

STATE STREET COMMISSION

State Street Commission Meeting
Tuesday, January 21, 2020
2:00 PM
ABC7
190 North State Street, 10th Floor

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

AFFILIATION

Commission Members Present

Commissioner Kristin Duncan
Commissioner John Idler
Commissioner Mark Kelly
Commissioner LaVerne Morris
Commissioner Ryan Segal
Commissioner John Tully
Commissioner Eric Finnegan
Commissioner Dean Lane

Renaissance Hotel
ABC7
DCASE
20 North State Street Condos
Acadia
Department of Streets & Sanitation
CIM Group
Palmer House

Commission Members Absent

Commissioner Mark Anderson
Commissioner Gia Biagi
Commissioner Greg Cameron
Commissioner Maurice Cox
Commissioner Andrea Schwartz

Hines
CDOT
Joffrey Ballet
Department of Planning & Development (DPD)
Macy's

Others Present

Michael Edwards
Robert Kearney
Cmdr. Michael Pigott
Mark Roschen
Abel Rodriguez
David Seglin
James Turner

Chicago Loop Alliance
42nd Ward
Chicago Police Department - 001
Department of Planning & Development
Chicago Loop Alliance (CLA)
Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)
CIBC/CLA Board Chair

I. Call to Order

In the absence of SSA#1-2015 Chairman John Idler and Vice-Chair Greg Cameron, Michael Edwards, CLA President & CEO welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 2:10 PM. Introductions were made around the table.

II. Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

During a brief discussion about the pedestrian counts on State Street in 2019, Eric Finnigan stated the Christmas shopping season started slowly in November but got better throughout the Christmas holiday.

Michael Edwards identified a document on the top of the Commission meeting packets with the dates of the 2020 SSA Commission meetings and he encouraged Commissioners to get these dates into your personal calendars.

III. Approval of Minutes

A motion to accept the Tuesday, November 19, 2019, meeting minutes as presented was made by Commissioner Duncan and seconded by Commissioner Lane. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Financial Statements as 2019 Year End

Financial Statements

Abel Rodriquez reviewed the unaudited financial statements through December 31, 2019. Abel reviewed the 2019 SSA budget, year-end actuals and discussed an overage on salaries, but when combined with savings in administrative cost results in a positive balance in SSA administrative overhead. As presented, the net revenue to bring forward into 2020 totals \$131,912. This is higher than we would like (we target \$100,000 carry-forward), but a number we can work with in 2020 utilizing the \$32,000 for other things through a future budget modification. Ryan Segal questioned the \$155,574 in the infrastructure line item. Abel explained that DPD requires CLA to recognize late collections and estimated loss collection, so CLA always adds those dollar amounts in infrastructure maintenance considered as “Wish List” items and why the discrepancy is always high.

DPD Performance Metric & Budget Report

Abel Rodriquez reviewed the 4th quarter and the annual report due to the City of Chicago Department of Planning & Development (DPD). These reports demonstrate to DPD how the SSA performed against the adopted budget and performance goals. David Seglin asked why the webpage views was below goal. Edwards indicated it was partly the change in our Marketing Director position and industry trends away from website page views and increased social media engagement.

Michael Edwards asked for a motion to approve the unaudited year-end financial statements; DPD performance & budget reports for the 4th quarter and for 2019. A motion was made by Commissioner Duncan and seconded by Commissioner Segal. The motion carried unanimously.

SSA and CLA Annual Audit

Abel Rodriquez referenced a draft letter of engagement with A.C.T. Group LLC for the 2019 audit of the SSA and CLA. The Commission questioned why we did not solicit bids for the services. Abel stated we were happy with the firm’s work (and have been for a long time). Commissioner Morris said she was familiar with the firm but has decided not to utilize them for her own business going forward. There was good discussion on the need to go out to the marketplace in 2020. After further discussion, Michael Edwards asked for a motion. A motion was made by Commissioner Lane and seconded by Commissioner Finnegan to approve the signing of an engagement letter for the 2019 SSA and CLA audits totaling \$8,100. Motion carried with one vote in opposition.

