



Meeting Minutes

July 28, 2021 SSA 28-2014 Commissioners Meeting (via Zoom)

(Numbers correspond to agenda items from the meeting.)

1.) The meeting was called to order by Mary Garcia at 12:03pm (CDT).

2.) Attendance:

Commissioners Present: Mary Garcia, Chris Murphy, Joe Oliveri, Moe Taleb, Dr. Juanita Mora, Jack Wroblewski

Commissioners Absent:

Sole Service Provider Staff: Michael Giordano, Nina Kosinski

Guests: Michael DiMeo (Six Corners Chamber of Commerce Board President)

3.) Public Comments: None

4.) Minutes from the June 23, 2021 SSA 28-2014 Commissioners Meeting were reviewed. Mary Garcia asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Joe Oliveri made a motion. The motion was seconded by Moe Taleb. All others were in favor.

5.) The retention of the Six Corners Chamber of Commerce as the Sole Service Provider (SSP) for SSA 28-2014 in 2022 was reviewed. Mary Garcia asked for a motion to approve the Six Corners Chamber of Commerce as the Sole Service Provider for SSA 28-2014 for 2022. Moe Taleb made a motion. The motion was seconded by Dr. Juanita Mora. All others were in favor. The vote to approve the Six Corners Chamber of Commerce as the Sole Service Provider for SSA 28-2014 in 2022 was unanimously in favor of approval.

6.) The offered services for SSA 28-2014 in 2022 were reviewed. These services will include: snow removal/salting, sidewalk litter abatement, garbage receptacle emptying, landscaping, and common area maintenance/repair. Moe Taleb made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Dr. Juanita Mora. All others were in favor.

7.) The 2021 2Q Workplan for SSA 28-2014 was reviewed. Mary Garcia asked for a motion to approve the 2Q Workplan for SSA 28-2014. Joe Oliveri made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Moe Taleb. All others were in favor.

8.) New Business / Administrative Update:

a.) Leo and Betty (new hires for SSA 28-2014) have been performing light maintenance and litter removal throughout the SSA.

b.) Our new streetlight banners are currently awaiting approval from the Chicago Department of Transportation. auditor, Cary J. Hall has finally received the working papers that were delayed from the previous auditor. Cary is currently working on the audit.

c.) Michael DiMeo spoke about the draft version of the 2020 Audit for SSA 28-2014. Keep in mind that the Six Corners Association was the Sole Service Provider for SSA 28-2014 in 2020. In January 2021, a little over \$111,000 was transferred to the Six Corners Chamber of Commerce to be placed into our newly created bank account for SSA 28-2024. These dollars represent unused/carry over funds for SSA 28-2014 from the previous years. Therefore, this money represents our starting point. However after taking a look at page three of the draft audit, we see a cash equivalent of \$251,000. That's a negative difference of \$140,000 [from what we received in January 2021]. It's a unique situation when the auditor shows a memo for this as less allowance for uncollectible taxes of \$140,000. In our review of other annual reports from SSAs, we have never seen this kind of notation. So, a deeper dive into the 2020 Audit seems to be required as there doesn't seem to be an explanation for the unexplained fund shortage. Bear in mind that the auditor can only work from the previous year's audit and whatever workpapers that have been submitted in order to establish a starting point for the current audit. All of this is in direct conflict with the Six Corners Association's 2019 Annual Report. In that annual report, it states that SSA 28-2014 received a one-time TIF surplus of \$147, 276 in 2019 that would be used for the revamp of streetscape elements within the SSA. Specifically, this money was to be used for new garbage cans, benches, bike racks, light pole bases, and kiosk revamping. All of these items were to be installed/facilitated in the first and second quarters of 2020. Additionally, this money would also be used to install new lighting on Milwaukee Avenue and to create illuminated art that would adorn some

of the vacant properties throughout the SSA. That's a \$140,000 discrepancy that commissioners [as fiduciaries] should not accept without a deeper dig into the specifics. Michael DiMeo suggested [to commissioners] that the management team of the Six Corners Chamber of Commerce should meet with the Alderman and our auditor, Cary J. Hall, with the intent of scheduling a meeting with the Chicago Department of Planning and Development in the hopes of explaining this discrepancy. To summarize, we have a direct conflict with what is being stated as 2019 Receivables for the Six Corners Association and what was ultimately transferred to us in January 2021. Moe Taleb inquired about these intended improvements [from the TIF surplus of \$147, 276] for SSA 28-2014 outlined in the 2019 Six Corners Association Annual Report. Michael DiMeo mentioned that some of these assets are visible. Michael asked commissioners to recall questions last year directed towards Amie Zander, the Executive Director of the Six Corners Association, regarding the benches that you see throughout the SSA. In response to this questioning, Amie mentioned that the benches were purchased three years ago; but the Six Corners Association never received the permits to install them. Michael alluded to several emails that he received as a SSA 28-2014 Commissioner that are in direct conflict to what is being seen here. Michael DiMeo resigned as a SSA 28-2014 Commissioner at the end of 2020 prior to joining the Six Corners Chamber Board of Directors. An auditor's job is to make everything balance - it doesn't mean it's right. This is why a meeting with the Alderman, our auditor, and the Department of Planning and Development is being requested. Chris Murphy asked if foul play is suspected. Michael reiterated that that is not something for us to determine. This is something that would be forwarded to the Inspector General and Illinois Attorney General if deemed necessary by the City of Chicago. The Six Corners Chamber of Commerce is most concerned with the dollars that represent our starting point in 2021. Either this starting point needs to be adjusted so we are not held responsible for that shortfall [in an audit of 2021] or a reasonable explanation for the location of this money needs to be found. A lot of good can be done for the businesses within SSA 28-2014 can be done with this unaccounted for money. The tax-paying business and property owners (e.g. stakeholders) at Six Corners deserve this. Joe Oliveri mentioned that the draft audit [for 2020] should remain a draft until this discrepancy can be resolved. Keep in mind that in an audit, we only see the SSA side of the books; we don't see the books of the SSP. Whether the intended improvements outlined in the Six Corners Association's 2019 Annual Report constitute a spend of \$147,000; that is a separate conversation. Mary Garcia expressed a desire to look into this further. Michael DiMeo stated that he felt generally accepted accounting principles were not followed - one should not have carryover or write offs without explanations and then continue to carry them forward. One should not merge two entry lines on a balance sheet to try and hide that dollar amount. Given the total fund balance as of December 31, 2020 was stated to be \$251,461 and the amount transferred to the Six Corners Chamber of Commerce in January 2021 was less than that; Joe Oliveri recommended that we request a forensic audit for 2019 and 2020. Michael DiMeo mentioned that he would ask the auditor for a forensic audit quote as this expense would need to be approved by commissioners in a subsequent meeting.

d.) The Silent Film Society is submitting an application for an Adopt a Landmark Grant to benefit the Portage Theatre.

e.) There is concern that the City of Chicago is attempting to sell the parking lot on LaPorte Avenue that serves the Six Corners Shopping District. More details will follow at our August SSA 28-2014 Commissioners Meeting.

9.) Mary Garcia asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joe Oliveri made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Jack Wroblewski. All others were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 12:26pm (CDT).