

**Special Service Area #61**  
**SSA Board of Commissioners Minutes**  
**Tuesday, October 27, 2020**  
**Virtual Meeting**

**Present:** Greg Guttman, Angie Marks, Charles Newsome, Mary Rogel, George Rumsey, Nancy Stanek, Eric Thompson, and Wendy Williams

**Absent:** Anthony Beach

**Also Present:** Brandon Evans (SSA Program Administrator), Diane Burnham (SECC), Jourdan Sorrell (SECC), Joann Tate (SECC), Sandra Bivens (SECC), Karen Forte (DPD), Mike McGarry, Kenny Newman, Aaron Gettinger (Herald Newspaper), and Brian Tyler

A quorum being present, Chairman Rumsey called the meeting of SSA #61 to order at 11:05 a.m. ***Pursuant to the applicable law and his determination that attendance by remote means is necessary because an in-person meeting is not practical nor prudent due to the declared public health disaster cause by COVID-19, this meeting was conducted by videoconference.***

**Reading/Approval of the Minutes:**

Minutes accepted as circulated.

**SSA Financials – B. Evans**

Currently the SSA has a net surplus. The carryover amount does not include the amount due to the SECC. The question on the floor in relation to the spending plan: What is the carryover/surplus to be budgeted for spending by the end of the year (2020)? What can be carried over?

Referred to the Finance Committee for recommendations.

**Reopen Rebate Reboot Program – C. Newsome, Chair and B. Evans**

Commissioner Stanek expressed her displeasure with the rebate program. The program comes across a more of a 'nice gesture' instead of being impactful for the small businesses and she is concerned about additional closures in the area. In addition, what is the plan for the holiday décor that could help in attracting consumers to the businesses within the corridors?

Commissioner Rogel stated that the rebate program seems to be most helpful to those businesses other than retail. Suggests that something be done to increase and attract foot traffic to the area.

Commissioner Guttman expressed concern that a few businesses are expected to permanently close, especially restaurants, due to the restrictions and change in weather.

Commissioner Newsome acknowledged all that was stated and inquired as to what could be done to assist the businesses. He suggested thoughts/ideas/solutions need to be provided/initiated to help solve the problem/issues businesses are facing.

In response to the concerns, Commissioner Williams suggested a customer rebate program may drive consumers to shop in the area.

A focus group of the SSA was established to address the retail matters:

- Brandon Evans
- Charles Newsome
- Nancy Stanek
- Wendy Williams

### **Halloween 2020 – B. Evans**

Businesses within the footprint were contacted directly and a letter was distributed throughout the business corridor stating the position of SSA 61 on the matter.

Businesses were encouraged to be mindful of their surroundings and cautious. Some businesses were giving their employees hazard pay. Each business was encouraged to follow the guidelines in place according to their business operations.

Chairman Rumsey is concerned about the current paintball incidents that have been occurring.

Aaron @ Herald has asked that if anyone sees anything to please contact the reporters directly.

### **Small Business Saturday (SBS) – B. Evans**

Small Business Saturday is observed the Saturday following Black Friday to support/focus on entrepreneurs. In what ways can these businesses be supported now until the end of the year:

#### Online business promotions/campaigns

- Social media
- Virtual shopping guide
- Utilize search engines such as Google to target a business's message to selected zip codes

Commissioner Marks mentioned a new business to the area will be hosting a soft opening. Commissioner Newsome asked what other businesses, if any, have opened or are slated to open. Commissioner Marks responded there are several businesses that have already opened and that businesses are very interested in coming to Hyde Park which is very encouraging.

#### **Questions and Comments from Commissioners**

Commissioner Newsome – Is it the time of season, for the merchants that have outdoor seating, to bring their furniture in off the corridor? *Per the COVID-19 guidelines set by the City, restaurants have been given an extension to have outdoor seating.*

Commissioner Rogel expressed concern regarding the constant flooding on 53<sup>rd</sup>/Lake Park Avenue. The intersection fills with water during heavy rains. *It was suggested that she contact 311 to report the issue.*

Commissioner Rumsey – Banners were destroyed in last week's storm and need to be removed or replaced. Asked about the date for the winter plantings to be in place. *Brandon stated the RFP response date will be extended and he will reach out to the current vendor on the matter.*

#### **Questions and Comments from Guests**

K. Newman – When is the Taco Bell scheduled to open? *The restaurant opened September 2020.*

The meeting was adjourned 11:56am. The next regular meeting is for Tuesday December 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am, Zoom Virtual Meeting Chicago, IL.

Respectfully submitted,  
Raymonde Vance, Secretary, SSA 61