

Howard Street Special Service Area #19  
Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88205418899>  
dial in: +1 312 626 6799 Meeting ID: 882 0541 8899



Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 9 am  
Meeting Agenda

Commissioners Present: Charlotte Walters, Gale Howard, Carrie Sullivan  
Commissioners Absent: Mike Smith  
Others Present: Cindy Plante & Sandi Price - RPBA, Lizzy Kreindler - A5  
Renee Labrana - RPH (pending commissioner)  
Mimi Kelso-Grant - CommUNITY Makery / Gale School

### 1. Call to order

Meeting called to order at 9:04am

Due to the pandemic the meeting is being held in a virtual format.

### 2. Public Comment

Cindy introduced Renee - owner of R Public House on Jarvis - she's applying to join as a commissioner now that Jarvis is part of the SSA.

Mimi Kelso-Grant is a teacher at Gale and also heads a nonprofit Community Makery, which provides STEM and arts programming for area youth.

### 3. Approval of the minutes from January meeting

Gale moved to approve the minutes, Charlotte seconded.

APPROVED.

### 4. Old Business

#### a. Marketing & 2021 events

Lizzy presented artwork for the bus shelter ads approved last month, which will be going up soon. We paid for 4 and they gave us two extra ones.

Lizzy presented social media and website analytics since last meeting and a list of suggested marketing projects that we could add in 2021, including a shopping guide or shared delivery or ecommerce website.

Charlotte likes the ecommerce idea. Cindy asked about TikTok.

Lizzy said not many chambers or municipalities are really doing TikTok yet but acknowledged that it might be useful for reaching younger demographics.

Cindy reminded commissioners that the Shop Where Your Heart Is raffle incentive program is still going - we've got 2 more weeks. Should also have data soon from Live Love Shop.

Lizzy asked about plans for incorporating Jarvis into marketing plans now that they're part of the SSA. Carrie and Renee expressed an interest in building off the existing brand and logo.

Cindy asked about 2021 events, specifically a 2nd round of Virtual Chalk Howard - the City has told us not to plan on large-scale festivals for 2021. Is there anything we want to add or change for 2021?

Carrie was really impressed with Nate and would like to work with him again on this.

Lizzy said he's been in FL but should be back soon and she'll reach out to him about availability. Hoping to do more this year to encourage people to visit businesses, including making videos on location or doing outdoor art on the street or sidewalks.

Carrie suggested inviting Nate to the next meeting to discuss and brainstorm ideas.

Renee added that the outdoor dining street closure on Jarvis has been approved through December, but requires that they leave a 14 ft fire lane - this could be a good spot for chalk art on the street.

Charlotte suggested also incorporating the WheelJam group from Gale for pop-up outdoor performances.

#### **b. Commissioner Recruitment**

Cindy shared that Renee is in the process of applying, and Lewis from I'm Soul Hungry has also expressed an interest. Once applications are submitted the city typically takes a few months to review them before anyone is officially appointed.

Charlotte asked about Cally coming back on.

Cindy spoke to Cally about this recently and while she's interested, she's working more hours herself while also trying to onboard new people at the salon and doesn't feel she has the capacity right now.

## **5. New Business**

### **a. revenue shortfall**

Cindy and Sandi presented year-end financials for 2020. We only received 73% of the budgeted/expected tax collection amounts. Although we came in under budget on spending and still have money in the bank, it's worth keeping this in mind for 2021 as such revenue shortfalls are likely to continue as people pay taxes late or fall behind due to covid hardships.

### **b. Jarvis camera request**

Cindy provided an update on the replacement of SSA cameras at the currency exchange, install should be happening in the next few weeks once weather permits. In the meantime, Renee has expressed an interest in getting SSA cameras on Jarvis.

Charlotte asked how many cameras would be needed.

Renee said maybe 4 cameras would be able to cover the whole area. It's usually quiet but they've had teens hanging out, and a group mugged a guy recently on the block.

Sandi asked about willingness to host equipment - usually a DVR and internet equipment.

Renee is cool with this. Asked for contact info for the vendor. Cindy will send in a followup email and work with him to get quotes for the additional cameras.

### **c. Snow complaints**

Cindy shared updates on sidewalk snow removal - we know people haven't been pleased with our contractor's performance so far this season. They notified us Monday that they were delaying service due to the cold weather, which was really frustrating.

Karen shared that other districts are also having a lot of issues with snow contractors this year and she'll be following up with district managers about this.

Charlotte asked how much we've paid so far on the snow contract.

Sandi doesn't have the number handy right now but we notified them that we're withholding payment on their February invoice because performance has been so bad. Of our 4 SSA's, two opted not to continue doing snow removal this year. The two that do have snow contracts have both had lots of issues with contractors not showing up or doing a bad job.

Karen has to leave for another meeting at 10 but reminded everyone of upcoming commissioner training sessions - it's online and is required for any new commissioners.

**d. Spring window decorating project**

Cindy shared that Mimi's organization got funding to pursue a spring window painting project and is interested in partnering with SSA businesses on the program.

Mimi shared some background - the event is tentatively scheduled for May 29, the idea is to allow students to paint spring designs on storefront windows using temporary paint that's easily cleaned off later. Downers Grove does something similar at Halloween, and lots of college towns do it around events like Homecoming.

Charlotte volunteered her windows for painting.

Carrie said Factory would also most likely be willing to participate.

Cindy asked about vacant spaces - we could see about connecting with property owners to include vacant storefronts too.

Lizzy suggested including Athena Board Games too.

**e. New/departing/expanding business updates**

**Cindy shared updates on new businesses opening soon, including** Beauty Nova, Legacy Barber College, and Howard St. Brewing. Villa shoes in Gateway Center is temporarily closed for remodeling but is expected to reopen in the spring. Sol Cafe is for sale but there are no plans to close the business before a new owner is found.

**f. Buildings for sale**

There are also new brokers marketing the Dearborn Wholesale building as well as the adjacent parking lot and the Tasty Sub building for sale. The new broker has prepared marketing fliers and is responding to calls. The corner building at Howard and Paulina (where the currency exchange is) is also for sale again and is being marketed along with the building immediately to the north (where the post office is).

Renee added that the Beachview Liquors building at Rogers and Sheridan is also back on the market.

**6. Adjournment**

Charlotte moved to adjourn. Carrie seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:27.

Next SSA Commissioners Meeting: Wednesday, March 17