

Howard Street & Jarvis Square Special Service Area #19
Factory Theater -1623 W. Howard St
Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 9 am
Meeting Minutes



Members present: Charlotte Walters, Jenni Smith, Dave Skora,
Tim Amos

Others present: Cindy Plante, RPBA
Zach Joseph, 49th ward
Jason Kaiser, Howard & Evanston Community Center (pending
commissioner)

1. Call to order

Meeting was called to order at 9:05

2. Public comment

Charlotte asked about Evanston police activity on Howard.

Cindy will follow up with the City of Evanston - their Howard Street SSA also meets this afternoon.

Jenni asked about getting Brandon and the crew to empty garbage cans in Jarvis alfresco.

David asked about maintenance of the flower boxes - lots of liquor and beer bottles are being left in the planting areas and the underground sprinklers near Howard/Rogers/Greenview are also no longer working - who's responsible for the sprinklers. Cindy thinks it's CDOT. Zach will follow up on this with CDOT.

Jason shared that HECC's annual program showcase is coming up at the family center and is free to attend. Jason asked if anyone was able to attend Carnivale over the weekend and if so how it went, and do we know if Juneteenth is happening this year.

Charlotte and Zach reported that the weather was good and turnout seemed strong, lots of spillover foot traffic at Lost Eras; the only complaint they've heard from people has been that they didn't have enough food vendors participating. Jenni and Cindy acknowledged that it's difficult to get food vendors for a single-day festival. Dave would like to be more proactive about reaching out to the organization in the future about coordinating on the event. Zach added that they did actually get permits for the parade for the first time this year. Jenni agreed but would

also like to see someone from the organization participate and present in meetings.

Cindy added that the organizer for Juneteenth did reach out about putting a request on this meeting but there wasn't a lot of detail and it was too close to the event date. Zach hasn't heard anything about Juneteenth. Jenni added that there's a Northside Queer Pride event in the works for Paulina and there is a team working on permitting for it.

3. Approve meeting minutes from last meeting

Jenni moved; Charlotte Seconded

Approved 4-0

4. YTD financials update

Cindy gave a summary of the financials through April 30, which were shared with commissioners via email. Cindy noted that for much of the tax proceeds we've received, we were directed to log them as revenue for 2019 and earlier, which is reflected on the profit & loss statement. We're also hearing that we may see second installment payments delayed again this year.

5. 2025 annual audit

Cindy shared that the audit is underway but the auditors weren't ready to present today, so we will either have to schedule a special meeting next week, or more likely after the 6/1 deadline to submit to the city. The June meeting will also be our preliminary budget discussion meeting ahead of the required July budget meeting.

6. Jarvis Square Music & Arts Fest Sponsorship Request (7/18) - \$1400

Jenni presented the request for Jarvis Square Music and Arts Fest on July 18.

Jason asked if there are vendor opportunities at this or any of the Jarvis festivals - HECC has program participants that are entrepreneurs looking to vend and festivals. Jenni says yes and will follow up with him about this offline. Cindy will also forward the vendor application for Chalk Howard Street. Promotional materials are already made and include the SSA logo already. It may be smaller than in previous years because of the economy; a lot of sponsors that usually contribute are cutting back. Funding is to assist with marketing, staffing, and equipment.

Charlotte moved to approve the request. Tim seconded.

Approved 4-0.

7. Pierogi Fiesta Sponsorship Request - (8/8) - \$1740

Jenni presented the request for Pierogi Fiesta - Renee and Sandra started the event many years ago. They wanted to call it pierogi fest but the name was trademarked so it's pierogi fiesta - they serve multiple varieties of pierogies and margaritas, and there's a pierogi toss game.

Charlotte moved approval; Tim seconded.

Approved 4-0

8. Twilight Market Sponsorship Request - (multiple dates) - \$1360

Monday night farmers market running from 4-8pm, running from June 1 to October 26. They've got vendors for meat, cheese, eggs, and produce, and are looking for a knife sharpener. Spaces are available for 3-4 cottage food sellers each week. They're aiming to have one of the booths be a service business - knife sharpening, bike repair, etc.

