



— OLD TOWN —
SPECIAL SERVICE
— AREA 48 —

SSA 48 Old Town –Commission Meeting
Teleconference
Tuesday, July 12, 2022
5:30pm

Commissioners and Staff present: Linda Fleener - Executive Director, Rachel Rubinson
- Marketing & Membership Coordinator,

Alex Christenson, Judy Erwin, Don Klugman, Peter O'Brien, Mark Proesel, Paul Purewal, Caroline Shoenberger, Jennifer Tremblay

Guests: Lisa Kidd - Cleanslate Chicago, Maya Porone - Resident

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:32pm by Mr. O'Brien.

Pursuant to the applicable law and the Commission Chair's determination that attendance by remote means is necessary because an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent due to the declared public health disaster caused by COVID-19, this meeting is conducted by videoconference via Zoom.

2. Roll Call

Quorum

3. Introduction of guests

Lisa Kidd, Cleanslate Chicago
Maya Porone, Resident

4. Review of DRAFT MINUTES from SSA 48 Commission Meeting on 04/27/2022

a. **MOTION TO APPROVE 04/27/22 SSA 48 Commission Meeting Minutes by Ms. Erwin, seconded by Ms. Shoenberger. The motion carries.**

5. Financial Report

Mr. Proesel reported that, since April 27th, 2022, \$28,340.25 has been taken in. This amount is less than what is typically taken in during this time, due to a delay in property tax collection at the county level. At this time, rates are expected to normalize by December 2022. However, SSA 48 has a financial cushion, and is not expected to have financial issues in the near future. Expenses since April 27th have totalled \$169,917.08. As of the end of June, the account balance is \$331,224.90.

6. Committee Reports

- a. Public Way Committee – Mr. Alex Christenson, Committee Member
- i. 2022 Power Washing has been completed

Mr. Christenson noted power washing has taken place June 13th through June 17th. Power washing took place overnight so as not to interrupt restaurant services and due to the high temperatures this summer.

ii. Report on Litter Abatement Contract: Brady Gott, Clean Slate

Ms. Kidd stated litter abatement has been going well. Clean Slate has not received any complaints from business owners as of yet. There is still a lot of crowding in the neighborhood; Clean Slate hasn't seen Old Town empty this summer. In accordance with their contract, Clean Slate typically arrives on-site around 10AM and leaves around 12AM, Wednesday through the weekend.

Mr. Klugman stated he believes that cleanliness has improved throughout the neighborhood.

Mr. O'Brien asked Ms. Kidd to elaborate on Clean Slate's staffing practices. Ms. Kidd explained the Clean Slate work force is very diverse. Some members come from shelters, some have recently been incarcerated (the program does not accept any violent offenders), and some have college experience.

b. Residential Committee – Mr. Mark Proesel, Committee Chair

i. Security Service Update

Mr. Proesel provided a recent update from the AGB Security Team (led by Captain Kevin Salmon). Mr. Proesel noted the most recent AGB incident report included a shooting incident at The VIG. On Saturday, July 2nd, when a patron was exiting the venue, a weapon discharged and a bullet was fired into the floor. A fragment of the bullet injured a nearby woman and resulted in a trip to the ER. The VIG filed a police report and provided video footage to the 18th District.

As a result of this incident, Ryan Marks (The VIG) has begun coordinating with other nearby bar owners to enhance security via metal detecting wands: Benchmark, 80 Proof, LG's, Woodies, Fireplace Inn, Utopian Tailgate, and Happy Camper. Additionally, AGB is temporarily posting a security officer at The VIG, and they are operating on high alert to prevent future incidents.

Mr. O'Brien stated, on behalf of the Executive Committee, he has been in touch with Ryan Marks (the former head of the restaurant committee of the OTMRA), and wants to reinstate the expanded AGB security program facilitated by the OTMRA.

Mr. Purewal stated that bullets reached the 32nd floor of one of the Old Town Park towers and shattered two of the windows.

Mr. Proesel stated that the SSA will utilize their resources to help tackle the issue of security in the neighborhood as best they can.

Mr. Klugman inquired whether the neighborhood could be designated a gun-free area. Mr. Proesel noted several Old Town businesses have stickers on their windows barring firearms already. Mr. O'Brien noted from a professional security standpoint, it makes the most sense to standardize the practices of security teams across the neighborhood. Mr. O'Brien additionally noted when Ms. Fleener goes through the budget, some funds will be reallocated to help bars offset the cost of purchasing wands.

Ms. Shoenberger inquired whether there was any follow-up with the individual who owned the gun that discharged. Mr. O'Brien replied that The VIG has given security footage to the police and detectives will follow up.

Ms. Shoenberger inquired about recent security incidents that originated at North Avenue Beach, spilling into Old Town, and to what degree they impacted Wells Street. Mr. O'Brien explained the events originated on social media approximately 5-6 weeks ago. Police were aware of the incidents

and followed the crowd as they walked through Old Town. Ms. Fleener additionally noted the OTMRA co-hosted an event with the 2nd Ward, 18th District, and the Gold Coast Neighbors to address summer safety strategy.

c. Executive Committee – Mr. Peter O'Brien, Chairman
i. Discussion on 2023 Budget and Workplan Final Draft

Ms. Fleener noted the 2023 Budget and Workplan did not have many significant changes. New changes have been highlighted in the document. Ms. Fleener additionally provided an overview of the changes within the document.