Contractor Affidavit

Abel Rodriquez requested the Commission to approve the Contractor Affidavit and authorize Michael Edwards to execute the agreement between the City of Chicago and CLA that we spent the SSA funds obtained from the City of Chicago appropriately in the delivery of the 2019 SSA projects, programs and actions. A motion was made by Commissioner Segal and seconded by Commissioner Lane. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Status Reports/Outstanding Issues

1. Security:

Commander Michael Pigott explained robberies are down 20% in the First District which includes the Loop and down 40% compared to the year before. This translates into 300 less incidents per year. Theft continues to be high and there has been an uptick in associated violent crime. Recently, the police arrested 10 individuals causing mayhem in the Loop and along State Street. Many are juveniles and associated with a foster house near the Loop. These kids have a lot of personal issues that are leading to the bad behavior. According to the Commander, there seem to be organized rings of young people elevating the criminal activity in the First District. The current State’s Attorney General’s policies make it difficult to get to felony offenses. The result, retail theft is increasingly bold and increasingly violent. Commissioner Finnegan agreed stating the retailers are closing due to the retail losses. Others, such as Zara’s, at the encouragement of Sargent Carol Burns, have changed their policies in order to assist the police. Often the tenants are looking to Block 37 to do something, but the mall management is not legally able to assist inside a store. Commissioner Finnegan indicated the cost of Block 37 security continues to rise.

John Idler entered the meeting.

Michael Edwards indicated the CLA continues to inventory street-level businesses to determine the status of their security – from no security to active security willing to file a police complaint. Edwards indicated the businesses that will file complaints and engage instore theft will be prioritized for our Street Patrol and CPD response. Those that have no security or will not file a complaint will not be a priority of the police.

Commander Pigott finished his report stating there were few problems with a variety of large-scale events in the First District through the holidays. Just last weekend the 8,000 attendees at the Woman’s March were peaceful. In answering a Commissioner Lane question, Commander Pigott said police and fire have plans for the arrival of guests associated with the NBA Allstar game.

110 officers will be stationed at key locations including State Street and Michigan Avenue the Wednesday and Thursday prior to the game and then focusing in on the United Center Friday through Sunday.

2. DCASE

Commissioner Kelly reported that on February 3, 2020, the Cultural Center will announce the Year of Chicago Music. This may be the biggest year for the 'Year of' programs positioning Chicago as a music center of excellence in the nation. To accomplish this, DCASE will reveal a new music brand for Chicago to compete with other 'music cities' such as Nashville, TN, and Austin, TX. The Year of Chicago Music has already attracted \$1.5 million from corporate sponsors and foundation donors to promote the brand and events schedule in 2020. Commissioner Kelly believes the Year of Chicago Music will be 5 times greater in impact and awareness than the past 'Year of' initiatives because of local bands, music venues, clubs, and major Loop music attractions such as the CSO, Lyric and Lollapalooza. Commissioner Kelly stated we take for granted our rich music scene and in many ways is invisible to us. The branding will suggest if you love music, you must visit Chicago. Commissioner Kelly looks forward to ways the SSA Commission, State Street and Chicago Loop Alliance can participate in in the Year of Chicago Music.

3. Streets & Sanitation

Commissioner Tully reported he has shared with Michael Edwards and John Idler some additional samples of trash cans should the Commission decide to upgrade the current trash and recycle receptacles on State Street. Street & Sanitation completed the bulk of Loop parades and events through the holidays. So far, the snowfall has been gentle. We continue to sweep the Loop streets and snowfall this season is expected to be average. Streets & Sanitation has had more issues with lake levels and the resulting erosion. Edwards reported the CLA has a system in place to stay on top of the snow falling on State Street including daily weather monitoring, and primed equipment (snow blowers, shovel and salt). Each week a plan is developed to assure the snow and ice does not stay on the sidewalks at intersections (priority) and a large pathway north and south on State Street. So far so good. The Street Team is doing a great job.

4. CDOT

David Seglin reported that there was nothing new. The State/Lake El Station is still in procurement but is getting close to being completed. CLA will be invited as a key stakeholder. John Idler directed Edwards to contact the new CDOT Commissioner and be sure she knows of our past and current interest in playing an active part in this important project. David Seglin stated the scooter experiment is completed and the scooters were popular. When they come back, they will not be able to come into the Loop.

5. DPD

There was no one in attendance to report.

