



**SSA #18 COMMISSION MINUTES – January 31, 2022**  
*Virtual Meeting*

**1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

Commissioner Jim Ludwig called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m. and the following Commissioners were in attendance: Jim Ludwig, Kearby Kaiser, Elizabeth Fuld, and Mike Raffety

From the Northalsted Business Alliance (NBA): Business Development Coordinator and SSA Program Manager Robert Morvay, Board Treasurer Dusty Carpenter, and Board Secretary Micah Hilgendorf.

From Alderman Tom Tunney's Office: Alderman Tom Tunney

**2. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- a. Jim asks if there's any corrections the commissioners would like to make to the minutes. Mike replies that he had mentioned a typo he had noticed to Robert, and Robert replies that it's fixed already.

**MOTION by Mike Raffety to approve the [December 8th Meeting Minutes](#).**

**SECOND by Kearby Kaiser.**

**All approve.**

**MOTION CARRIES.**

**3. Northalsted Update**

- a. Robert mentions that in the last month since the last meeting, not much has changed with the holidays and Omicron keeping business on the down-low. There are a couple of plans pending Omicron, a Bar Crawl and a Soup & Sip neighborhood event tentatively planned for March or April, but those plans are being held back until more is known about the ongoing medical situation and staffing issues preventing the Membership committee from meeting.
- b. Kearby asks about planters for the Spring, and Robert replies that Northalsted's staff has been in consistent contact with all current contractors, GoWindows for Snow, Brightview for Landscaping, and Cleanslate for Sidewalk maintenance to make sure that everything is set for Spring.

Acting Executive Director Lake Alen joins the call at 1:10 p.m.

- c. Robert says that board officer elections were completed in early January, with Drew Knecht taking over from Ramesh Ariyanayakam as Board President, Mark Liberson

- remaining Board Vice-President, Dusty Carpenter taking over from Lake Alen for Board Treasurer, and Micah Hilgendorf taking over from Stu Zirin for Board Secretary.
- d. Lake updates on the Executive Director search. Northalsted's Search Committee, consisting of Lake Alen, Drew Knecht, Mark Liberson, and Ramesh Ariyanayakam, have done several meet and greets with a variety of candidates, with 15 minutes with the president and Lake and if it goes well the committee will be brought on for an additional 45 minutes. They've interviewed 3 people who may work, but the search is still ongoing with an updated job listing and budget that markets the job more so as a 501(c)6 than as a non-profit to look into applicants who are less experienced in education and community service and more-so in trade organizations.
  - e. Kearby asks what the plan is for the amount of staff in office, and Lake replies that he doesn't want to hand-cuff the new Executive Director to any plans for 2022 and wants to leave those choices up to them.
  - f. Kearby notes that he suggests more instagrammable and interesting landscape for Northalsted and that he greatly appreciates Dusty and Micah's attendance at the meeting.
  - g. Dusty mentions that he is working with Choose Chicago on a grant to refurbish the Pylons and improve them with LED lighting that can change lighting on command.
  - h. Micah mentions that four planters have been ordered to replace the broken ones from the Broadway/Clarendon Triangle, which should arrive with the Spring landscaping.
  - i. Robert mentions that the Northalsted Marketing Team is still crafting new instagrammable experiences, such as more Pride Walls like the ones at ProgressBar, Hydrate, Crosstown Fitness, and The Chicago Diner, as well as looking into new interactive implementations on the street with more to report as those ideas are more developed.

#### 4. SSA Program

- a. Vacancy Update
  - i. Robert shares that two residential property owners, Carlton Daniels and Richard Winter, and two business owners, Allan O'Brien of Men's Room Chicago and Diego Cevallos of Strong Hands Gym, have filled out applications and submitted them within the last week.
- b. 2022 Meeting Dates
  - i. Robert presents the new [proposed list of meeting dates for 2022](#) due to the new need for meeting approval for Quarterly Reports.
  - ii. Mike mentions that he's wondering why there is such a gap between January and April when there are so many meetings in the back half of the year instead of a bimonthly schedule or something more structured akin to that.
    1. Lake replies that the beginning of the year is generally more scarce of updates and actionable material along with prep for festivals, so it makes sense to have more meetings in the later end of the year.

