

Howard Street & Jarvis Square Special Service Area #19
Factory Theater -1623 W. Howard St
Wednesday 7/15, 2026 at 9 am
Meeting minutes



Members present: Charlotte Walters, Dave Skora, Tim Amos, and
Jenni Smith (joining by phone)

Others present: Cindy Plante & Sandi Price, RPBA

Zach Joseph, 49th ward

Jason Kaiser, Howard & Evanston Community Center (pending commissioner)

Carrie Jackson, social media coordinator

1. Call to order

meeting called to order at 9:02 at 9am

2. Public comment

Commissioners and attendees introduced themselves.

Carrie Jackson introduced herself - she's the new social media manager for SSA19 Howard.

Her goals for social media are to share the personal stories behind the businesses in the district and reflect the uniqueness and richness of the neighborhood and its businesses. Getting to know the businesses and business owners is an important goal, working to communicate neighborhood vibes. Carrie also manages social media for Main Dempster Mile and Evanston Roundtable, as well as the SSA for the Evanston side of Howard Street.

Charlotte asked if Carrie has any particular strategy in mind for marketing Chalk Fest. Carrie said that Ana is managing most of it, but we are planning to do a paid ad. Cindy added that this is what we've done in previous years; we're also still working with Silverman Group on earned media, so trying to get TV and other media coverage that can also be shared and promoted on social - this is what we're doing for the Clark Street Taco Crawl Right now since that event is this week. Charlotte asked how many tickets have sold so far - Cindy said that advance tickets sold out yesterday after a WGN feature. Sandi said it's over 400.

David asked that Carrie keep in mind positive stories about public safety, and also asked to keep in mind regular day-to-day content rather than focusing exclusively on specific events,

which seemed to be how the previous firm was approaching content.

Carrie agreed.

Cindy added that one of the things that drew us to Carrie based on her other work has been connecting more frequently with other pages and creators and responding to dm's, which wasn't really happening previously.

Carrie agreed and noted that that kind of engagement is also important for the algorithm.

Dave asked Carrie to also prioritize including content from the park advisory council since they have events scheduled for the summer. Cindy has already shared some info about outdoor movies and kickball.

3. Approve meeting minutes from last meeting

Charlotte moved to approve, Tim seconded

Approved.

4. 2026 YTD Financials

Cindy presented the year to date reporting - we are in positive territory, though 2nd installment property tax collections are being delayed again this year.

The Recyclery reached out to Cindy earlier this week to inquire about moving forward with their facade project, which was approved for BIP rebate funding through the SSA last year contingent upon the SSA receiving tax proceeds, so it's been on hold. Since we now have the funds, Cindy plans to tell them they can go ahead and schedule their project. Charlotte asked for a recap about this project since it was over a year ago. Cindy recounted the project scope, which included replacement of the storefront glass and entry door and bringing the doorway even with the windows to create more square footage for the shop. They submitted estimates from Ardmore Glass and Evanston Glass & Mirror that were both over \$20,000. Our maximum rebate for facade projects is the lesser of 50% or \$5,000, so they're requesting the maximum rebate of \$5,000 for the project. Dave asked who owns the building. Cindy reported that the building is actually owned by Good News Partners, which operates the homeless shelter on Paulina that was also being renovated. They had applied for a facade rebate for the shelter project in 2024

but the project was delayed. Jason added that they also still own the SRO building nearby, but sold one of their affordable housing buildings recently. Although the shelter got some federal funding, they ran into environmental issues with the site that have increased the project cost resulting in delays. Tim is ok with telling Recyclery to move forward on their project since it was technically approved last year.

Charlotte asked about plans for street beautification on Paulina - is anything happening with that?

Zach said that the Warner building is supposed to break ground in September, so CDOT doesn't want to do major work on the street until after that construction is done, but there are plans to resurface Paulina to the north of that site later this year.

Charlotte would also like to see more weeding of tree pits. Zach will ask the ward superintendent to look at these. David said that Patch had a crew out for a few days last week working on the in-ground planter beds.

Charlotte asked if anyone has heard any updates about the opening of American Islamic College on Howard. Cindy has a contact person but hasn't heard anything in a while - we keep asking them about scheduling a ribbon cutting and they back out. Zach shared that as far as he's aware it's a delay with accreditation, nothing to do with building permits, inspections, or city licensing. Sandi will reach out to her contact at Becovic about this. Zach has been in touch with someone looking to launch a sports bar concept in the former Salerno's space.

5. 2027 budget & service provider agreement

Cindy gave a summary of the 2027 draft budget, reminding commissioners about the statutory cap of 30% on admin/personnel expenses and 25% cap on carryover, which are always the priority in writing these budgets. This budget does have an increase of just over 7% in the levy year-over-year, which requires us to designate a future meeting as a community meeting on budget. The reasons for the increase are detailed on the executive summary and none of them are particularly exciting - increasing cost for the maintenance team because of the minimum wage increase, increased dumpster costs, office utilities and supplies, etc. The only new thing is

an increase in the line item to replace banners next year, which has been discussed in previous meetings. Charlotte would like to prioritize replacing banners sooner if possible.

Charlotte moved to approve RPBA as the SSA service provider agency for 2027.

Dave seconded.

Approved.

Charlotte moved to approve the proposed budget for 2027. Tim seconded.

Approved.

6. Chalk Howard Street Updates

Cindy encouraged SSA commissioners to sign up for volunteer shifts using the provided signupgenius link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D48A4AD2AA7F8C61-63207840-2026#/>

Charlotte asked when posters will be distributed and asked for a stack.

Cindy reported that we're finalizing artist bookings and the deadline for vendor signups is today, so we're hoping to start updating posters accordingly and shifting attention to promotion in the next week or two.

Dave asked if we have photos from previous years that can be shared with Carrie and used on posters to promote this year's event. Cindy said that is the plan and we've shared our google drive photo folders with Carrie.

7. One Howard Street Updates

a. intersection art funding

Cindy reported that we got updated pricing from Gallagher Asphalt on the intersection art project at Howard and Paulina - they've brought the cost down but there's still a gap between the available grant funding and the updated (reduced) installation quote.

SSA19 hasn't spent anything in the public art category yet this year, though we had budgeted for Chicago Sculpture Exhibit, which we didn't actually do. Cindy proposed using \$11,000 from the SSA's public art budget to close the gap on the Paulina intersection project.

Charlotte moved approval. Tim seconded.

Approved.

b. viaduct mural

Cindy reported that she met with the artists and the City of Evanston earlier this week to discuss potential project timeline and logistics. There will be two contracts, one between the artists and RPBA and another between the artists and the City of Evanston. On our side, the funding will most likely be coming from a grant.

Charlotte asked about timing for installation - is it still next spring? Cindy said that early 2027 is still the goal, but the project timeline we're looking at also includes some community engagement around design this fall - one of the things we talked about doing was having a joint meeting between this SSA commission and Evanston's Howard Street SSA, taking the place of the September meeting for both groups, since both SSAs meet on the third Wednesday of the month.

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:04

Next SSA Commissioners Meeting: Wednesday, August 19, 2026