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**Special Service Area #61 – Hyde Park**  
**SSA Board of Commissioners Minutes Tuesday, March 25, 2025**  
Polsky Exchange North – Jackson Park Room

**Present:** S. Karim, A. Marks, C. Newsome, J. Nurss, G. Robnett, M. Rogel, G. Rumsey, E. Thompson

**Absent:** L. Brown

**Also Present:** Rod Sawyer (SSA Program Manager), Diane Burnham (SECC Executive Director), Cecilia Butler (Washington Park Advisory Council), Kenneth Newman, Peter Cassel (MAC Properties), Carol Moy, Jane Moy

A quorum being present, Chair Rumsey called the meeting of SSA #61 to order at 11:05am.

**Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes for the January 2025 meeting were accepted as circulated. Since a quorum had been lacking at certain meetings, minutes were also approved as circulated for December 10, September 24, July 23, and May 29, 2024.

**Questions and Comments from Guests**

Ms. Butler inquired about the progress with the planned installation of the new artwork in the 53rd St and 55th St viaducts; she also announced a book signing for *To Washington Park with Love*, by Rose Blouin, on Saturday, 1:00, May 29, in Washington Park field house.

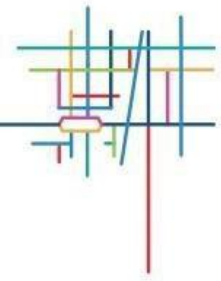
Kenneth Newman commented on the need for additional bicycle racks throughout the footprint. He also encouraged the commissioners to speak up on broader Hyde Park issues.

**Commissioner Meetings—Schedule Modifications**

Program Manager Rod Sawyer presented an updated schedule for meetings, with no meetings planned for July or August (unless there were unexpected needs). The commissioners unanimously agreed.

**Guest Presentation—Wayfinding Street Signage Project**

Diane Burnham, Executive Director of the South East Chicago Commission, announced that the SECC and Hyde Park had been selected by Choose Chicago Foundation as a partner for bringing in new branded neighborhood directional signage, including kiosk maps, to help guests and tourists find their way around the neighborhood.



## Financials

Program Manager Sawyer presented the monthly budget tracker through February, pointing out that this is a period of little activity. He also announced the commission would need to approve the Audit Contract at the next meeting in April.

## 2025 Workplan Modification

Reporting a decline of approximately \$20,000 in carryover revenue, Manager Sawyer presented a revised 2025 budget to adjust for the shortfall. This had been previously presented to the Finance Committee, where all questions were answered. The Commissioners approved the modification on a roll call vote:

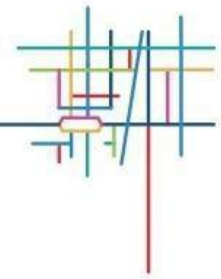
<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>Vote</b>
S. Karim	Yes
A. Marks	Yes
C. Newsome	Yes
J. Nurss	Yes
G. Robnett	Yes
M. Rogel	Yes
E. Thompson	Yes

## Service Contracts and Proposals

Chair Rumsey asked Manager Sawyer to detail the plans for sending out new Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for a variety of services in the coming months. Sawyer reported that he would spend the summer working on the RFPs, and that they would be presented to the Commission before being released to the public.

Four current contractors (six contracts) were discussed and approved for continuation during the current year, until the new RFPs were available:

- CEI Media—Contract for the SSA #61’s website. Motion to approve by Rogel, seconded by Marks, unanimously approved.
- CEI Media—Contract for the SSA #61’s social media posts. Motion to approve by Newsome, seconded by Thompson, unanimously approved.
- Clarence Davids—Contract for twice-yearly plantings in the hanging baskets around the footprint; the Chair noted that the Lake Park plantings would not be done in 2025 due to a shortage of funds. Motion to approve by Rogel, seconded by Robinette, unanimously approved.



- Clarence Davids—Contract for summer watering of the hanging baskets. Motion to approve by Newsome, seconded by Karim, unanimously approved.
- APC—Contract for sidewalk power washing. Motion to approve by Nurss, seconded by Rogel, unanimously approved.
- CleanSlate—Contract for litter abatement and snow. Motion to approve by Thompson, seconded by Karim, unanimously approved.

### **Program Committee Report**

Commissioner Rogel, chair of the Program Committee, provided an update on two projects. The new art work for the 53rd and 55th Street viaducts is scheduled for installation on May 22, 2025. Publicity and a reception are being planned, with details to be provided at a future meeting. The Lake Park Metra Mural project has been cancelled at the mutual request of the SSA#61 and the artist. The RFP for this mural project is being re-visited and will be issued again in the fall.

### **Chairman Updates**

The chair encouraged everyone to start thinking about the upcoming budget for FY2026. He directed the commissioners to think about the individual parts of SSA 61 (such as 55th Street, west 53rd, Nichols Park, Lake Park), but to also think about the bigger picture and to consider if there are actions we should conduct that will benefit the overall footprint.

The next Commissioners' meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 22, at 11:00 in the Polsky Center. The meeting was adjourned at 12:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
George W. Rumsey, Chair