Ms. Fleener noted on the Customer Attraction tab, one change is that an additional \$5,000 for holiday decorations has been allotted. Due to last year's costs exceeding the allotted amount (and additional supply chain issues, and inflation), Ms. Fleener increased the line item for this year's budget. Additionally, every three years, the OTMRA renews their banner program, so additional funds have been allocated to that line item as well.

On the Public Way Aesthetics tab, this year, an additional \$14,000 has been added to the allotted spring/summer/fall landscaping contract, for a total of \$70,000. In the last fiscal year, expenditures exceeded the allotted amount for this line item. Additionally, \$6,000 was added for the litter abatement contract, due to inflation and the rising costs of materials. \$24,000 was added for snow removal services. Last season, the SSA spent \$111,100 for that contract. While a \$5,000 credit will be issued because the snow cap wasn't met, there was only \$100,000 allotted for the prior year. A vandalism repair program has additionally been added back to the budget in order to help revitalize the corridor, and help businesses make repairs to their storefront and increase the aesthetics of the area.

On the Sustainability and Transportation tab, the taxicab stand reimbursements funding has been removed. Rideshares cannot utilize the drop-off points and restaurants have not been utilizing the program; only one restaurant took advantage of the program in the past fiscal year.

In the Economic and Business Development section, the sidewalk cafe rebate has been reinstated in the budget. In 2022, the fees associated with sidewalk cafes will increase by 75%, so this rebate will help offset those additional costs. Each rebate will cover up to \$400 (per application), so the budget can accommodate up to 12 rebates.

The Safety program section includes an increase to the maximum amount allotted for camera rebates up to \$1,000; previously, the amount was up to \$500 per applicant. These cameras can connect to OEMC; they are the easiest for police to access and utilize. Additionally, a new rebate program allowing businesses to apply for safety enhancements will reimburse restaurants up to \$750 to help them increase their safety measures. The Security and Patrol line item has increased from \$110,000 to \$125,000. This is due to the reduced number of officers in the neighborhood (an increase in the amount of security officers will increase costs), as well as increased labor costs.

On the SSA Management tab, additional funding has been allocated to the SSA Audit; the current contract only provided three opportunities to renew at the current rate, and the contract was drafted before the SSA expansion. Additionally, some funding has been added to the Commissioner Trainings and Meetings line item, in case the Commissioners meet in person later this year.

The Personnel Costs and Reimbursement tab includes a reduction in funds requested by \$15,500. This is due to the OTMRA receiving additional grant funding from other sources (DPD recommends the allocation of funding reimbursement from the SSA stays proportional to the total budget made up of grants).

Mr. O'Brien inquired as to when the budget is due. Ms. Fleener noted the full budget is due this

Friday, July 15th.

When is budget due? POB. LF: Full budget is due This Friday, July 15th. The July SSA meeting was held a day earlier than is typical, so if any changes need to be made to the budget before the due date, there is extra time to do so.

Mr. Christenson stated the Public Way budget looks good; Mr. Proesel similarly echoed the Security budget looks good as well.

1. **MOTION TO APPROVE 2023 Budget and Workplan Final Draft by Mr. Christenson, seconded by Ms. Shoenberger. The motion carries.**

ii. **Discussion on 2023 Levy**

Ms. Fleener stated the SSA is looking at a slightly lower tax rate for this year as compared to last year. In terms of dollars, this change translates to \$3,295 fewer dollars collected this year than last year. However, in 2020 and 2021, SSA 48 did not expend as much funds as is typical, due to the pandemic; during the SSA's audit, it was recommended that SSA 48 expend more of these funds.

1. **MOTION TO APPROVE 2023 Levy of 0.2378% by Mr. Klugman, seconded by Ms. Erwin. The motion carries.**

iii. **Discussion on Approving the OTMRA as the Sole Service Provider (SSP) for 2023.**

Mr. O'Brien noted that, with Ms. Fleener's departure from the OTMRA, he would like the SSA to be included in the search committee to identify Ms. Fleener's replacement, and recommends Ms. Tremblay to be included in the search committee.

Ms. Shoenberger inquired if the SSP motion could be amended to include a provision whereby Ms. Tremblay would be included on the committee. Ms. Fleener stated that unfortunately, due to reporting requirements from the City, they must be independent items.

1. **MOTION TO APPROVE the OTMRA as the Sole Service Provider (SSP) for 2023 by Ms. Erwin, seconded by Mr. Proesel. The motion carries.**

7. **New Business**

Mr. O'Brien stated he would like to make a motion to appoint Ms. Tremblay to the search committee to elect the replacement of the Executive Director of the OTMRA.

1. **MOTION TO ADD Jennifer Tremblay to the Search Committee for the replacement of the Executive Director of the OTMRA by Mr. Proesel, seconded by Ms. Shoenberger. The motion carries.**

Ms. Shoenberger stated if any board members know any Ukrainian-speaking individuals, the Polish American Association is looking to hire them. They can additionally help any individuals impacted by the war as well.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34pm.