

Howard Street Evanston Special Service Area #10
Ward Eight - 629 W Howard Street
Wednesday, June 17, 2026 at 2 pm
Meeting Minutes



Members present India McKay, Monica Picchietti, Barbara Carlson,
Jeremy Denny, Shelley Carillo (by phone)

Others present Cindy Plante & Ana Bermudez, RPBA
Katie Boden, City of Evanston

1. Call to order

Meeting was called to order at 2:04

2. Public comment

Cindy shared a reminder about the city's parking survey for businesses. Monica and India have already responded, Katie shared that they got over 90 responses on the first day. There will be more opportunities for businesses to weigh in on parking policy beyond this. Cindy shared that she's also met with new management at Gateway center, they're willing to work with folks on renting out the parking deck for valet use.

Barbara asked about Seven Star events; Cindy said RPBA has been trying to get in contact with Lenice about an upcoming event and hasn't heard back. Shelley shared that she's on a committee with Lenice that meets tonight, so she might see her there, though Lenice wasn't at the last meeting.

Barbara asked about Culture Connect. Cindy asked if anyone has contact info for this business that we could pass along to Carrie for photography and marketing. Katie shared that they're pursuing a special use through zoning for ticketed events. Shelley will share her contact info.

Barbara asked Katie for an update on landscape planters. Katie shared that they have onboarded a new landscape company and they're saying they plan to have plantings done by next week - they've had delays across all the business districts.

3. Equipment storage & transportation

Cindy thanked India for sending around storage unit quotes. Currently the plasticades, step and repeat, and tote bags stored at Peckish Pig and also the newer items (tent, signage, fans,

tablecloths) that are all at RPBA. India doesn't have space to store it at Peckish anymore and wants to consolidate it somewhere that's still easy to move to and from our events, and has proposed the Lockup Storage at 1832 Juneway behind the Howard CTA yard.

Katie added that part of the plan for Callan Plaza was to include moveable seating and tables, and turf tile that would also need to be stored. It might be possible to have the city help move stuff along with the shared Evanston Thrives shared equipment, but there would be costs for doing so.

Jeremy asked about what size we'd want to get. Katie shared the pricing and size list for the lockup space behind the CTA station on the Evanston side. Jeremy and Monica proposed a 10x10 unit at \$189/month or \$2,268/year. Cindy shared that there isn't a specific expense category for storage in the 2026 budget but could classify this in the special events category for now and create a new storage category when we write the budget for 2027.

Jeremy moved, India seconded.

Monica asked about adding shelving for stuff in any storage unit we get. Cindy agreed.

Approved

4. Social media maintenance & photography updates

Cindy shared updates - Carrie is getting started with reaching out to businesses to schedule photography and develop content. Ana added that we've shared a list of all the businesses with Carrie so she can make sure that we're following them all and they're following them back.

We've already seen a bump in the number of followers since she took over. Monica added that Carrie has also attended her recent event at PalmHouse and took photos. Barbara asked if Carrie was selected for any of the other social media contracts that RPBA had out for bid. Cindy replied that Carrie was also awarded the contract for the Chicago SSA for Howard Street and Jarvis Square, which

5. 2026 event calendar

a. Main Street Fair - 6/27

Cindy shared that all the equipment has been ordered and arrived except fans.

Jeremy plans to be there all day and said that Catherine put the Howard Street booth together with the Main-Dempster one on the site plan. Shelley also plans to be there the whole day - it will be two booths. India shared that they're allowed to do giveaways but can't sell food or beverages. India plans to be there for part of the day. Load-in instructions haven't been received yet.

Katie suggested doing a raffle or giveaway to collect people's email addresses or get people to follow on socials. Cindy has sent out emails to businesses to ask if folks want to include coupons or menus in the tote bags and hasn't yet gotten any responses. The deadline is next week. Jeremy is planning to do stickers.

Jeremy would also like to print an info sheet or card on what the SSA is. Katie suggested collecting email addresses to send that information out afterwards. India mentioned that Matt had suggested doing a mailer to adjacent residents too for this and would like to explore this further.

b. Block Party/ Callan Plaza Ribbon Cutting - 8/15

Cindy asked Shelley if she'd had any success finding the site plan drawing or documentation from when this was held last year that we can use for starting on permitting submissions. Katie shared that this can be hand-drawn but does need to show how the space will be laid out. Shelley shared that she has one from Small Business Saturday that she can share.

Katie added that there will be more usable space on Callan because of the installation of pavers. Everything will be done by August except the overhead lighting - the city was expecting updated installation pricing on lighting sometime this week. We will need to also talk about landscaping after this - they're installing cells under the paver surface to protect the tree roots long-term. Cindy suggested putting this on the agenda for the July and August meetings.

Cindy asked about timing for the block party - noon to 5? Shelley confirmed the times and said that we'll still need barricades for the alley. Cindy asked about whether there

would be space for a fire truck since that was a concern that Shelley brought up previously. Katie suggested having the fire truck in the Palmhouse lot instead. Monica said possibly unless there's an event that day. Shelley said they usually come around 3 or 4 towards the end of the block party, but it's an open window on timing. Katie asked where they've set up previously. Shelley said they usually park where Callan plaza is now and shoot water across the alley so the kids can play in the water all the way across the alley. We'd need to be able to take the bollards down in order to have the truck come through. Katie said that the bollards are heavy and require a forklift to move on the Howard Street side; there won't be bollards on the northern side - those would be type 3 or jersey barricades. Cindy asked if it might be better to rent an inflatable water feature instead of having the fire truck? Shelley is open to this as long as there's some sort of water element for kids. Katie added that they can use the giant jenga and checkers and stuff from Evanston Thrives too. Ana suggested using it for the Main Street fair. Shelley has it right now. Cindy will start making calls about water slide quotes and follow up with Katie about potential hydrant access.

c. Halloween Trick or Treat - 10/30, 4--7pm

Cindy asked what if anything we want to have on the plaza during the trick-or-treat event? Shelley suggested music and costume contest. Katie and Cindy asked about having the inflatable movie screen out, which had been discussed previously. Cindy could set up rights, it's usually about \$400. Jeremy and Shelley suggested including a popcorn vendor or candied nuts or something too. Jeremy asked about AMC. Katie said they're going to be closing the Evanston AMC location temporarily for an upcoming renovation project, maybe they'd be interested in sponsoring. Cindy suggested starting the movie around 5:30 or 6 and asked for suggestions - Hocus Pocus or Nightmare Before Christmas? Hocus Pocus was the consensus. Katie excused herself for another meeting starting at 3pm.

d. Turkey distribution - 11/22

Cindy asked about times. India suggested narrowing down the time window from last year because it was advertised more widely. Last year it was 125 meals distributed by the SSA - including the turkey, beans, stuffing, and dessert mixes. Shelley would like to get tote bags for this with our branding since last year the bags were jewel bags. Jeremy suggested getting a larger bag and including individual business logos in addition to the Howard Street logo. India said last year it was 2-6pm which was too long. Shelley and Jeremy suggested shifting it earlier - 11am-1pm. Shelley suggested doing it on Callan Plaza for visibility.

Jeremy asked about having a way to put up banners to promote events on Callan Plaza, or a kiosk for signage. Cindy said this would be a question for Katie and will follow up with her separately.

e. Small Business Saturday - 11/2 holiday Event - 12/12

6. One Howard Street Updates

Cindy shared updates on the metra viaduct mural proposal and intersection art, and gateway signage.

Shelley said that the litigation with her current landlord is going in her favor, and she's been in contact with the owners of the dispensary at Howard and Clark about moving into the former cafe space starting in July.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:17