

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

**Minutes, August 17, 2016
Hyde Park Hyatt
5225 S. Harper, Chicago, IL**

Present: Brian Tijan, Allison Hartman, Jacqueline Jackson, Michael McGarry, Charles Newsome, Mary Rogel, George Rumsey

Absent: Greg Guttman, James Hanson, James Hennessy

Also Present: Eric Reaves, Wendy Williams

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Chair McGarry, who thanked everyone for attending.

Minutes. Minutes for the June 28, 2016, special budget meeting were approved as circulated. Due to technical difficulties with the June 15 regular meeting minutes, they will be circulated for the September meeting.

Financial Report. In Treasurer Guttman's absence, Chair McGarry gave the financial report. June is a heavy expense month because a lot programs are going on; however no tax revenues were received in June or July. As of the end of July we had \$8000. Second half tax revenues are just starting to come in now, which is the latest we have received the. With these payments beginning, we are now in a position to begin forecasting our end of year budget. We do not expect a budget increase as a consequence of the new developments that are being or have been built in the SSA District. Harper Court tax payments are all in the TIF, which has 6-7 years remaining. Vue53 will not start paying taxes until the first quarter of 2018.

At the next meeting, Director Reaves will provide a breakdown of how much we have spent for each event this year. We will take a look at the budget and evaluate whether we need to approve changes in line item allocations. It looks like the funds that remain in our budget will be sufficient for what we will be spending by the end of the year.

Updates.

Farmers Market. Director Reaves reported that the market attendance is trending 31% ahead of last year, which was anemic compared to when the Market was located in Washington Park. A \$5 coupon is being passed out to try to increase business. Though vendors are getting enough business to stay, there is always the chance that they may leave for a more lucrative market. Vendors are still calling to participate in the market. Commissioner Hartman suggested

that shade be provided for patrons listening to the music. Director Reaves will try to get a double tent for that purpose.

Silver Room Event. The Silver Room Block Party was a remarkable success. Business owners could not say enough about the event. It was well organized and peaceful, with no apparent complaints from the neighbors in spite of the fact that the crowds were huge and shopped everywhere. People were still trying to come at 2 a.m., even though it closed at midnight. Businesses on 53rd Street had more business than they had ever experienced, with lines out the door.

Website. Director Reaves reported that the bounce rate for the website is unbelievable. The trend shows that people are going to the website to find out about Hyde Park. It is accomplishing what we set out to do, which does not always happen with websites. New users continue to increase. At some point it may be time to start selling ad space on the site.

Industry Award for DTHP. Otherwise's Hyde Park logo was chosen from among submissions of typography from around the world as one of the 100 top entries. Voting for the best of these 100 will take place next month. It is quite an honor to make this list. Otherwise was up against submissions by designers from companies like Google and Leo Burnett; they will have a party to showcase the DTHP logo.

Summer Concert Series. The summer concert series started slowly this year. Attendance was down almost two-thirds from last year. There were no cancellations due to rain, but we cut back on our funding of the series, which is reflected in the advertising budget for the series. Numbers are rising, but we will have to look at how we will participate next year.

First Thursday. The University's First Thursday marketing effort was not resonating with the community, so the Vitality Committee decided to help them out. They inaugurated "Follow the Drum" to move people around the street. It has completely changed First Thursday. The Vitality Committee did not commit beyond August, and the University will continue the program on its own after that.

Pokemon Go. Director Reaves will look into the possible impact of getting District businesses involved with Pokemon Go as a way of increasing foot traffic and attracting people who might not otherwise come into the SSA District.

July 4 Parade. The July 4 parade was absolutely wonderful this year. It traveled faster than in the past, and some people had trouble keeping up. The floats made a big difference. Stephanie Franklin will not be the Chair of the parade next year.

Obama Presidential Library. The Presidential Library has been announced for Jackson Park. By the time the library is built, the current commissioners' terms will have expired. It will be a challenge for the commissioners who are serving then to get people who are visiting the library to visit the rest of Hyde Park. Chair McGarry is researching the impact that Presidential

Libraries have on their communities. Director Reaves reported that only the Clinton Library has had a positive impact on its community, Little Rock. Director Reaves will meet with Mike Straughtmannas of the Obama Presidential Library Foundation to make sure the business piece is tied in with library plans earlier rather than later.

Business Development Leadership Class. Director Reaves attended the Business Development Leadership Class and met people from other SSAs in the City. He reported that we run a good SSA compared to others; we turn in our reports on time, and we are in good standing. This is a testament to our standards. The class toured various SSAs. Some do not have the rudiments needed in a business district, such as garbage cans, even with larger budgets than ours. Our footprint looks good on most days, though Commissioners did note that some businesses are not keeping up with the City policy requiring that a certain percent of the budget for outdoor eating space is to be devoted to greenery. The Commissioners encouraged Director Reaves to speak with the businesses that are not keeping up.

Flower Baskets. Director Reaves reported that Brickman has been purchased by someone else, who seems to be skimping on water. Flower baskets that were looking beautiful now contain dead plantings. He will speak with them.

Service Businesses. Commissioner Hartman mentioned that September might be a good time to resume the discussions about how to promote service businesses. The discussion was tabled during efforts to get the Farmers Market up and running.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next meeting will be September 21 at 11:00 a.m. at the Hyde Park Hyatt. Chair McGarry will call in to the meeting from out of town, and Vice Chair Rumsey will run the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary J. Rogel, Secretary, SSA 61