

STATE STREET COMMISSION

State Street Commission Meeting

Tuesday, January 19, 2021

2:00 PM

Via Zoom

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members Present

Commissioner Mark Anderson
Commissioner Greg Cameron
Commissioner Kristin Duncan
Commissioner John Idler
Commissioner Mark Kelly
Commissioner Dean Lane
Commissioner La Verne Morris
Commissioner Ryan Segal
Commissioner Andrea Schwartz

AFFILIATION

Hines
Joffrey Ballet
Renaissance Hotel
ABC7
DCASE
Palmer House
20 North State Street Condos
Acadia
Macy's

Commission Members Absent

Commissioner Gia Biagi
Commissioner Maurice Cox
Commissioner Eric Finnegan
Commissioner John Tully

CDOT
Department of Planning & Development (DPD)
CIM Group
Department of Streets & Sanitation

Others Present

Commander Jake Alderden
Sheamus Mannion
Prentice Butler
Katherine Branch
Michael Edwards
Dwayne Hightower
Robert Kearney
Paul Reise
Mark Roschen
Abel Rodriguez
David Seglin

Chicago Police Departments
Chicago Police Department
Alderman King
CTA
Chicago Loop Alliance
Department of Streets & Sanitation
Alderman Reilly
Department of Planning & Development
Department of Planning & Development
Chicago Loop Alliance (CLA)
Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)

I. Call to Order

Commission Chair John Idler welcomed everyone and called the Zoom meeting to order at 2:05 PM. John Idler asked the Police Commander to continue updating us on any concern he has for non-civil behavior on State Street due to tomorrow's Inauguration. The Commander said the police have coordinated assets to protect State Street but have no credible evidence that anything will be happening tonight or tomorrow. There is a small protest planned today and noon tomorrow but it is expected to attract only 60-80 people.

John Idler complimented the work of officer Carol Burns and thanked the Commander for their great staff and support. Michael Edwards reminded the Commission they were sent the meeting dates and times with the meeting notice and he asked everyone to get the 2021 meetings into their calendar. CLA will follow-up with Zoom and Outlook meeting invites.

II. Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

III. Approval of Minutes

A motion to accept the meeting minutes of the November 17, 2020 SSA Commission meeting was made by Commissioner Cameron and seconded by Commissioner Lane. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Financial Statements as of December 31, 2020

Abel Rodriguez reviewed the financial statements through December 31, 2020 or 100% of the year. The report included the 2020 budget compared to the actual revenues and expenses.

The SSA has received 99% of the SSA levy. Overall expenses came in at 81%. Abel highlighted a few line items and discuss the small adjustments staff made to end the year. These adjustments were made to reflect actual expenses. After discussion, Abel will be requesting a motion by the Commission to accept these changes as year-end budget modifications. With these changes he will to submit a final financial report with no unauthorized overages to DPD. Abel explained the overages in marketing, kiosks, sidewalk maintenance, power washing and overhead including rent. With these modifications and the reduced spending throughout the year he is projected we will have a carryover of \$556,267 which is more than are anticipated \$350,000 carry-over we had been projecting. There was good discussion about the recommended budget modifications, the carry forward and who will be deciding how the larger carry-over will be spent in 2021.

Hearing no further discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Duncan and seconded by Commissioner Lane to accept the financial report through December 31, 2021 as presented, with the budget modifications as discussed and with a projected year-end carry-over of \$556,267. Motion carried.

DPD Year-end Reporting:

Abel Rodriguez took the Commission through a series of year-end reports required by the SSA program and DPD. This included a sole-service provider fourth quarter and year-end performance metric & budget and the contractor affidavit stating the CLA provided the required services in 2020.

After brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Cameron and seconded by Commissioner Lane to accept the year-end performance metric and budget as presented and discussed. Motion carried.

After brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Schwartz and seconded by Commissioner Lane to accept the contractor affidavit as presented and discussed. Motion carried.

2020 CLA & SSA Audit:

Abel Rodriguez screen shared a list of 20 auditing he reached out to for auditing services. He solicited proposals because we have been working with the ACT Group for many years and, he has not been overly impressed with their work of late. Unfortunately, Abel received little interest and received only one proposal from our current auditor, the ACT Group at a cost of \$8,100.

After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Duncan and seconded by Commissioner Schwartz to approve a contract with the ACT Group, but allow Abel Rodriguez to take a week to see if he can find another firm able to complete the work at a similar cost. Motion carried.

V. Status Reports/Outstanding Issues

1. Security

Commander Alderden reported earlier.

2. DCASE

Commissioner Kelly reported DCASE continues to work with the Mayor's Recovery Task Force. We are planning the reopening of the Cultural Center and some 'low-fi' programming as a destination to the Loop. In July we hope to 'go live' with the Year of Chicago music programming and hope to continue a more normal in-person events in August and September. Like everyone, we are trying to imagine the future for arts & culture so important to Chicago, the Loop and State Street. Greg Cameron discussed Governor Cuomo's arts and culture initiatives in New York City and will share some information to Commissioner Kelly. The Commissioner concluded that DCASE is not doing a lot in the winter and early spring trying to save limited resources for a bigger impact later in the year.

3. Streets & Sanitation

Dwayne Hightower reported his department is focused on snow with snow and icing expected tonight. So far this year we have only received 6" of snow and typically we have twice that amount by this time of year.

4. CDOT

Michael Edwards reported he had a meeting on January 13, 2021 with CDOT Commissioner Biagi, Deputy Commissioner Kevin O'Malley and Vig Krishnamurthy, the Deputy Commissioner for Project Development to discuss issues associated with the impact of the pandemic and ability to re-imagine and reuse Loop streets (including State Street) in different ways in 2021.

