

STATE STREET COMMISSION
State Street Commission Meeting
Tuesday, January 16, 2023
2:00 PM
190 North State Street, 10th Floor, Chicago, IL 60601

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members Present

Greg Cameron
Konstantine “Gus” Drosos
Kristin Duncan
Brian Grossman
John Idler
La Verne Morris
Ryan Segal

Commission Members Absent

Mark Anderson
Ciere Boatright
Tom Carney
Erin Harkey
Aimeabilomon Ochiekeleye
Cole Stallard

Others Present

Melvin Craig III
Debbie De Lopez
Michael M. Edwards
Rich Gamble
David Harris
Robert Kearny
Theophilos Kerkeres
Dan Luna
Abel Rodriguez
Mark Roschen

AFFILIATION

Joffrey Ballet
Palmer House Hilton
Renaissance Hotel
Walgreens
ABC7
20 North State Condo Assn.
Acadia Realty Trust

Hines
DPD
CDOT
DCASE
Macy’s on State Street
Streets & San

Chicago Loop Alliance
Streets & San
Chicago Loop Alliance
Chicago Loop Alliance
Chicago Police Department
42nd Ward Alderman’s Office
Chicago Police Department
34th Ward Alderman’s Office
Chicago Loop Alliance
DPD

Call to Order

The State Street SSA Commission meeting on January 16th was convened at 2:00 PM by Chair Ryan Segal. The Chair welcomed attendees and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Public Comment

No comments were made by the public.

Approval of Minutes

Segal asked for a motion to approve the Commission's November meeting minutes. Kristin Duncan motioned to approve the minutes, and Konstantine Drosos seconded that motion. The motion carried, and the minutes were approved.

Financial Statements as of December 31, 2023

Segal requested an update on the SSA financials ending December 31, 2023, from Abel Rodriguez, the Chief Financial Officer of the Chicago Loop Alliance. Rodriguez informed the group that the SSA had received 99% of its expected levy funds this year. Also, \$120,000 in late collection funds from the previous year were not received, and ratepayers received \$80,000 in tax rebates, resulting in an anticipated \$200,000 loss for the SSA.

Total revenue amounted to \$3.2 million, and total expenses were \$3.1 million, leaving the SSA to begin the year with a carryover of \$128,000. Rodriguez explained that due to the Department of Development and Planning policy, there cannot be overages in line items at year-end. Several lines have been reallocated so that they do not appear over their budgeted numbers. This has not resulted in any additional spending; funds have simply been reallocated. He noted that a motion would need to be made to confirm this additional change as well as to approve the financials.

Greg Cameron made a motion to approve the financial statements as of December 31, 2023, and Segal seconded that motion. The motion carried.

4th Quarter Metrics & Contractor Affidavit

Rodriguez then walked the group through the 4th Quarter metrics report, summarizing the organization's performance, such as the number of vendors used in a quarter and the number of Facebook likes and media earned.

Cameron asked about the 18 million difference between targeted and actual ad buy impressions in the report. Rodriguez explained that the number is a composite comprising several different media forms, such as page views and other measurements. Rich Gamble explained that he believes the discrepancy could be due to the field not including unique digital traffic, as many of these ads/posts could be viewed over and over again by the same people and not new folks who have never seen the content before. Rodriguez agreed the baseline number could be changed to a higher threshold in the 2025 SSA Budget in July to avoid confusion.

The Chair then asked for a motion to approve the 4th Quarter Metrics report. La Verne Morris motioned to approve, and Kristen Duncan seconded that motion. The motion carried.

Next, the group considered the contractor affidavit. Rodriguez explained that the affidavit is essentially a formal way for Commissioners to acknowledge that CLA has done its job for the year 2023 as the contractor of the SSA.

The Chair then called for a motion to approve the contractor affidavit as presented. Konstantine Drosos made a motion to approve, and Greg Cameron seconded that motion. The motion carried.

Sole Service Provider Report

Michael Edwards, President and CEO of Chicago Loop Alliance, opened the report with a reminder for the Commissioners to be sure to get their Commissioner applications submitted to city officials so that the city council can confirm them. He then directed the group to the 2024 Chicago Loop Alliance Business Plan, which was included in the meeting packet, explaining how the plan correlates to the objectives outlined in the organization's recently completed 5-Year Strategic Plan.