**MOTION by Elizabeth Fuld to approve the meeting dates as presented.**

**SECOND by Kearby Kaiser.**

**All approve.**

**MOTION CARRIES.**

- iii. Lake reminds the commission that April's meeting will be Joy's Audit presentation which will mean it'll be a longer meeting.
- c. Q4 Report
    - i. Robert begins to present the Q4 Report, but he and the Commission quickly realize that something went wrong with the file and essential data has been omitted. Robert fixes the problem and will present the proper Q4 Report later in the meeting as Lake moves on.

- d. SSA Reconstitution
  - i. Lake brings up that the SSA is up for Reconstitution in 2023, which means that the SSA #18 will need to get city council approval to continue its duties and will require documentation through 2022.
  - ii. Robert mentions that the first step is to get approval from the commission that they want to reconstitute.

**MOTION by Mike Raffety to proceed with reconstitution efforts.**

**SECOND by Kearby Kaiser.**

**All approve.**

**MOTION CARRIES.**

- iii. Mike asks Robert if they need to set a desired tax rate, and Robert replies that at this moment they just need to approve the reconstitution.
  - iv. Jim asks if Robert has been warned of any expense by the DPD, and he says Oneida Pate from the SSA just told him his next steps were to get this approval and then she'd follow up. He will follow up with that information via email and future meetings.
  - v. Alderman Tunney notes that if we're looking to change the boundaries of the SSA with the reconstitution, this is the time to do it.
    - 1. Lake mentions that any boundary changes need to be done in concert with Lakeview East.
    - 2. Mike recommends looking to see if there's any area that could be encompassed, but later in the Zoom text chat [posts a map](#) saying "looks like no room to expand."
- e. Budget Adjustments
    - i. Lake presents [Budget Adjustments for the SSA](#)
      - 1. In an effort to balance the budget, money has been removed from some line items and placed in increased personnel anticipated for 2022 as well as additional overhead for the office.
      - 2. All other adjustments are common-sense for 2021's final actuals and for 2022's projected needs.
      - 3. Lake projects carryover to be around \$50,000, which can be used as needed to adjust the budget in the future.
      - 4. Kearby asks if the lighting project needs to be so high in cost if Dusty's project with Choose Chicago will potentially make it needless in the future.
        - a. Lake says the lighting project has already been nearly finished, minus the beacon lights.
        - b. Dusty said it won't start until the Summer and won't be finished for a year.
        - c. Lake mentions that we don't want to gamble the lights being in poor condition on a grant that's not been approved yet anyway.
      - 5. Lake explains that the SSP Contractors Line has upped in collaboration with Northalsted's office going from more staff-based to more contractor-based.
      - 6. The personnel budgets have been increased to reflect Robert more-or-less taking over Eric's role and to reflect the labor time of Northalsted making some Northalsted Member benefits extend to the entire SSA.
        - a. Alderman Tunney is confused at the low cost of the personnel and asks if they are part time positions, and Lake replies that these costs are split between the SSA and Northalsted.

- b. Tunney then asks how much was saved from Northalsted's vacancies in staffing in 2021, and Lake replies that Northalsted basically broke even due to the need for contractors.
  - c. Lake mentions that the SSA generally covers 20% of labor costs for Northalsted.
7. Jim mentions that last year, the commission had asked to see Northalsted's budget to see if there were any irregularities and to make sure they follow the SSA's general philosophy, and asks if we can do that this year.
- a. Mike approves that.
  - b. Lake says he'll ask the Executive Committee and prepare that information for publication if they approve it.

**MOTION by Mike Raffety to approve the 2022 Budget adjustments and ask to see the approved Northalsted Business Alliance (NBA) budget for 2022 pending approval by NBA's Executive Committee.**

- c. Kearby mentions that in the Loop Alliance, they see a percentage of how much the SSA is paying, and asks if Dusty can prepare that information going forward. Dusty says yes.
  - i. Mike and Jim agree on this point.

