

## Devon SSA 43 Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 9, 2017 6:00pm

Office of 50<sup>th</sup> Ward Ald. Silverstein 2949 W. Devon Avenue

**Commissioners Present:** Irshad Khan, Maura Levit, Sanhita Agnihotri

**Commissioners Not Present:** Bhavesh Patel, Pete Valavanis

**SSA Commission Applicants Present:** Tareq Khan, Mohammad Yaqoob, Jayesh Shewakramani

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

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

**Public Present:** None

1. **Call to Order:** Irshad called the meeting to order at 6:25pm.
2. **January 12, 2017 Minutes:** The minutes were approved with the correction of the spelling of Irshad's name. Motion by Maura, second by Irshad. Motion carried.
3. **Financial Report:**
  - a. Sandi reported that \$18,000 paid to CleanStreet for 2016. Snow removal contract paid, but the litter contract was not paid.
  - b. RPBA is advancing Devon SSA 43 funds to pay its bills and will be reimbursed once the SSA bank account is opened. Discussion about interest-bearing account; would be difficult to create an interest-bearing account.
  - c. ACT Group has been engaged to conduct the audit; cost will be \$3200 this year versus \$4000 previously, due to a new negotiated price.
  - d. No end-of-year financials are ready yet, but should be ready by April, at the latest.
  - e. The transferring of funds will happen in the next day or two, as soon as the West Ridge Chamber of Commerce Board president is able to sign the final check to transfer all funds. Online bill paying was used extensively by the previous sole service provider; that is being updated this month.
4. **Programs and Services:**
  - a. **Façade Rebate:**
    - i. The façade rebate program would be changed to up to 50%, maximum \$5,000. This is a change from up to 60%, maximum \$4,500. The City inserted new language for the façade program and that has been incorporated into the proposed revised program, which is now called the Business Improvement Program (BIP). Motion to approve the new BIP application made by Maura, seconded by Sanhita; motion carried.
    - ii. Regarding Christina's Cleaners, 3049 W. Devon, the Commissioners questioned which owner paid for the improvements and who submitted the application. The Commission requested that Gina contact Christina's Cleaners and clarify who submitted the application and who paid for the work
  - b. **Security Camera Rebate:** The form was not disseminated; the discussion was tabled for the March meeting. There are 3-4 people who are interested in the program. There seems to be great interest in upgrading current systems to better integrate with the Chicago police system. Irshad agreed to send Gina a list of people he knows who are interested in the camera program.

- c. **Sign Removal Program:** Daallo Meat 2742 W. Devon and Zabiha Halal Meat & Grocers 2243 W. Devon applied for the Sign Removal Program. The quotes for removal of both signs are: JR Signs \$1250, TFA Signs \$1310, Express Signs \$1200. TFA Signs is a local company; the other two are not. Maura made a motion to approve the application for sign removal, seconded by Sanhita. Motion carried. Maura made a motion to approve TFA Signs to remove signs for the two applicants. Sanhita seconded the motion; motion carried. The Commission requested that Gina and Irshad walk a block of the district at a time to request that owners sign the application for removal of old signs.
  - d. **Public Way Beautification:** RPBA is working with CleanStreet to tighten up the definition of “debris” to include leaves in CleanStreet’s pick-up from the sidewalks.
  - e. **Landscaping:** The landscaping RFP was launched to cover in-ground beds, above-ground planters with three seasons of plantings, watering, and tree maintenance. Bids will be ready for Commission review and approval at the March meeting.
  - f. **Streetscape:** Installation of additional streetscape elements was tabled.
5. **Commercial Attraction:** This work will be addressed.
6. **Office hours:** Gina is holding regular office hours at the Alderman’s office. Irshad offered to share his space for Gina at 6405 N Campbell. The Commission encouraged Gina to collect email addresses from as many businesses as possible. A specific SSA #43 e-blast could be created.
7. **Business support:**
- a. **Sidewalk café permits:** The application is available for businesses to apply.
  - b. **Food sanitation class:** There was discussion about who needs the sanitation license, when it can be utilized and how it would interplay with sidewalk sales. Two or three sidewalk sales might be held in 2017. A calendar of events would be helpful; the Alderman offered to provide the list of events, to the best of their ability.
  - c. **Block ambassadors:** Each SSA Commissioner will take responsibility for 2-4 blocks in the SSA district and reach out to neighbors to offer information and resource referral.
8. **Customer Attraction:**
- a. **Social Media:** The Commission wants a Devon SSA Facebook page and to have a questionnaire about social media when visiting businesses. Sandi offered to reach out to the West Ridge Chamber about any existing business databases.
  - b. **Special events:** Sunday, July 9 was identified as a possible date for the first sidewalk sale event. August 20 was identified as a possible second date.
9. **Old Business:** The SSA commission training for new commissioners is February 22 at 9am. Maura and Sanhita will be attending.
10. **New Business:** The commission noted that they would like to discuss public art at the next meeting.
11. **Public input:** No public input.
12. **Adjournment:** Maura made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Sanhita. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:59pm.