

STATE STREET COMMISSION
State Street Commission Meeting
Tuesday, March 19, 2023
2:00 PM
190 North State Street, 10th Floor, Chicago, IL 60601

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members Present

Greg Cameron
Konstantine “Gus” Drosos
Kristin Duncan
Brian Grossman
John Idler
La Verne Morris
Ryan Segal

AFFILIATION

Joffrey Ballet
Palmer House Hilton
Renaissance Hotel
Walgreens
ABC7
20 North State Condo Assn.
Acadia Realty Trust

Commission Members Absent

Mark Anderson
Ciere Boatright
Tom Carney
Erin Harkey
Aimeabilomon Ochiekeleye
Cole Stallard

Hines
DPD
CDOT
DCASE
Macy’s on State Street
Streets & Sanitation

Others Present

Melvin Craig III
Debbie De Lopez
Laura Graves
David Harris
Alek Jaunzemis
Michael Lev
Michael M. Edwards
Abel Rodriguez
Mark Roschen
Cindy Roubik
Julian Silva
Olivia Simon
Eileen Sweeney
Sean Wiedel

Chicago Loop Alliance
Streets & Sanitation
ABC 7
Chicago Police Department
Chicago Loop Alliance
Transystems
Chicago Loop Alliance
Chicago Loop Alliance
DPD
DPD
CDOT
Alderman Conway’s Office
DPD
CDOT

Call to Order

Chair Ryan Segal convened the State Street SSA Commission meeting on January 16th at 2:00 PM. The Chair welcomed attendees and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

Approval of Minutes

Segal asked for a motion to approve the Commission's January meeting minutes. Kristin Duncan motioned to approve the minutes, and John Idler seconded that motion. The motion carried, and the minutes were approved.

Financial Statements as of February 29, 2023

Segal requested an update on the SSA financials ending February 29, 2023, from Abel Rodriguez, the Chief Financial Officer of the Chicago Loop Alliance. Rodriguez informed the group that the first levy installment went out on March 1, and as of March 18, \$1.2 million had been deposited into the SSA bank account, almost half of the yearly budget to date, instead of last about 15%, at this time in the prior two years.

Segal then asked for a motion to approve the financial statements.

Konstantine Drosos moved to approve the financial statements as of February 29, 2023, and Greg Cameron seconded that motion. The motion carried.

State and Lake Station Update

Michael Edwards, President and CEO of Chicago Loop Alliance, opened the Sole Service Provider Report by introducing Julian Silva from the Chicago Department of Transportation and Development (CDOT) and Michael Lev, a consultant with CDOT who is working on the State and Lake Station Renovation. Silva and Lev passed out printed PowerPoint slides to the group that detailed the project's progress thus far and its next steps.

Silva briefed the group on the long-standing history of the State and Lake station, which has been operational since 1895, and emphasized the serious need for comprehensive updates. He clarified that despite the inevitable disruptions, the construction is essential. CDOT aims to enhance accessibility by connecting the State and Lake Street station to the State Street Subway through elevator installation, ensuring compliance with ADA regulations and enabling access for all commuters. Additionally, the project will create a beautiful platform for viewing the Chicago River, Chicago Theater signage, and State Street.

Bidding for the project has been underway since early March. Notably, State Street will remain partially open, with two lanes accessible throughout the construction period. The project is slated to span approximately three years, with groundbreaking happening in either late 2024 or Spring 2025.

Lev elaborated on the project's intricacies, highlighting that the selected contractors should likely obtain construction permits by October 2024. He also noted that there will be overhead scaffolding and temporary signage during the construction to help pedestrians with wayfinding.

Silva said that a website detailing more information about the project should be up by Q4 of this year.

Commissioner Applications

Rodriguez updated the group, mentioning that seven individuals had fully completed and submitted their applications to the city. He urged those still with outstanding applications to reach out if they needed assistance. Rodriguez expressed his preference for all applications to be submitted by the April SSA meeting, although the Department of Planning and Development's official deadline was in May.

Mark Roschen from DPD reinforced this message, indicating that existing Commissioners should have already received multiple reminder emails regarding the importance of promptly submitting their applications to avoid a \$250 late fee. He also noted that one of the commissioners was approved at committee last week and will be voted on before the full City Council shortly.