**SECOND by Kearby Kaiser.  
All approve.  
MOTION CARRIES.**

- d. Dusty asks to clarify if the commission means they would like to see the whole budget or just those approved percentages of what the SSA is actively covering.
  - i. Mike says he'd like to see the whole budget, but that only feels they have the right to ask to see the line items covered in the split between NBA/SSA.
  - ii. Kearby thinks it's important to have an understanding of what they are and are not paying for.
  - iii. Lake agrees that we should show the 6.0 SSA Management and 7.0 Personnel lines that are shared expenses but nothing else.
  - iv. Jim asks Alderman Tunney if he knows how it's handled in Lakeview East, and he says he doesn't know but he personally believes SSA and Service Provider budgets should be transparent with one another.
  - v. Jim believes it should be an obligation for the Service Provider's budget to be the knowledge of the SSA.
  - vi. Dusty doesn't see a problem with it. Lake thinks that if it doesn't cross the line of being co-paid by the SSA that it shouldn't need to be a matter of public record. Micah doesn't foresee a problem.

f. Q4 Report

- i. Robert scrolls through the fixed 2021 Q4 Report, and asks for any questions or objections to anything on the report.
- ii. Alderman Tunney asks how the "number of receptacles maintained" is calculated.
  - 1. Robert replies that it's the amount of sidewalk maintenance service days multiplied by the amount of receptacles on the street.

2. Tunney responds that this is often a shared responsibility between the city, Service Provider contractor, and the Cubs in the case of the trash receptacles at Addison during home games, and to keep that in mind.
- iii. Kearby asks what this report is. Robert responds that these quarterly reports are something that had been presented and approved behind closed doors with Jim for a long time, but the DPD has asked that we now approve them at SSA Commission meetings.
- iv. Kearby asks what the difference is between Decorations and Landscaping.
  1. Lake responds that cost is delineated by the permanence of the items and who creates and puts them up. Part of the landscaping contract is to maintain some holiday decorations.

**MOTION by Kearby Kaiser to approve the Q4 Report as presented.**

**SECOND by Mike Raffety.**

**All approve.**

**MOTION CARRIES.**

## 5. Rebates

### a. Men's Room Rebate

- i. Robert shows off a rebate for Security Cameras at Men's Room Chicago that have been installed at the front and back of the property. The installation has already been completed, so to approve the SSA Commission would have to waive the requirement for pre-approval. Kearby and Robert recommend this rebate for approval.
- ii. Kearby explains with the online applications, the proposal and invoices/receipts are included in the application which makes cataloging this information very easy.

**MOTION by Kearby Kaiser to approve the rebate application and waive the pre-approval requirement.**

**SECOND by Mike Raffety.**

**All approve.**

**MOTION CARRIES.**

### b. Security Rebate Re-Proposal

- i. Robert explains that due to increased needs for the Security following the Winter months and general COVID unrest, that action needs to be taken to reinvent the Security Rebate to allow for urgent Security purchases to be made by businesses. The [new rebate language](#), as explained by Robert and Lake, allows applicants to make purchases before applying, providing evidence that the projects are effective (defined as screenshot of camera's view for security cameras, photo of lighting after dusk for internal lighting, and/or contrasting camera screenshots showcasing the difference between lighting when it is on/off for internal lighting). The application process would be similar to the 2020-21 COVID Rebates, where rebates would be supplied for relevant purchased goods as long as the SSA Commission feels as though those purchases fit in the goal of the rebate in their sole discretion.
- ii. Lake highlights that the screenshots for these camera views could also help in identifying key locations to look at for crime monitoring on the street.
- iii. Kearby mentions that prior to 2020, the two rebates run by the SSA were for Security Cameras and Facades, and asks if we're planning on making a third rebate that encapsulates Security Lighting. Lake replies that lighting is being added to the Security Rebate under recommendation of the CPD.

- iv. Alderman Tom Tunney announces that he has to leave the meeting, but is happy to be more engaged in these conversations, especially in how they pertain to security as he's looking into license plate readers as an active project.
  - 1. Kearby remarks that he's incredibly glad that Tunney was able to make it. Mike agrees.

Alderman Tom Tunney leaves the meeting at 2:03 p.m.