One significant move, Edwards explained, is hiring a development officer whose job would be to bring in different forms of revenue and help CLA diversify its income. He noted that to make this hire possible, CLA would need to use \$70,000 in reserves to fund part of the position in 2024, but that in 2025, that person's job would be to bring in at least enough money to cover their salary and break even. This strategic investment will better position CLA to be able to do more on State Street. Edwards clarified that the position would be paid for 100% by CLA, as SSA rules state that SSA program funds cannot pay for positions like this.

He also announced that the city had informed him of its interest in bringing back the Corridor Ambassador Program for another year in 2024. Edwards also stated that the DNC officials who attended CLA's January board meeting signaled their desire to assist with beautification on State Street before the August convention and asked for some ideas to help do so. Rich Gamble and Edwards suggested that the group develop a list of some modest requests that the DNC might be able to assist with.

Security Report

Segal introduced Commander David Harris with the Chicago Police Department for his update on security. The Commander announced to the group that Carol Burns had been promoted to Lieutenant and introduced her replacement at the 1st District, Sergeant Theophilos Kerkeres.

The Commander then went into detail regarding current statistics in the districts in and around the SSA, stating that in the last 28 days, there have been 0 homicides and shootings, 4 aggravated batteries, 9 robberies, 0 vehicular hijackings, 4 burglaries, 14 vehicles stolen, and 153 thefts. Since January 1, 2024, there have been 0 homicides, 0 shootings, 4 aggravated batteries, 3 robberies, 0 vehicular hijackings, 1 burglary, 5 vehicle thefts, and 66 thefts. The Commander said that overall, crime is down and that this is a good place to begin the year. He then announced to the group that the CPD program of the stationary cars (flashing blue lights) parked in strategic locations would be ending at the end of January due to overtime reductions.

He then spoke briefly about the idea of the St. Patrick's Day Parade being moved to State Street. He said that one of the biggest challenges would be the smaller area of the street since there would be 2,000 participants in the parade and thousands of spectators.

John Idler stated that he was unaware of any contact between Local 130 and the Aldermen for State Street about the move because security is a priority, but that it could be an interesting opportunity for the SSA in regard to getting folks back in the Loop, depending on what business owners and residents think of the move.

Edwards expressed that the move would be very consistent with recommendations from the State Street ULI Technical Assistance Panel to celebrate the community on State Street. La Verne Morris stated that in her experience as a condo board president, she believes the primary issue residents will have with a potential move is crowd dispersion. The Commander said that consumption of alcohol could be a concern. Konstantine "Gus" Drosos expressed some interest in the idea. Abel Rodriguez mentioned some hesitation about possible damage to SSA property, such as to the planters. Duncan stated that staging could be problematic due to hotels being busy during the dyeing of the river and festivities. Cameron said that maybe LaSalle Street would be an additional option to Columbus or State. Robert Kearny stated that when this idea was brought up a few years before, Alderman Reilly was opposed to the proposal and expressed some concerns about alcohol, the use of business restrooms, property damage, and more. Kearny said that regardless, the Alderman would like to review whatever proposal is written. Dan Luna said that in his many years of working the parade with Alderman Osterman's office, he is unsure that State Street can stand up to the number of visitors that could attend the parade.

Department of Planning & Development

Mark Roschen said that in March and April, DPD will be holding several discussions for SSA Commissioners across the city in addition to mandatory training and that feedback on topics for the discussion series is welcome.

State of State Street

After some healthy discussion around back-to-office numbers, Edwards asked if any Commissioners would like to share a bit about how things are going on State Street in their respective areas of business.

Duncan and Drosos each briefly touched on the topic of the hotel business, with Drosos saying that conventions are strong at the Palmer House but that leisure stays are lacking, while Duncan said she noticed the opposite, but that group sales at the Renaissance were also good but that weekend stays were not as strong as before.

Segal announced that a new cantina across from the Palmer House will be opening later in 2024 and that TJ Maxx had signed a new lease at its location.

Cameron touched on the strength of the arts in the Loop and on State Street. He explained that theatre shows have been doing well and informed the group that the Joffrey Ballet had its highest-attended Nutcracker ever in 2023.

Luna asked the group to inform him of any graffiti they had to report and that he would contact the correct departments to get it cleaned.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

La Verne Morris, Secretary