

STATE STREET COMMISSION

State Street Commission Meeting

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

2:00 PM

190 N. State Street, 10th Floor

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members Present

Mark Anderson
Greg Cameron
Konstantine “Gus” Drosos
Cynthia Roubik

Ryan Segal
La Verne Morris

Sean Wiedel

Commission Members Absent

Kristin Duncan
Erin Harkey

John Idler
Cole Stallard

Luis Zepeda

Others Present

Melvin Craig III
Debbie De Lopez

Michael Edwards
Rich Gamble
Laura Graves
Brian Grossman (Commission Nominee)
David Harris
Dan Luna
Abel Rodriguez
Aimea Ochiekeleye (Commission Nominee)
Mark Roschen

AFFILIATION

Hines
Joffrey Ballet
Palmer House Hilton
Department of Planning and
Development
Acadia
20 North State Street Condo
Assn.
Department of
Transportation

Renaissance Hotel
Department of Cultural
Affairs And Special Events
ABC7
Department of Streets &
Sanitation
Department of Streets &
Sanitation

Chicago Loop Alliance
Department of Streets &
Sanitation
Chicago Loop Alliance
Chicago Loop Alliance
ABC7
Walgreens
Chicago Police Department
34th Ward Alderman’s Office
Chicago Loop Alliance
Macy’s
Department of Planning and
Development

Call to Order

The State Street SSA Commission meeting on October 17th was convened at 2:07 PM by Chair Greg Cameron. Cameron welcomed the new Commission nominees, Aimea Ochiekeleye from Macy's and Brian Grossman from Walgreens; while not officially appointed by the Mayor's office, it is good to have them there to accelerate the process. Cameron informed the group that the Commission's secretary, La Verne Morris, would arrive late but assured that the meeting would proceed as planned. Michael Edwards, President and CEO of Chicago Loop Alliance, clarified to the nominees that in compliance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act, meeting minutes are made publicly accessible online.

Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

Approval of Minutes

Cameron then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 18th meeting of the Commission. Ryan Segal motioned to approve the minutes, and Konstantine "Gus" Drosos seconded that motion. The motion carried, and the minutes were approved.

Financial Statements as of September 30, 2023

The Chair asked Chicago Loop Alliance's Chief Financial Officer, Abel Rodriguez, for an update on SSA financials ending September 30th, 2023. Rodriguez presented the report, which was included for those in attendance with their meeting packet. Rodriguez noted that there wasn't much to report regarding changes, and the SSA continues to perform its services.

Rodriguez stated that CLA received the initial levy payment of \$1.7 million earlier this year. However, CLA has since advanced over \$500,000 beyond that amount to its vendors to ensure uninterrupted service on State Street due to the late billing of the second half of the levy.

Rodriguez expressed hope that SSA levy funds would arrive earlier this year since the property tax payment window opens for property owners on November 1st instead of later, such as last year. Edwards briefly explained to the nominees the SSA financial process and how the taxes levied are formulated and disbursed to CLA, as the Sole Service Provider for the SSA, in two yearly installments.

Furthermore, Rodriguez mentioned that CLA is closely tracking its expenditures in anticipation of a potential shortfall in SSA funds, similar to last year. This is due to the possibility of property owners contesting their assessments, therefore reducing the amount of money collected by the SSA levy.

Mark Roschen briefly informed the group that the SSA funds should be going out in mid-November, about a month sooner than the previous year. This is due to the Assessor's November 1st deadline for property tax payments.

Rodriguez moved on to the 3rd quarter metrics report, briefly explaining the different report categories to the new Commissioners before continuing.

Edwards further explained that these reports are essential to the city to aggregate this data under the SSA Program across all 55 Special Service Areas.

Gus Drosos inquired about the method used to calculate the number of ad buy impression targets reported. Rodriguez explained that the marketing team at CLA employs specific software to monitor this data. Edwards further clarified that the figures might be influenced by the higher number of Sundays on State events (4) in 2022, in contrast to the fewer events (2) held this year or a number carried forward from the previous year.

After some discussion, the Chair requested a motion to approve the financial statements.

Mark Anderson motioned to approve, and Gus Drosos seconded that motion. The motion carried.

Introductions

The Chair asked the group to briefly introduce themselves so that the Commission nominees could gain some familiarity with the current Commissioners and city department representatives. They did so. Cameron noted that Grossman and Ochiekeleye's nominations to the Commission will be formally submitted to the SSA area's Aldermen to be confirmed by the City Council soon.

Security Update

The Chair then gave the floor to Commander David Harris, who updated security efforts in the 1st District. The Commander started the update with current crime data in SSA boundaries. He noted that there have been 4 fewer homicides this year than the previous year, 9 fewer shootings than last year, 9 fewer episodes of aggravated battery, 34 additional robberies, 8 fewer vehicular hijackings, 2 more burglaries, 3 additional motor vehicle thefts, 2 more thefts, and the officers in the district have made an additional 839 arrests this year over last year.

Overall, in the entire 1st District, crime is up 5%. He added that although the city is seeing increased crime, the 1st District remains one of the lowest impacted districts. Murders are down 22%, robberies are up 5%, aggravated batteries are down 3%, burglaries are up 34%, thefts are up 4%, and motor vehicle thefts are up 15%.

Harris informed the group about the start of the district's new 14-person "Window Detail." Officers are assigned to State Street from Lake to Adams from 1 PM to 10 PM daily until the end of the holiday season. The Commander expects an average of about 9 officers daily in the detail, factoring in days off. They will wear high-visibility clothing on foot, addressing quality-of-life

issues like homelessness, double parking, and checking in on businesses. The detail can move one block east and west of State Street.

