



Southeast Side
COMMUNITY
Business District
Special Service Area 5

SSA 5 Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

February 23, 2023

PRESENT

Laura Shallow
Bonnie Dinell-Dimond
Laurentino Ramirez
Angela Hurlock
Dorothy Hudson

ABSENT

Alex Alemis

SERVICE PROVIDER

Tom Schell
Crystal Vance-Guerra

GUESTS

Diane Dalton, Peoples Bank
Vanessa Bly, Invest South-West
Liliana Busto, 10th Ward Office
Linda Gonzales, Community Member, Peoples Council Southeast Chicago
Jessica Smith, Plates on Purpose

Angela Hurlock welcomed our guests. At this time, our guests, commissioners and services provider staff introduced themselves.

At this time, a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order at 2:04 p.m.

1. Approval of the Agenda

There being no corrections or additions to the agenda, a motion to approve the agenda was made by Laurentino Ramirez, seconded by Laura Shallow. Motion carried.

Public Comments

Linda Gonzales stated that she had two top concerns which are safety for people who work and shop in South Chicago and the number of business that are for sale on and around Commercial Avenue. Ms. Gonzales inquired as to whether this was related to safety issues or other issues. Angela Hurlock stated that these issues would be discussed during the safety and program reports and she thanked Ms. Gonzalez for her concerns and attendance at today's meeting. Further, Ms. Hurlock asked Ms. Gonzales to give a brief overview of Peoples Council Southeast Chicago. Ms. Gonzales provided an overview of the activities of the organization.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Minutes from the January 26, 2023 were reviewed. There being no corrections nor additions to the minutes, a motion to approve the January 23, 2023 meeting minutes as presented was made by Laura Shallow, seconded by Laurentino Ramirez . Motion carried.

3. Financial Report

Financial Reports for the month ending January 31, 2023, were reviewed and discussed. Tom Schell reminded the commissioners that January is the first month of the new fiscal year. Mr. Schell reviewed the financial position statement as well as the revenues and expenses for the month of January. Mr. Schell pointed out that the holiday gift card expense has a separate expense line item in the 2023 budget and will no longer be considered a special events expense. At this time, Bonnie Dinell-Dimond asked if the commissioners would receive a report regarding how much money was spent at each of the business. Mr. Schell stated that Ms. Vance is working on the report and it will be presented to the commissioners when completed. After further discussion regarding the Financial Reports, a motion to approve the January 31, 2023 Financial Reports was made by Bonnie Dinell-Dimond, seconded by Laurentino Ramirez. Motion carried.

4. Cash Flow / Receivables

Tom Schell provided the commissioners with a copy of the January bank reconciliation. A brief discussion occurred regarding the outstanding checks and the monthly deposits. After further discussion and explanation, a motion to accept the January bank reconciliation was made by Bonnie Dinell-Dimond, seconded by Laurentino Ramirez. Motion carried.

5. Items for Approval

Tom Schell presented the January and February invoices for payment approval. After further discussion regarding the invoices, a motion to approve the January and February invoices for payment was made Bonnie Dinell-Diamond, seconded by Laura Shallow. Motion carried.

6. Program Report

Crystal Vance-Guerra reported that SSA 5 staff met with CPD 4th district last week and a second meeting is scheduled for next week. Ms. Vance-Guerra stated reports that there was a business meeting which included the 4th district to discuss safety concerns on Commercial avenue. A second meeting was held with the Commercial Avenue business to discuss the NOF (Neighborhood Opportunity Fund) grant. Further, Ms. Vance-Guerra stated that an additional meeting is scheduled with CPD 4th district and our SSA 5 security to discuss the security issues on Commercial Avenue.

Crystal Vance-Guerra stated that the business meeting have been occurring every other week. Ms. Vance –Guerra has been helping the businesses complete grant applications for the NOF and other city grants to help uplift the business on Commercial Avenue.

On February 24th, 2023 we will be holding our first Thrift and Thrive event at the Salud Center from 3:30 to 7p.m. Our Thrift and Thrives are another way we work to help uplift our businesses as well as other neighborhood businesses.

Angela Hurlock thanked Ms. Vance-Guerra for agreeing to partner with Claretian Associates next month at the March business meeting so that they can share information regarding the vacant land on 92nd and Brandon and receive feedback from the businesses on what types of businesses and buildings they would like to see on this piece of property.

Crystal Vance-Guerra and Tom Schell provided a brief update on the CDOT Streetscape project that will be occurring on Commercial Avenue and 92nd street.

Jessica Smith asked if any of these projects in South Chicago would be effected by the upcoming mayoral elections. Tom Schell responded that he was not aware of any reasons why these projects would not continue.

At this Linda Gonzales was asked what safety concerns she and her organization had regarding Commercial Avenue. Ms. Gonzales stated that she believe the safety report that was presented highlighted the types of incidents occurring in the business district and the concerns regarding investing in the business district.

Liliana Busto, from the 10th Ward office stated that the office is in the planning stages for an Easter egg hunt that would take place on April 1st and would like to partner with SSA 5 on this event. Crystal Vance-Guerra stated that the SSA would like to help out with this event Ms. Bustos stated she would email the information to Ms. Vance-Guerra.

Again, a brief discussion occurred regarding security. Crystal Vance-Guerra reported on the recent survey we completed with our businesses in the district. Ms. Vance-Guerra reported that of 73 South Chicago business and property owners surveyed, the average feeling of safety from 0-5 is a rating of 3.5. Most businesses expressed concern with safety and crime on the corridor. Most business owners answered, when asked how long they plan to stay on the corridor, more than 80% answered “forever” “foreseeable future” “hope to pass this business to my children.” Ms. Vance-Guerra stated that the safety issues are present. However, with more coordination between SSA 5 security and the 4th district we are looking to bring people back to shopping on Commercial Avenue and reclaim the sidewalks which will change the energy on Commercial Avenue. A comment was made about the open air drug market in the ward.

Adjournment

There being no additional business, a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:40 p.m. was made by Laurentino Ramirez, seconded by Laura Shallow. Motion carried.

Next Scheduled Meeting – March 23, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.