6. CTA

There was no one in attendance to report.

VI. Sole Service Provider Report

City Development & Pritzker Park

Michael Edwards directed the Commission to a document in the meeting packet. The City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development is hosting the "C40 Reinventing Cities" competition to address underutilized lots near Pritzker Park. C40 is a global network of megacities committed to addressing climate change through sustainable and resilient development. The competition calls for teams of interested developers to create proposals to redevelop the site in question with special attention to carbon neutrality and resilience. The winning bid will result in the sale of the land to the proposing entity and the eventual redevelopment of the site. The winning bid will likely also include improvements to Pritzker Park.

Edwards explained the creation of proposals for the site is typically an expensive task. If allowed by the City of Chicago, the SSA could contribute towards stipends for the proposing teams to help offset the cost of proposing. The potential State Street impact could include improvements to Pritzker Park with regards to beautification and safety; potential "front door" on the State Street side of the building, creating activity and eyes on the street; and, possible addition of new residents and economic activity to this portion of State Street.

For the newer Commissioner Edwards explained the CLA tried and failed at managing and programming Pritzker Park in 2014 and 2015. The park was designated a narcotic hot spot by CPD in 2015. Commander Pigott stated the CPD has had a police car parked in the park for over a year to discourage negative behavior from the drug activity partly the result of the student population and the homeless who frequent the library facilities. The Commander also stated there have been 2 shootings in and around Pritzker Park in the last couple years. Edwards continued that at the encouragement of Alderman King to address issues in Pritzker Park, the SSA has budgeted \$25,000 to do something about Pritzker Park in 2020. Since 2015, there has been meetings concern by the surrounding universities and Chicago Loop Alliance on what to do and frankly, at this point, beyond programming and activations like our alley activation series, staff is not certain how to effectively change behavior in the park in 2020.

Staff is recommending the SSA provide the \$25,000 to create a stipend for 2-3 final development firms to respond to a request for proposals following a community engagement and RFQ process which the SSA Commission and CLA leadership can be part of. This idea is supported by Alderman King as a good strategy to make a lasting change in (and around) Pritzker Park. John Idler was firm that our funding result in a development project that benefits State Street, improves Pritzker Park and even fronts on Pritzker Park. The Commission agreed. Edwards stated the SSA Commissioners will be able to request the benefit to State Street as part of the community engagement processes that will define the final RFQ and RFP.

A motion was made by Eric Finnegan and seconded by Lavern Morris to provide \$25,000 to the C-40 process to redevelop a city owned site bordering Pritzker Park to the west. Motion carried unanimously.

State Street Corridor Plan Update

Michael Edwards directed the Commission to a summary of the State Street Corridor Plan process to date. He stated there has been an extensive amount of media coverage and positive discussion about an evolving State Street. The result of this is the hiring of Site Design Group who will be starting their work shortly. The next step is to form a Plan Steering Committee. Edwards indicated we need consistency throughout the year-long planning process, so Commissioners should anticipate 6 or so meetings that you would need to attend. Currently Kalindi Parikh, CLA Planning Director is working out the meeting schedule which would include extensive community outreach and engagement. The following Commissioners expressed interest in participating on the Steering Committee: Duncan, Morris, Cameron, Idler, Finnegan (and later Schwartz and Segal).

VII. Other Business

Michael Edwards distributed a copy of the approved **2020 Chicago Loop Alliance Business Plan & Budget**. The plan includes the adopted SSA budget and a Chicago Loop Alliance budget of \$515,000 and Chicago Loop Alliance Foundation budget of \$394,000. The information needed no action but represents the priorities of the SSA Commission and the CLA as the sole service provider for SSA #1-2015.

Edwards also distributed in the Commission packets a summary report and copy of the **2019 total pedestrian counts from the Springboard counters** on State Street, two intersection locations on Michigan Avenue and one pedway location. The total traffic volume is down 2.7% from 2018, (this included almost a full week of sub-freezing weather in January), but finished the last half of the year stronger than similar United Kingdom and USA pedestrian counts.

VIII. Adjournment

The next meeting of the State Street Commission will take place on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 2:00 PM. This will be a voting meeting. Commissioners will review the strategy regarding clean & safe services going into 2020 and beyond. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

LaVerne Morris
Secretary