



SSA Commissioners Meeting  
Wintrust Loyola, 6420 N. Sheridan Rd.  
2pm, Tuesday, Jul 7, 2026

#### Meeting minutes

Commissioners present: Jennifer Clark, Sara Lukens, Stefanie Roti, Cesar Coronado  
Others present: Cindy Plante & Sandi Price, RPBA  
Zach Joseph & Madeline, 49th ward office

#### 1. Call to order

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 2:08pm.

#### 2. Public comment

Sarah shared some feedback on spring and summer landscaping.

Sandi asked Jennifer if the university's landscaping work on the porkchop planting area has been completed; Jennifer reported that it is done, though it will take some time for the plants to fully grow in. Jennifer added that the university has also installed some new fencing and lighting on Loyola Avenue.

Zach introduced Madeline, who recently joined the 49th ward office.

Cindy shared that ChiTea Hot Chicken and Mama's African Kitchen have closed, but the movie theater is expected to reopen soon, though we don't have a specific date.

Jennifer and Zach reported that there will be a community meeting on July 20th about potential redevelopment of the former St. Ignatius Church and school buildings on Loyola Avenue; the meeting will be held at the church.

#### 3. Approve minutes from previous meeting

Sara moved to approve the minutes; Jennifer seconded.

#### **4. YTD financials**

Cindy provided a summary of the financials, which were shared with commissioners via email ahead of the meeting. Spending is on track for the year relative to the adopted budget, and the SSA has a positive bank balance, though we have been informed that second installment property tax collections are going to be delayed again.

#### **5. 2027 budget & service provider**

Cindy presented the draft budget, which was shared with commissioners via email. We were informed by the city late last year that the district EAV for SSA54 has dropped by about 30%; we're not sure why, probably appeals? Because the overall EAV is lower, our levy from the previous year actually exceeds the statutory .75% tax cap, so we're not in a position to introduce any new programs or projects for 2027, and actually had to reduce the proposed levy compared to the current year, while also still staying under the 25% carryover cap and statutory 30% cap on admin & personnel expenses. With a budget that's relatively small to begin with, this wasn't easy to do.

Sandi added that those who were here in 2020 when we did the most recent SSA reconstitution, this sort of situation is one of the reasons we always push to consider an increase in the statutory tax cap at reconstitution time. Jennifer asked how long SSA54 has been in place. Cindy and Sandi reported that it was around 2010, since the initial ordinance allows for 10 years, and we did reconstitution in 2020 for a new 15 year term. For specific budget changes proposed for 2027, Cindy pointed to the executive summary page, which lists 17 individual line items in the budget that have gone up or down by 20% or more since last year, none of which are particularly exciting: increases in dumpster service, audit, office utilities and supplies, and maintenance crew wages; removal of a wayfinding signage line item and adjustments on bike rack maintenance and city permits.

Jennifer asked about the admin and personnel cap. Sandi responded that it's 30%.

Cindy added that this is actually a state requirement rather than a city one. Sandi added that with budgets this small, it can feel like pressure to outsource some SSA expenses - if we hire a marketing company it doesn't count against the admin/personnel cap, but if we have someone on staff doing this work it counts towards the cap.

Cindy reminded commissioners that in addition to approving the proposed budget for 2027, each SSA commission is also asked to approve a service provider agency for the upcoming year.

Jennifer moved to approve the 2027 budget as presented; Sara seconded.

Approved 4-0.

Jennifer moved to approve RPBA as the service provider agency for 2027. Cesar seconded.

Approved 4-0.

## **6. BIP applications**

Cindy left this on here in case the new owner of the movie theater wanted to submit a request for some planned work, but opted not to so there aren't actually any requests needing a vote at this time.

## **7. First Friday Music Series updates & 2027 dates**

Cindy reported on this year's First Friday live music events so far, which were held in May and June. The next one is scheduled for September. May attendance was limited by unseasonably cold weather and some rain; June saw strong attendance and participation as expected rain held off. There was no July event because of the holiday weekend and we usually skip August because people are out of town, and overlap with Lollapalooza makes staffing a challenge. These kind of gaps in the summer are always a bit of a headwind for marketing and momentum. For this reason, Cindy asked if commissioners would be open to shifting the timing for the summer music series, maybe to Thursdays instead of Fridays?

Jennifer likes the alliteration but understands the schedule challenges presented by Friday events and proposed Third Thursdays.

Sandi identified Third Thursday dates for the 2027 calendar as May 20, June 17, July 15, August 19, and September 16. This avoids overlap with July 4 and avoids the Memorial Day and Labor day weekends; Juneteenth falls on a Saturday this year, so the holiday would fall on Friday the 18th. Jennifer and Sara noted that students will be back at the university by August 19th.

Commissioners approved the shift to Third Thursdays for 2027.

## **8. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 2:59 pm.

Next meeting: September 8, 2026