



SSA 54 Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 16 at 8:30 am

Commissioners Present: Heather Hill (chair), Jennifer Clark , Sara Lukens, Tony Fox, Chris Bell

Staff Present: Cindy Plante, RPBA Staff

Others Present: Nick Andersen, pending commissioner; Vanessa Irizarry, CDOT; Lubica Benak, CDOT

1. The chair called the meeting to order at 8:40am

2. Approval November 14, 2019 Minutes

Jennifer moved approval of the minutes; Tony seconded. APPROVED 5-0.

3. January-November 2019 Financials

Several commissioners asked about the holiday lighting and how the snowflakes were funded. Cindy responded that RPBA paid for these out of Loyola's contribution to the SSA.

Other commissioners had concerns about the snow contract and asked about the snow contract. Cindy said that the current contract with Piersa covers November 15, 2019 through March 2020, and requires that they send a crew out for snowfall of an inch or more. The Halloween snowstorm and the snowfall in early November both happened before the contract was in effect; the snowfall this past weekend was less than 1" inch – they sent someone out to measure and sent pictures. Commissioners asked to look into whether the money might be better spent by buying snow machines and having RBPA's in-house maintenance team take over snow removal, or whether any savings could be achieved by having all the SSAs use the same snow company.

Chris moved to approve the financials, Sara seconded. Approved 5-0.

4. New Business

- **Silverman Group PR proposal**

Cindy provided a summary of the proposal to have SSAs take on a share of the RPBA contract with Silverman Group. The firm provides media relations services, helping to generate earned media appearances for businesses and events in Rogers Park.

Commissioners asked to have a representative from Silverman come to the next meeting to provide more specificity on the scope of the work, what demographics and markets they're targeting, and how this can benefit the Sheridan Road businesses.

Sarah proposed approving up to \$2500 for now. Jen moved approval as amended, Chris seconded. Approved for up to \$2500.

Cindy will invite Silverman to the next meeting.

Since CDOT isn't here yet, the committee moved on to Old Business

- **Landscaping**

At the November meeting, Commissioners asked for information on hiring a landscaping firm to take over maintenance and plantings for the planters and in-ground beds along Sheridan now that Loyola is no longer funding it.

Cindy worked with RPBA staff to count and measure the planters in order to start getting quotes from landscaping firms to add some seasonal plantings and provide maintenance of the 23 planting areas that were identified. Brightview, which currently provides these services for Howard Street, provided a preliminary estimate of \$22,800 for provision of 2-3 seasonal plantings and landscape maintenance. Greenwise estimated \$35,000 based on a recommendation to include more perennials in the first year, with the expectation that fewer replantings would be needed in subsequent years. Still waiting to hear back from Patch landscaping and City Grange.

Tony and Chris asked that the scope be adjusted to include the planting areas in front of the 400 Theater and Flats & Sharps. Tony also asked about rat abatement.

Cindy shared that this isn't typically part of landscaping but that the City will place baits if you call 311.

Nick asked about getting renderings and/or plant lists.

Cindy will ask for more detailed proposals and bring them back to the March meeting for approval.

- **Open & Closed businesses**

Cindy provided updates on recent openings and closings, including the recent shutters of Argo Tea and Midnight Mac & Cheese.

- **Discussion w/ CDOT representatives on streetscape planning process**

Vanessa and Lubica from CDOT arrived and presented examples of streetscape elements from past projects around the city. Sheridan is an IDOT road so state approval is needed for any changes to curbs and right of way. Doing decorative crosswalks across side streets going north to south wouldn't need state involvement, but are typically installed when the road is being resurfaced. Some streetscape elements, including green infrastructure and light poles with receptacles typically require ongoing maintenance agreements with the SSA or some other community partner. In the case of the light poles, the city now requires that the SSA or other maintenance partner pay for the electricity cost of any holiday lighting plugged into street lights on their own Comed bill.

To move things forward, Vanessa and Lubica will look into the current status of the existing TIF district (how much money is left and when is it open for applications). In the absence of an area master plan or corridor plan, the SSA should list out priorities for any new or upgraded streetscape elements (gateway elements/signage, decorative crosswalks, light poles, etc.).

Meeting adjourned at 1030 am.

Upcoming Commission #54 Meeting Dates

Next Meeting – March 19