- v. Kearby says his stance is that he believes it'd be better to get these applications before installation, because he hates to think of someone purchasing something under the impression that they'd get the rebate and then not getting approved. The 50% (up to \$1,500) worries him as those doing joint lighting and security camera rebates, as someone could just use this to reimburse \$150 off of a \$300 decorative lighting project.
  - 1. Lake responds that the commission has every right to turn down the application if they don't believe it fits the scope of the rebate, but agrees to Kearby's point that if someone applies they may be turned down and that could be disheartening. He continues to say that it could similarly be disheartening if someone needs to wait 3-4 months to have their application processed and approved if they need it.
  - 2. Kearby replies that no one has not been approved in practice.
    - a. Mike and Kearby bring up that this might mean that the SSA runs out of money for the rebate, and if some smaller, less interesting projects are approved before someone submits an important larger project, they'll be out of luck.
  - 3. Dusty asks if there's a way to do a special meeting to get these approved if the wait period is too long.
    - a. Mike brings up the idea of doing email approval, but Lake mentions the city has made it clear that the SSA can no longer do email approvals and that there needs to be a public announcement 10 days prior to do special meetings, in-person or virtual.
  - 4. Kearby mentions that interior illumination should be a need, and Robert responds saying that this is a recommendation of the CPD to help aid in identifying features from internal security camera footage.
  - 5. Kearby mentions that denying applications may harm chances for reconstitution.
- vi. Kearby would like to have a marketing piece delivered both via email and in person to every business that would advertise both the Security and Facade rebates.

**MOTION by Mike Raffety to approve the updated Rebate Language as presented.**

**SECOND by Kearby Kaiser.**

**All approve.**

**MOTION CARRIES.**

## **6. Audit Proposal**

- a. Lake reviews the [audit proposal](#), which is pretty much in the same scope except the price of the audit services has gone up from \$3,500 to \$4,200, which was approved earlier in the meeting. Lake believes that approving the proposal is the right move at this time and not sending out an RFP for this audit.
- b. Robert clarifies why the rise from \$3,500 to \$4,200 occurred from Joy's perspective, revealing that Eilts & Associates had to reevaluate audit fees in light of additional costs

associated with COVID as well as pronouncements per the both Associations of International and Illinois Certified Professional Accountants which result in additional professional hours on audits. The cost of maintaining a CPA license in IL, professional insurance costs, and costs of required continuing education hours have also gone up as usual. According to Joy, their audit fees have been dramatically lower than other CPA firms for some time now, and the firm just can no longer sustain that. He mentions that Lake and Dusty had discussed this after receiving that explanation, and that at least for 2022, they recommend moving forward with the audit this year as normal but put out soft feelers throughout the year to see if Joy is correct about the general prices of SSA audits.

- i. Kearby recommends contacting other SSAs to check this, but he can't imagine that Joy is trying to rip us off.

**MOTION by Kearby Kaiser to approve the audit proposal.**

**SECOND by Elizabeth Fuld.**

- ii. Jim comments to ask the service provider to check to see what Maureen is paying for their audit.

**All approve.**

**MOTION CARRIES.**

**7. Contractors Update**

- a. Pylon Lighting
  - i. The base fixtures for the pylon lights have been completed, with only some rewiring work to be done at this point for the beacon lighting that's in progress.

**8. Other Topics**

- a. Kearby mentions that those who have applied should come to SSA meetings, and there should be a concentrated effort to have them attend. He mentions that Elizabeth came for 3 years before joining officially.
  - i. Robert mentions that he sent out the invites to all of them, and asked them to attend, and some of them even said they would, but none showed up. He's going to follow up.
  - ii. Kearby says to let them know the Commission is disappointed that they couldn't make it.
- b. Jim mentions that it was difficult to get Dave Gassman to attend this meeting, but he ultimately should be attending these meetings in whatever form they take to prioritize the health of the commission and other attendees, regardless of his distaste for virtual meetings or masks.
  - i. Kearby mentions that if Elizabeth tests positive, she cannot report to work for three weeks, and that we have to take this seriously as a commission. Elizabeth agrees.

**MOTION by Mike Raffety to adjourn the meeting.**

**SECOND by Kearby Kaiser.**

**All approve.**

**MOTION CARRIES.**

The meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

Next SSA meeting will be held at Center on Halsted at 1:00 p.m. on April 13th.