Harris explained street takeovers, such as drag racing, are an area of concern for the new Police Superintendent. Currently, officers are bound by specific policies that can make it difficult to crack down on street racing effectively and aggressively. Harris stated that the Superintendent will be working with the Chicago Police Department's legal team to see if some of those policies can be relaxed. These events are not just happening on Mexican Independence Day but during non-holidays. The Commander said four arrests were made last weekend on Wacker Drive. The cars were impounded.

Harris said that impounding is one of the Police Department's greatest tools. If drivers are caught, they can face fines of up to \$10,000 to get their car released. If not, the maximum fine that may be imposed is only \$500 to get a car released.

The Commander has noted that a Car Caravan team works for the Deputy Chief out of 18th and State. Their sole focus is the 1st District and the neighboring 18th District.

Manpower in the department is slowly increasing. Officers spend six months in the police academy and a year on the street before they can be entirely off probation. However, they're working officers as soon as they leave the academy. The 1st District recently welcomed seven new training officers. Once those officers are off probation, another seven recruits will take their place in the district.

The Chair expressed his gratitude to the Commander and encouraged the group to speak up when they see issues and keep an open eye.

Sole Service Provider Report

The Chair then gave the floor to Rich Gamble, Board Chair of Chicago Loop Alliance, to give an update on the effects of Sundays on State. Gamble summarized his earlier report at the CLA board meeting that morning. According to statistics from Choose Chicago, the event spurred \$7.8 million in direct and indirect business sales, 4,200+ booked hotel stays, supported 3,200+ jobs, and created nearly \$400,000 in city taxes and another \$400,000 in state taxes. It was the most attended Sundays on State ever, rivaling Lollapalooza numbers at 270,000+ attendees over the two event days. 88% of activations and businesses were from underrepresented Chicago communities. Over 99% of attendees said they felt safe in the area, with 76% saying that the event positively affected their feelings about the Loop.

Edwards added that the event was partly supported by a \$100,000 grant from the city as well as CLA's event sponsors, requiring no funds from the SSA this year.

Nominations

Edwards explained the SSA nomination process to the Commissioners. Following this, both candidates spoke briefly about themselves, their work and what they enjoy doing at their leisure.

. Edwards expressed gratitude for having two new Commissioners who can speak to what is happening on the ground level on State Street. Edward subsequently requested a motion to approve the nominees and send their information to Aldermen Reilly, Conway, and Robinson.

A motion to approve was made by Greg Cameron and seconded by Mark Anderson. The motion carried.

Sidewalk Aggregate Proposal

Edwards reminded the group of the proposed aggregate repairs discussed a few months prior and brought the nominees up to speed. Due to budgetary constraints, only the most damaged squares could be repaired within the year. This would allow for 70 squares to be replaced for a cost of \$50,000.

Edwards then passed around two cylindrical concrete samples of what the new replacement squares could look like. These two concrete samples are more reasonably priced than the exposed aggregate currently on State Street and would require less frequent maintenance.

While the samples were being passed, the Chair asked Edwards if CLA had formulated a repair plan. Edwards explained that CLA had not developed a comprehensive plan. Today, Edwards said that he is requesting approval from the Commission for the immediate repairs. Fall 2023 is the only time of the year that the work can be done because there are work and permit restrictions during the Summer months. Edwards agreed a more comprehensive plan is required as CLA moves forward.

Cameron asked if any funds might be available to repair the street, considering the Democratic National Convention coming to the city next year. Edwards said that he asked Streets and Sanitation to assist with the IDA Conference with graffiti removal and keeping the area clean for the guests so that it may be possible for assistance before the DNC. Still, an ask would need to be specific and targeted. Drosos mentioned that the DNC is not the only reason assistance might be needed. He said that media groups worldwide are negotiating with hotels in the city to arrive the week before and after the convention, so support might be warranted to put the city in the best light.

Cameron then gave the go-ahead for the work to be completed, and Edwards agreed to formulate a long-term plan as a part of CLA's 5-year Strategic Plan.

Gamble added that there could be multiple ways of funding the project, seeing as there could be federal, state, and county grant funds due to the Build Back Better bill.

The Chair then asked for a motion to approve the repairs. Ryan Segal made a motion to approve, and Gus Drosos seconded. The motion carried.

IDA Conference Recap

Gamble then gave a short recap of the International Downtown Association Conference. The conference set a new record for the International Downtown Association by attracting the highest number of attendees ever. The event brought together leaders from downtown groups worldwide, with 12% of attendees coming from international locations, although most were from North America.

Thanks to help in part from the Department of Planning and Development, CLA had the opportunity to extend invitations to all 57 SSAs to attend the conference, with over 60% accepting the invitation. The conference featured 11 master talks, eight of which were delivered by speakers from the Chicago area, including CLA board members Leon Walker and Lori Healy. Attendees had the opportunity to participate in 26 neighborhood tours and attend 40 different session presentations.

Gamble expressed his gratitude for the support from Broadway in Chicago and their donation of Hamilton tickets, the Chicago Department of Aviation, Choose Chicago and gave a special shout-out to the Magnificent Mile Association for hosting the closing reception. In addition, CLA hosted a meeting of the Global Business District Innovation Club at Convene, which featured leaders of downtowns from Ireland, China, France, Morocco, Canada, and the United States.

Roschen noted that the SSAs seemed to enjoy the event and that the SSA Cocktail Party was a success.

Gamble spoke about the five interactive sculptures hosted by Montreal in cooperation with CLA up and down State Street.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

La Verne Morris, Secretary