

SSA Commission Meeting/ Special Service Area #60
Wednesday, May 27, 2015
5:30 p.m.
North River Commission Office
3403 W. Lawrence Ave Ste. 201
Chicago, IL 60625

SSA Commission Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

SSA Commissioners Present:

Andrew Levin (chair), Stephanie Fishel (vice chair), Angela Bowman (secretary), Saima Causevic, Frank Kern, John Tunnell, Jimmy Karagianes (treasurer)

North River Commission Staff Present:

Thomas Applegate, (E.D.), Duka Dabovic (SSA manager)

Other Attendees:

Tom Guagliardo (TRIP, Tano's Pizzeria), Kevin Heffernan (Rep. Andrade's office), Joy Coombes (CPA with EILTS & Associates), Helen Slade (Territory Design)

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:30

Item: Old Business

a. Minutes

Saima moved to approve; John seconded. All voted in favor.

b. Financials

Frank moves to approve; John seconds. All voted in favor.

c. Review & approval of 2014 audit

Joy Coombes is the auditor. SSAs audits are a hybrid format, partly nonprofit, partly governmental. Auditor's opinion is unqualified—there's nothing in the financial records that will mislead the end user. That's what the city wants. Also, the financials and books and records are all in compliance with Dept of Housing and Economic Development's accounting guide.

Sometime between now and February 2016, city will hire another company to audit the audit; they will send us a letter if they have any findings. Those findings can be a matter of typos or they can be serious questions like "why is there a loan on the books?" 50% of SSA audits come back with some sort of letter. Usually it's elementary.

Angela asks: what is the worst-case scenario? Joy says: in the case of real mismanagement of funds (e.g., overspending), there is one more audit and most likely what will happen is the

service provider will not get awarded the contract again. Duka's estimate of carryover funds is close enough (within a margin of \$10,000) to the figure that Joy came up with, so we don't have to rework the 2015 budget.

Frank noted that on page 5 of the audit, the end of the paragraph that outlines the SSA boundaries is very unclear. Joy says this text was taken from the website and isn't really a problem as far as the city is concerned. We can fix it next year. Stephanie confirmed that the website is actually correct. Duka wonders whether it's possible to correct this on the audit? Joy will check, but the audit has already been submitted to Baker Tilley (the city's external auditing firm). Joy responsible only for auditing through April 10, 2015 and not later.

Stephanie moves to approve the audit. Frank seconds. All voted in favor.

c. SSA Security

Reliance wants to be armed. They've been on the job. Tom says that the guards on the job get harrassed a lot and they have been taking bats and pipes away from kids on the street. Jim says that there are gangbangers flashing guns on the street outside his restaurant.

Andrew asks: business owners, do you feel safer? Jim says yes. He sees the Reliance car drive by often, which deters would-be drug dealers on his corner. Tom sees them often, is happy to have them here. But admits that there's not as much activity on Lawrence, where his store is.

Stephanie wonders about the personal liability of the commissioners if a security guard shoots someone. Andrew is concerned about the bad publicity that could arise if there is a shooting.

Jimmy also wonders about our liability if a Reliance person is shot. Duka told a story that makes us wonder whether Reliance is just wanting to go on record to protect themselves in a later event. Andrew thinks we need legal advice about our liability.

Saima says Reliance do their best unarmed and call the police if they need backup. Jimmy says make sure they have the number of the desk sergeant rather than have to call 911.

Andrew says they took the job knowing the neighborhood and knowing that they would be unarmed. He is not happy that two (one?) months in now they are asking to be armed. They knew the job, why the change?

Jimmy suggests they bring in video from their body cameras so we can see what they're going through. He also suggests keeping the officers only in cars—protecting them from direct confrontation. The guys in cars can call the cops if they see a problem.

Thomas is going to get us a legal opinion. Jimmy also wonders if tasers is an option. Duka says that tasers counts as "armed." A lot of people present think that tasers sounds better than guns.

Action: Thomas, John Tunnell, and Duka are going to talk to Reliance before the next meeting, get more information, and report back.

d. Review and approval of revised facade rebate applications

Mir has submitted a revised application for his building. Stephanie moves to approve; John seconds. All voted in favor.

Aspire: Jimmy moves to approve their application. Saima seconds. All voted in favor.

Racks & Couture: has submitted a revised sign design that looks more modern. Frank moves to approve; Jimmy seconds. All voted in favor.

Andrew's building: Jimmy moves to approve; Frank seconds. All voted in favor. (Andrew did not participate in the vote.)

4747 N. Sawyer (future Bikes 'n Roses) submitted new application clarifying their plans for replacing the windows. Their entire project is more than \$25,000, but we are only going to approve \$12,863. Angela moves to approve; Saima seconds. All voted in favor.

Irving Park Early Learning Center on Montrose: added tuckpointing (an extra \$17,300) to an existing proposal to replace the awning, add gooseneck lighting. Duka shows photos of old awning and new. Jimmy thinks the old awning is perfectly fine, would not approve. Others think the new awning is nice. They are two storefronts, so eligible for \$15,000. Before the tuckpointing they are asking for \$13,259. Stephanie moves to approve; Saima seconds. All in favor except Jimmy, who opposes. Motion passes.

4219 N. Kedzie. They are proposing tuckpointing. Duka says that they have been in building court several times, and the building is still in violation. Andrew thinks that the work has already been done to get out of the violations, which is not in compliance with the program rules. He says the proposal is not going to materially improve the building. Saima moves to reject the proposal; Stephanie seconds. All voted to reject the proposal.

e. Territory Urban Design

Helen Slade here to represent Territory. They want to open a year-round design studio in an Albany Park storefront. Work would include projects with community partners and youth employment programs. They are hoping to find a partner for this summer's project. She wonders if they might partner with Bikes and Roses.

Takes teens and turns them into designers. Have worked with over 70 teenagers so far. Paying kids to have career readiness skills and it's good to have teenagers on the street doing something positive and providing welcoming environments.

They do community visioning sessions; conduct research and interact with the public to get ideas. They themselves are very creative and come up with great ideas.

Giving kids problem-solving tools.

Territory would like to resettle in Albany Park long-term.

What they are asking from us:

- Help finding a storefront (someone could donate)
- Nonprofit umbrella
- Be a client for some project

Ultimately they'd like a permanent home but they would settle for something short-term for now. They need to house their summer project.

Discussion of us being a client: this is where bike racks could come in, or some similar project. We have \$6000 allocated to such a project. Andrew suggests that Helen and Duka talk and come up with a proposal.

Helen says they need a space before they can start thinking about the project. Andrew has a space that he is probably willing to donate for 6–8 weeks, maybe more.

Generally positive reaction by the commissioners to the whole idea.

New Business: SSA Meeting Schedule

June 10th meeting is back on the books.

July 8th meeting is moved to July 18.

Another meeting on August 12th.

Stephanie wonders whether it's possible to change the SSA boundaries within the initial 10-year period. Duka says no.

Frank comments on the Mayfair shooting video reported; CBS misreported it as Albany Park. He was not happy about that.

Public Input

Kevin Heffernan from Rep. Andrade's office says they'd love to help out however they can.

Adjournment:

Andrew adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.