

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

**Minutes, January 20, 2016
Hyde Park Hyatt
5225 S. Harper, Chicago, IL**

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

Absent: James Hanson, George Rumsey

Also Present: Eric Reaves, Wendy Williams, Brian Tijan

The meeting was called to order at 11:09 a.m. by Chair McGarry, who welcomed the community guests and thanked them for attending. He introduced Brian Tijan, from A10 and Yusho, who has applied to be a Commissioner and is waiting for his appointment letter, which is expected to be sent February 1.

Minutes. Minutes for December 9, 2015, were approved as circulated.

Financial Report. Treasurer Guttman reported that we ended the year \$14,000 over budget; with costs incurred but not yet paid, the over-run increases to \$27,000. The overage was primarily in the Customer Attraction line items. Treasurer Guttman and Chair McGarry will meet with Director Reaves to prepare a revised 2016 budget for the next meeting. The SECC has applied for a \$50,000 line of credit on our behalf which can provide funding for programs until we receive the first tax installment from the city.

Update on LOC. Ms. Williams reported that the SECC is in the final stages of its 2015 audit, which is required by the bank for the loan. All other documents have been submitted.

2015 Annual Report. Director Reaves distributed copies of the Annual Report, which explains how we spent tax dollars, and announced that it will be put on the SSA website.

Updates.

Farmers Market. Director Reaves reported that he sent out 120 invitations to current and potential vendors ten days ago and will follow up by telephone. The objective is to have a full market including other activities such as musical programs. This is the time of year that vendors decide whether or not to participate in the market, which comes under SSA management this year. Suggestions for participants are welcome.

An agreement is being negotiated with the business that owns the building where we display the sign for the Farmers Market. The Farmers Market will be responsible for paying for the sign from June through October, when the market is in operation. From November through May, the SSA will promote Downtown Hyde Park or something else on the sign.

The Farmers Market starts the first Thursday in June and will be in Harper Court for the second straight year. The marketing campaign for the market will start in May. Director Reaves has been doing exit interviews with vendors. They were not unhappy with the foot traffic through the market, and all three regular farm vendors want to return. Chair McGarry commented that the weather and new location of the market may have negatively impacted foot traffic. Director Reaves is seeking a melon farmer because last year's vendor has stopped going to farmers markets altogether. Commissioners made suggestions for possible vendors and services. Director Reaves has invited non-food vendors. All vendors may use SNAP (through SECC), which worked well in 2015 and increased sales. Commissioner Hennessy raised the question of whether we will allow political campaigning in the market since this is an election year. Chair McGarry asked Director Reaves to submit a recommendation at the next meeting. We will be discussing Rules and Regulations for the market, which Director Reaves will prepare for distribution.

Director Reaves recommended that the SSA allocate \$10,000 in the 2016 budget for the Farmers Market.

Bike Racks. Director Reaves reported that \$23,000 was allocated in 2015 for bike racks, but nothing has been paid yet. The City process is still ongoing and is likely to finish sometime in 2016. The bike company that will install the racks is ready to cut concrete as soon as approval for the work to begin is given by the City. Commissioner Hennessy recommended that we allocate only \$23,000 for bike racks in the 2016 budget and not allocate anything more than that until 2017.

Outreach to Chicago Concierge Program. Director Reaves recommended that we produce our own trifold brochure promoting Downtown Hyde Park to distribute in downtown hotels. He will be working with the museums and concierges to set up tours and make arrangements to bring tour busses into the SSA district. He suggested allocating \$25,000 for catalogs promoting Hyde Park and will invite 100 concierges to Hyde Park to experience our restaurants and businesses. Commissioner Hartman suggested checking with other SSAs, such as Lincoln Park, who have worked with the concierges. No one from the South Side has worked with them; however, the Hyde Park Chamber of Commerce approached them years ago though nothing has materialized.

Facade Program. Director Reaves is experiencing difficulties finding an architect to work with him on the facade program. Mr. Tijan volunteered his business partner, who is an architect, to assist. The building owner for the model remake may need to add money to the \$4,000 budgeted by the SSA to make additional changes.

Vitality Committee Activities in the District. Some of the events planned by the Vitality Committee include OctoberFest, Holiday Nights, carolers, characters from Frozen, ice sculptures, concerts, and HPKCC Book Sale. The SSA can partner with them on such activities.

Customer Loyalty Rewards Program. Director Reaves has met with two companies and will meet with two more. Retailers will need to buy into the program in order for it to work;

there is a cost to retailers to participate. Mr. Tijan suggested making a presentation about the program to the members of the HP Chamber of Commerce.

Banners. The banners have held up really well, but they will need to be replaced in April. Director Reaves is working on the new design. The banners will cost less this year because we already have the hardware, all of which can be reused.

Flower Baskets. Our contract with Brickman ends in the Spring. Because this was our second year with the same company, we are required to send out an RFP for this year's contract.

Clean Slate. Our contract with Clean Slate also ends in the Spring, and we will also need to send out an RFP for this year's contract. Clean Slate empties the garbage cans in the SSA District twice a week and three times a week during the summer. A local person cleans the cans because it is less expensive. We may not have the money in this year's budget for these little things, which can be costly.

Beautification. Abandoned bicycles are removed and donated two or three times during the year. Unused newspaper boxes have been removed. The flower baskets were better in 2015. Clean Slate was used for cleaning but not for snow removal. Director Reaves will revisit the snow removal issue and investigate how other SSAs handle it. We will need to discuss ways to fund the beautification of the Nichols Park parkway after Vue53 is finished in Fall 2016 or Spring 2017; it would be nice to find a community partner. There are no ideas yet, but we will get some streetscape drawings to assist in the design.

Outreach to Businesses in SSA District. Director Reaves asked that the Commissioners remind people to come to the 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. A brief discussion ensued about ways to encourage all businesses in the District to participate in customer attraction activities.

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

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:26 p.m. The next meeting will be February 17 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hyde Park Hyatt.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary J. Rogel
Secretary, SSA 61