

**Special Service Area #61
SSA Board of Commissioners Meeting**

**Minutes, December 9, 2015
Hyde Park Hyatt
5225 S. Harper, Chicago, IL**

Present: Greg Guttman, James Hanson, Allison Hartman, James Hennessy, Jacqueline Jackson, Michael McGarry, Charles Newsome, Mary Rogel, George Rumsey

Absent: Anthony Fox, Donna Trainor

Also Present: Eric Reaves, Wendy Williams, Jackie Pingel

The meeting was called to order at 11:06 a.m. by Chair McGarry, who welcomed the community guests and thanked them for attending. Commissioner Hanson introduced Jackie Pingel, Property Manager for Vue 53, whose leasing office is now open on 53rd Street. Chair McGarry welcomed her to the neighborhood.

Minutes. Minutes for October 21, 2015, were approved as circulated after amending them to reflect the fact that funding to replace trees in the district was provided by the SECC and not by the SSA.

2015 Overview. Director Reaves provided highlights of the 2015 annual report that he is preparing of SSA-funded activities, to be presented next month. Some of the highlights include: 1500 bags of garbage removed by Clean Slate and 400 bags of recycling, 130 abandoned bicycles given to bike building project, 10 miles of sidewalk power washed, 601 tree grates painted, 200 light poles cleaned monthly, flower baskets throughout the district, summer concert series, Downtown Hyde Park Fest, and 14,000 visitors to SSA-sponsored events that provided an estimated economic impact within the district of \$250 thousand. Social media and messaging attracts a growing segment of the market.

Chair McGarry reported that 41% of the SSA budget was spent on customer attraction and 28% for public way aesthetics – 65-70% of the budget goes toward improving the SSA district or attracting visitors. At the January meeting, we will have a conversation about future priorities.

Director Reaves is working with Choose Chicago and with the concierge organization located downtown to help bring people to the businesses of Hyde Park when they visit the museums. The Downtown Hyde Park initiative (SECC) was awarded Honorable Mention for Outstanding New Initiatives in the Neighborhoods.

Commissioner Appointments. All Commissioners who applied for renewal of their terms will be approved by City Council in January. Commissioners Trainor and Fox elected not to return in 2016. Brian Tijan, from A10 and Yusho, has applied and is expected to be approved by the Council. One more spot is available. Chair McGarry asked for input from anyone who has ideas for potential Commissioners. Commissioner Hennessy suggested asking whether someone from

the Hyatt would be interested; and Chair McGarry suggested finding a resident to represent the homeowners in the district might also be a possibility.

Financial Report. Treasurer Guttman reported that we will end the year very close to budget, with no carryover. He met with Chair McGarry, Director Reaves, SSA Accountant Isaac Green, and SECC Board Treasurer James Poueymirou to review the budget. It is anticipated that we will end the year approximately \$10,000 over budget. However, Director Reaves is holding \$10,000 that is owed to our website designer and will not be paid until the problems in the website have been corrected, which is not likely to happen until after the close of this fiscal year. Treasurer Guttman also reported that at we can expect another payment of \$10,000 from the City because of delinquent taxes being collected. He added that the exact timing of receiving the funds is unknown.

Chair McGarry has met with the Board of the SECC and requested that they take out a \$50,000 line of credit for the SSA so that we may continue to function while we are waiting for tax disbursements from the City. As last year, the loan will be repaid within 30 days of receiving funds from the City. The LOC will be a 1-year potentially renewable loan, and it will remain in place throughout the year so that it will be available should similar circumstances occur later in the year.

Director Reaves sent out an RFP for the LOC to all the banks in the district. Only Hyde Park Bank responded.

At 12:09 p.m., Chair McGarry recused himself from the meeting for the vote on the loan, turned the Chair over to Vice Chair Rumsey, and left the room. Commissioner Hennessy moved that we authorize the SECC to secure a line of credit from Hyde Park Bank for future spending needs anticipated in the first and potentially third quarters of 2016, with the loan to be paid off when tax funds are received. Commissioner Hartman seconded. Approval was unanimous. Chair McGarry was asked to rejoin the meeting and resume the Chair. Chair McGarry thanked Treasurer Guttman, Director Reaves, and SECC Treasurer Poueymirou for all the work they have done with the budgets.

Updates.

Farmers Market. Director Reaves reported that over 7000 people have been through the market this season. Three new vendors have agreed to sell at the market next year, when it will become the responsibility of the SSA. The City will no longer be involved; SNAP is now administered locally. The Market will have its own bank account so that the rent received from the vendors is not commingled with tax dollars. The Market will be advertised differently next year in an effort to make it more appealing. Three major farmers will participate; no others will be invited until the market is larger so that these vendors can be assured of selling their produce. The alley sign announcing the market will be coming down soon and replaced with something else until next year's market. Over 1 million people have passed the sign since it was put up. Director Reaves will formalize the arrangement regarding the sign with the business that owns the building, as a safeguard for both sides. The business is not charging the SSA for advertising on its wall.

Bike Racks. Director Reaves reported that the City process is still ongoing and is likely to finish in 2016. The bike company that will install the racks is ready to get started as soon as approval for the work to begin is given by the City.

Website. Corrections are still being made on the website. Once it is working seamlessly, Director Reaves will pay the balance owed to the website designer. CEI Media has been updating the website, to date pro bono.

Outreach to Businesses in SSA District. There will be two meetings open to all business owners in the SSA district on January 23, 2016, at CIE, one in the morning and one later in the day, to inform them of what is happening in the district. An annual calendar of district events will be put together and given to the businesses and to the City in an effort to keep things organized, to reduce conflicts with dates, and to assist businesses to participate in district activities and increase their traffic. Nonprofits in the district are welcome to attend.

Proposed 2016 Meeting Schedule. Director Reaves circulated a proposed schedule of meetings for 2016, all to be held at the Hyatt. Commissioner Rumsey moved that we accept the proposed schedule; Commissioner Newsome seconded; vote was unanimous.

Announcements. Chair McGarry opened the floor for announcements and public comments.

Director Reaves thanked the Commissioners and the Board of the SECC for their support over the past two years since he became Director of the SSA.

Commissioner Hartman thanked the SSA, and Director Reaves in particular, for the wonderful job he did working with DARE Property Manager Christy Casey in providing a lovely Thanksgiving for the residents of DARE. They and the DARE Board are most appreciative and are looking forward to whatever support the SSA can provide for Christmas, as there are eight children living at DARE. Commissioner Hartman lauded the SSA for taking care of the nonprofits that are part of the SSA and for not focusing exclusively on the needs of the businesses in the district.

Commissioner Hanson announced that Vue 53 is signing leases now; the building will be ready for occupancy in late August or early September. Their goal is to be integrated into the community and the SSA prior to opening. SECC Director Wendy Williams thanked Vue 53 Property Manager Pingel for donating the food left over from the grand opening to the holiday party at the Washington Park Incubator; it was much appreciated.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m. The next meeting will be January 20 at 11:00 a.m. at the Hyde Park Hyatt.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary J. Rogel
Secretary, SSA 61