Below is a list of items discussed at that meeting. The CDOT Commissioner (and Alderman Reilly) are generally in favor of these ideas assuming public safety is maintained in order to provide some relief/support to Loop businesses.

- Repave, and close/share Chicago theater alley for outdoor (semi-permanent) food hall to support surrounding restaurants
- Streamline the ability of CLA to shut down Loop streets to facilitate planning of events that can positively impact the storefront businesses
- Close State Street a few times a year for: downtown drive-in; ACTIVATE type event; arts in the dark parade other celebrations
- Close Washington from Christkindle market to the holiday tree for the holiday season pedestrian stroll – maybe add vendors, closed from Mid-November until after Christmas
- Close a few blocks of Wabash (where we have a concentration of restaurants. Monroe north a block or two to establish outdoor dining)
- Turn off some of the lights on State Street to highlight improved holiday decorations
- Hang streetlights over State Street throughout the year
- Activate the State Street median with temporary coffee pop-up – between Lake and Couch Place alley to demonstrate the potential for commercial development
- Modernized red line stops along State Street as critical (first impression) arrival points to State Street and the Loop (by millions of people). This will likely be a BIG recommendation of the Elevate State planning work that we would very much like CDOT to be part of.

David Seglin, CDOT reminded Commissioners the CTA State & Lake station committee will be meeting again on Monday, January 25, 2021 at 1:00 PM.

5. DPD

Mark Roschen of DPD reported that DPD is involved with the central area group and the city comprehensive planning process. Part of this planning is to work with businesses and property owners to look at BID legislation in Springfield this year for possible application in Chicago. Mark Roschen also indicated there will be in person mandatory training for all new SSA Commissioners in March 2021.

6. CTA

Katherine Branch wished everyone a Happy New Year. The CTA continues to provide service to the Loop and implement necessary COVID-19 public health guidelines to keep their bus and train customers safe. Numbers are down from last year, but seem to be slowly rising, which is a good sign. Katherine stated CTA could begin sharing the ridership numbers. Michael Edwards said that would be very helpful especially year over year comparisons for the buses and the trains to the Loop and/or system wide.

VI. Sole Service Provider Report

CLA 2021 Business Plan

Michael Edwards stated a copy of the final 2021 business plan was sent out to all the Commissioners last week. He is hopeful everyone had a chance to review the Plan action items. Today, he will only do a broad overview of the Plan. The CLA 2021 Plan aligns with the SSA's adopted budget and the CLA and CLAF budgets compliment the direction set by the SSA.

The plan is all about getting people back to the Loop to accelerate economic recovery and assumes the Loop will be close to 50% re-occupied by July or August. CLA will be moving from virtual to hybrid to in-person events and programs during the year. The Plan increases our efforts regarding clean (with an eye on public health) and safe to get workers, residents, shoppers and visitors comfortable coming back to the Loop. There is more aggressive placemaking proposed and the Elevate State planning process will be pushed back to later in the year. The rollout of our programs and actions will be dictated by the pandemic and re-opening allowed by the State and the City, but we intend to push to get workers back into their offices.

President's Report

Michael Edwards included a copy of the January President's Report in the last meeting reminder. He encouraged the Commissioners to take some time to review the report and the activities taking place on State Street. Edwards asked if any property owners would be interested in hosting a COVID-19 vaccination center along State Street. Ryan Segal stated he would be interested in more information.

VII. SSA Officer Nominations

John Idler stated it was time for the SSA Commission to consider new officers to lead the State Street SSA Commission over the next year. John has enjoyed his time as the Chair, but felt it was appropriate for others to lead the Commission going forward. In addition, in full transparency, the nominees will be listed on the CLA website as required by DPD. A set of nominees was presented to the Commission for introduction. These included:

- Greg Cameron, Chair
- Ryan Segal, Vice-Chair
- Kristin Duncan, Treasurer
- La Verne Morris, Secretary

The Commission agreed with this slate of nominees and directed staff to post the names on the CLA website for public review. Now that the names have been introduced, the Commission will take formal action at the next SSA Commission meeting set for March 16, 2021. Edwards stated he would send the list of nominees to Alderman Reilly and King for review and input.

VIII. Other Business

La Verne Morris is very glad to see the opening of new businesses on State Street including the new Primark store. That said, La Verne stated she and her fellow condo owners are concerned with the brightness of the new neon blue signage that seems to be on all night. Robert Kearney requested La Verne Morris to take a pic and send the information to him and he will discuss the issue with Alderman Reilly.

Andrea Schwartz indicated Macy's will be reporting their 4th quarter earnings in late February after all the holiday returns have been completed. The State Street store has seen a big increase in online sales and curb side pick-up. During the holidays the store was busy with more people in and experiencing the new store renovations.

Andrea Schwartz explained the plans to close the Water Tower store which will, unfortunately close for good by the end of March 2021. The good news is Macy's expects more customer traffic to the State Street store. Andrea explained to the Commission that \$48 million in renovations has been invested in the store sales space plus another \$2 million in exterior maintenance and improvements.

Kristin Duncan explained the pandemic and the lockdowns continue to negatively impact the hotel industry and along State Street. The closure of indoor dining in late October really took the last remaining business. Kristin says she still has some diehard customers utilizing the fire pits and plastic greenhouse at Raised. Her hotel is under 10% occupied and likely not to improve through March, with the hope of some recovery in the second half of the year.

XL. Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

La Verne Morris
Secretary