. Rogel
Secretary, SSA 61