SSA Officers Update

Edwards opened the conversation by thanking former Chair Greg Cameron for serving the SSA over the years. With Duncan serving as Treasurer and Morris retaining her position as Secretary, there was an opening for the Vice Chair position. Edwards shared with the group that he had spoken to Drosos, General Manager of the Palmer House, and asked if he would be willing to serve, and he said yes.

Segal then asked a motion to recommend Drosos as the Vice Chair of the Commission, which Kristin Duncan made, and Greg Cameron seconded, and the motion carried.

DNC Proposed Loop Projects

Edwards briefed the group on the DNC Chicago Host Committee's newly formed subcommittee, which is dedicated to aiding city infrastructure and beautification projects ahead of the convention. The convention is expected to attract an estimated 60,000 visitors.

During the meeting, attendees received packets containing a variety of project ideas that could be proposed to the host committee. Edwards emphasized that these projects are intended to enhance the value of CLA's work and will continue to do so for the next three decades.

For example, Edwards inquired with CDOT Commissioner Tom Carney about the possibility of repainting the railings and poles on State Street, which haven't been painted since the 1990s.

John Idler asked about the funding source for these improvements, and Edwards clarified that they would be financed through the new funds raised by the Chicago Host Committee. Additionally, projects would be re-prioritized, with less critical departmental projects deferred until after the convention.

Edwards asked the group to email him their top three ideas.

Greg Cameron noted his concern about how many of these projects could realistically be completed before the convention. Edwards explained that the goal is to identify just a few of the ideas that could be implemented before the convention.

Idler asked if the Chicago Host Committee could match CLA's budget for aggregate replacement and sealing since it would be more cost-effective for both parties. Edwards said that he thought it was a good idea and that he would ask officials about it.

After some discussion about CDOT providing complimentary tree plantings for State Street, the conversation shifted to the next item on the agenda.

Security Report

Segal introduced Commander David Harris of the Chicago Police Department's 1st District to provide a security update. Two shootings have occurred, leading to homicides, and an arrest is imminent. One shooting incident involved a jewelry store owner defending against a robbery attempt. Year-over-year, aggravated batteries have increased from 10 to 21, with 60% of these offenses committed against protected employees like CTA workers. Robberies have decreased by 30%. Since the last report, there have been no vehicular hijackings and only two across the district. Burglaries have decreased from 11 to 6, while motor vehicle thefts have decreased from 54 to 34. Thefts have increased by 22% district-wide, but only by 13% in the SSA's boundaries. There have been nine gun-related arrests, and overall arrests have increased by 78%.

The St. Patrick's Day celebration was successful and proceeded without any major incidents, resulting in only two arrests.

The Standard Club has been facing significant loitering issues associated with some of the migrant population. One solution has been to relocate the loiterers to Pritzker Park, reducing the impact on businesses at the south end of State Street. The District is collaborating with other stakeholders to address the shelter's problems.

Commander Harris confirmed that the CPD has been preparing for the DNC for several months.

Greg Cameron highlighted that Joffrey initiated a lockdown following a shooting near Innovation High. He asked Commander Harris about the Department's new strategies and how they could collaborate. He stressed that the Loop is a shopping district, residential area, and education center. The Commander mentioned his outreach efforts with Loop area schools and collaboration with CPS. Edwards shared that he had met with the founder of Innovations, LaShaun Jackson, a CLA Board member, and mentioned that there are six schools in the Loop area, all of which CLA plans to engage in these discussions with.

The Commander commended the schools for their efforts to maintain student safety and order.

Streets and Sanitation Report

Debbie De Lopez, the Deputy Commissioner of Streets and Sanitation, updated the group on her department's efforts to maintain cleanliness in the Loop. She mentioned that her shift teams have been inspecting areas such as the Couch Place Alley three times daily to ensure cleanliness. Pritzker Park is also being cleaned three times a day. Her team is making arrangements to keep the streets clean in preparation for the DNC.

Edwards mentioned that several CLA members and their volunteer staff, are interested in contributing to the cleanliness of their buildings. In response, De Lopez suggested that those interested should contact her directly. She assured them that Streets and Sanitation could provide them with the necessary tools and cleaning supplies.

Department of Planning and Development Report

Cindy Roubik of DPD spoke briefly about the Mayor's newly announced Downtown Economic Growth Committee and how its recommendations will impact the Central Area Plan Update. She also spoke a bit about the LaSalle Reimagined project and said that more details will come soon. She said that Mary O'Connor led their department's collaborative approach to the DNC.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

La Verne Morris, Secretary