

## **Devon Avenue SSA #43 Commission Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, January 12, 2017 4:00pm APPROVED 2.9.17  
Office of 50<sup>th</sup> Ward Ald. Silverstein 2949 W. Devon Avenue

**Commissioners Present:** Irshad Khan, Maura Levit, Bhavesh Patel, Pete Valavanis

**Commissioners Not Present:** Jayesh Shewakramani, Tareq Khan

**Service Provider Staff Present:** Sandi Price, Kimberly Bares and Gina Caruso (Rogers Park Business Alliance)

**Public Officials Present:** 50<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Debra Silverstein

**Public Present:** None

### **1. Call to Order/Welcome/2017 Officers**

Meeting began at 4:05pm. Sandi introduced the Rogers Park Business Alliance (RPBA) as the new Sole Service Provider for SSA #43 effective 1.1.17. Sandi introduced Gina Caruso and Kimberly Bares from PLACE Consulting, which is a subcontractor hired to help manage SSA 43. Gina is serving as the SSA 43 Program Manager. Sandi reported that Brandon Harding, Maintenance Director for RPBA, will conduct field audits of the district to check on vendor services for maintenance and landscaping. Sandi will invite Brandon to the next available Commission meeting to meet the Commissioners.

Motion to approve the appointment of the following executive Commission members (Valavanis/Patel) APPROVED:

- Chair: Irshard Khan
- Vice Chair: Pete Valavanis
- Secretary: Maura Levit
- Treasurer: Tareq Ali Khan

### **2. Public Input**

None.

### **3. December 12, 2016 Minutes**

The Commission reviewed the December 12, 2016 Minutes. Minutes were corrected to reflect the vote abstention by Maura Levit for her company's Façade Rebate Program application. Motion to approve December 12, 2016 Minutes (Khan/Valavanis). APPROVED

### **4. Financial Report**

Sandi explained the type of financial reports the Commission can expect to see each meeting, including:

- Profit & Loss Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual Report.
- In addition, the Commission requested copy of the SSA 43 bank statement with reconciliation be provided.

- The Commission wants to know how bills are paid (e.g. check, credit card). RPBA will provide that information moving forward as part of the financial procedures.

In reviewing the \$185,298.61 in Carry Over, the Commission thinks there are unpaid expenses that will reduce this amount. RPBA will check with Barbra Singel, formerly with the former service provider (West Ridge Chamber of Commerce) to identify and pay any legitimate outstanding expenses and recommend and remaining Carry Over allocation to the 2017 budget. Irshad asked about an outstanding credit from Cleanstreet. Sandi is checking status for crediting 2017.

Sandi reported RPBA can save SSA 43 approximately \$1,200 on the 2016 audit conducted by ACT Group. Motion to authorize RPBA to retain the ACT Group to conduct the 2016 SSA 43 Audit. (Levit/Patel) APPROVED

## 5. Program and Vendor Updates and Discussion

The Commission discussed program priorities for 2017:

- **Signage Removal Program:** The Commission wants to work with businesses to remove antiquated signage. The SSA 43 program pays 100% of signage removal and 60% of new signage up to \$4,500. Irshad has a list of approximately 10 businesses that are candidates for signage removal. The goal was to remove signage concurrent with each phase of streetscape. RPBA will develop an updated program application, guidelines, and application tracker.
- **Façade Rebate Program:** RPBA will update the SSA 43 application to incorporate new language required by the City as of 1/1/17. RPBA will check the status of the application by Christina's Cleaners. The new owner inquired about receiving the rebate; however, the application was submitted by the previous business owner. The Commission did not recall approving their application. RPBA will confirm whether Delhi Darbar received his rebate payment. RPBA will develop an updated program application, guidelines, and application tracker.
- **Security Camera Rebate Program:** The Commission wants RPBA to develop camera specifications based on vendor estimates and to create a list of local vendors to provide applicants. These vendors will not be pre-approved, but rather will connect applicants with locally-owned companies. RPBA will develop an updated program application, guidelines, and application tracker.
- **Sidewalk Cleaning Program:** The Commission is satisfied with the Cleanstreet work scope so RPBA will transfer contract from the West Ridge Chamber of Commerce to RPBA.

- **Landscaping Program:** RPBA will get bids for 2017 and present a recommendation at the February meeting.
- **Streetscape Program:** Alderman Silverstein will get a construction drawing from CDOT of the streetscape so the Commission can comprehensively examine what additional streetscape elements they want to get and for where. In particular, more benches will support how people actually use the street. RPBA will also explore opportunities for planters and other streetscape elements for the Western Ave. portion of SSA 43.
- **Business Attraction:** The Commission requested RPBA conduct a store front and site vacancy inventory and a market analysis to determine tenant opportunities. RPBA will develop a basic tenant attraction piece.
- **Customer Attraction:**
  - The Commission would like more marketing of Devon Ave. to customers, especially leveraging that it is one of the largest Indian commercial corridors in the US. Ideas RPBA will explore include: gateway signage, CTA advertising, tourism/concierge outlets, sidewalk sales and ethnic festivals.
  - RPBA will also explore unconventional marketing outlets such as doing events that bring social media users with strong followings to restaurants/retail who will do social media about those businesses.
  - Ald. Silverstein will host a food sanitation class if RPBA can help guarantee a minimum of 10 attendees.
  - The Commission feels a motivation for businesses to participate in marketing events is to enlist block ambassadors who can testify to the financial benefit to events and can help recruit businesses to participate.
  - RPBA will help drive businesses to Ald. Silverstein's office to get sidewalk café permits.
  - RPBA will look into administering social media outlets to promote SSA 43 features and benefits (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

**6. Meeting Calendar:** February 9 at 6pm, March 16 at 4pm; April 20 6pm; May 18<sup>th</sup> 4pm and RPBA will work on the remaining year's dates.

**7. Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 5:45pm. (Valavanis/Levit) APPROVED