

Clark Street SSA #23 Meeting Minutes – April 7, 2010
Location: Basil Leaf Café, 2465 N. Clark Street

Present: Jim Kroeger, Sean Tehrani, Eme Cole, Bruce Longanecker, Peigi Jean-Blanc

Not Present: Diane Doyne, Steve Quick, Elizabeth Rossdeutscher

Guests:

LPCC Staff: Kim Schilf, Loren Dinneen

Call to Order

- I. Call to order by Bruce Longanecker at 4:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

- I. Bruce Longanecker asked for and received approval of the minutes from the 2/17/10.

Motion to approve 2/17/10 minutes. Motion seconded. Unanimously approved.

Action Items

- I. 2009 Audit
 - a. Dinneen explained that there was significant carryover from 2009. The roughly \$210,000 in carryover was associated with marketing initiatives that we were unable to carry out in 2009.
 - b. Dinneen went on to explain that we will be able to budget to use that carryover in 2011, which will result in a lower levy on tax payers.
 - c. Jean-Blanc asked how this carryover will impact our 2010 budget. Dinneen explained that it would not impact the 2010 budget as we did not budget for this extra carryover and therefore will not be able to spend it this year.

- II. Motion to approve 2009 Audit. Motion seconded. Unanimously approved.

III. 2011 Budget and Work Plan

- a. Dinneen explained that the 2011 draft budget and work plan are basically a continuation of the scope of services of the 2010 budget and work plan. It focuses on continuing the aggressive marketing initiatives that are being undertaken in 2010. Dinneen continued to express the importance of establishing these essential marketing tools and processes.
- b. Tehrani asked if Dinneen had further investigated establishing a grant program designed to award money to new businesses that move into the SSA to aid in offsetting the cost of building out a space. Dinneen expressed that he had performed some research but felt that this was not the appropriate time to establish such a program. He continued to express his view that focusing on the outlined marketing initiatives needs to be our first priority.
- c. Tehrani again stated that he felt it was important for us to research a business attraction grant of some kind to help address the business vacancies in the district. Dinneen agreed that at some point in the future, such a program could be viable but that at this time, it should not be explored further.
- d. Dinneen went on to explain that he felt that providing grant and technical assistance in the future is a good idea, but is several years away from being a viable option.

- e. The commission felt comfortable with the draft 2011 budget and work plan. Dinneen explained that he would deliver a final budget and work plan for approval at the June meeting.

New Business

I. Façade Rebate Guidelines

- a. Dinneen explained that Commissioner Cole has recently asked if she was eligible to apply and receive façade rebate grants. Since there is no explicit language in the program guidelines, Dinneen contacted several other SSA's to inquire what their program guidelines say in regards to commissioners receiving façade rebate grants. No other SSA's façade rebate programs have guidelines that address this issue. Dinneen then contacted the City of Chicago BOE to obtain greater clarification. The BOE stated that there was not a conflict of interest for a commissioner to apply and receive funds as long as they were not directly involved in the approval process. The BOE also stated that any organization can choose to hold themselves to a higher code of ethics than is explicitly required by the City.
- b. Dinneen explained that the Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce (LPCC) as program managers have put in a great deal of thought on this issue. He understands that a sitting commissioner pays into the SSA as well as volunteering his/her time. But after a lot of thought and discussion, Dinneen recommends amending the program guidelines to prohibit sitting commissioners from applying and receiving funds due to the perception of impropriety that could arise if this activity was allowed.
- c. Cole stated that she felt that not allowing a commissioner to receive funds was negative towards her business since a recent recipient was a direct competitor.
- d. Longanecker stated that he understood where Cole was coming from but agreed with the LPCC as he himself felt it would be a conflict of interest for a commissioner to apply.
- e. Dinneen expressed that he sympathized with Cole because he understands her point of view and agreed that it was, to a degree, unfair that a commissioner pay into the SSA and volunteer and not be able to receive funds. However, the commission needs to recognize that approving the applications sets a precedent in regards to this issue and felt that it could lead to situations in the future that could potentially put the SSA in an ethically questionable position.
- f. Kroeger asked if there was a way to amend the program guidelines to put greater restrictions on commissioners applying but still allow them to receive funds.
- g. Dinneen could not state whether or not that would be acceptable and would have to inquire with the BOE.
- h. Longanecker stated that we should table this discussion until next meeting, after we could ask the BOE more questions and solicit the feelings of the remaining commissioners.
- i. The commission agreed to table the discussion until the May 12 meeting.

Reports

I. Financial Report

- a. Dinneen explained that there we have collected one third of our tax levy so far. The only major expenses that we have incurred so far were the remainder of the 2009 Christmas decorations contract and the regular clean and green services.
- b. Tehrani asked if our budget would increase next year with the addition of Diversey. Schilf explained that we saw an increase in levy in 2009 that reflected the addition of Diversey.
- c. There were no other questions regarding the financials.

Other

I. 2010 Meeting Dates

- a. Dinneen explained that because of the scope of work in regards to the marketing initiatives that need to be discussed, we will need to hold an additional meeting in May to cover those initiatives and make decisions regarding their implementation. The two dates that will be emailed out to the commission for consideration are:
 - i. Wednesday, May 12, 5:00 p.m.
 - ii. Thursday, May 13, 5:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Loren Dinneen.