Charlotte moved approval; Tim seconded

Approved 4-0

9. Jarvis Alfresco maintenance request - \$462.64

Jenni shared the request for maintenance - Jarvis took the barrel planters that were being used on Glenwood when the other alfresco closed, but they need to be repainted and planted, and hoping to add a Little Free Library and trinket box. Staff is willing to do the work to keep costs down. Jenni is requesting the cost for paint and supplies and pizza for the volunteers.

Charlotte moved approval; Dave seconded.

Approved 4-0

10. Social media maintenance & photography

Dave would like to have physical flyers or directories to hand out at Jarvis events to promote Howard Street and the SSA as a whole. Tim suggested focusing on a QR code to point people to the website, which already covers most of this info. Cindy agrees - keeping print materials up to date is difficult and more costly than digital. Jenni would like to one day have a gateway

signifier for Jarvis but realizes that it would take a lot of funding; her concern about postcards or handouts is the litter that it would generate on the alfresco. We still have the one poster kiosk on Jarvis alfresco. Cindy added that she hasn't forgotten about restoring the existing kiosk by Elite Auto, we may have the budget available to revisit it this year since we couldn't last year.

This discussion leads us to the social media maintenance and photography contract - A5 didn't submit a bid in the most recent call for proposals and will be wrapping up in the next two weeks. We'd previously discussed awarding the contract for SSA19 to Carrie Jackson based on her submission but hadn't taken an official vote on it. Jenni said she was really impressed with Carrie's proposal and pricing, and is excited at the prospect of working with her on social media for Howard Street. Jason asked about contract pricing. Cindy shared the pricing from her proposal, which represents a significant savings over what we had been paying the previous company for a similar scope of work.

Jenni moved to approve a contract award to Carrie Jackson. Charlotte seconded.

Approved 4-0

Dave asked if we can have Carrie attend the next meeting. Cindy will invite her to the June meeting.

11. Public Way & One Howard updates

a. Chalk Howard Street

Cindy reminded commissioners that the event date is August 22. This year's event will run from 11am to 7pm. We're starting to hire professional chalk artists and vendor applications are open now until July 15.

b. Intersection art project

Cindy has met with Gallagher Asphalt last week; they're talking with the product manufacturer about ways we can alter the design to bring costs down, most likely by narrowing the color palette and taking out some of the smaller details. We're also looking at phasing the project to do one intersection this year and one next year. We expect to get updated drawings and pricing from them in the next few weeks.

c. Wayfinding kiosk

Cindy is working with the manufacturer on permitting for installation later this year and the deposit has been paid.

d. Metra mural

Cindy shared that the viaduct lighting project that Evanston is funding for both the Metra and CTA viaducts is being delayed due to issues with power access, and likely won't happen until 2027 at the earliest. In the meantime we've also been talking with the artists that installed the existing mural on the south side of the viaduct about a proposal for new art on both sides of the viaduct that will also complement the updated lighting. Originally we were looking at restoration of the existing artwork that was installed in 2014, which Metra had given permission for. Concerns about wall conditions and level of detail in the artwork made straight restoration not feasible or cost effective, so we're now looking at an updated design that would include both sides of the street.

Charlotte would prefer to use a different artist.

Cindy acknowledged Charlotte's concerns and shared that there would still be some opportunity for review and feedback on proposed design; we want to be conscious of the fact that artists are professionals and respect the time they put into preparing designs and concepts, particularly for a project of this scope.

Dave asked Zach about the timeline on the water feature installation for Willye White.

Charlotte asked about the opening timeline for American Islamic College. Cindy shared that RPBA had been in touch with getting them on the calendar for a ribbon cutting but they weren't ready. Zach said they had been in contact with the 49th ward office about city-related needs.

Charlotte also wants Cindy to follow up with the maintenance team and Patch about cleaning up the in-ground planting areas around Howard & Greenvue. Cindy will reach out to Brandon and to the Patch team. Jenni asked if it would be possible to restore or repaint the pavement mural on Jarvis alfresco. Cindy will look into it.

Zach shared that Mandala Arts is hosting a live jazz performance at the Howard CTA station tomorrow from 5-7, they're also doing a press conference with the new CTA president as part of this.

12. Adjournment

meeting adjourned at 10:07

Next SSA Commissioners Meeting: Wednesday, June 17, 2026