



APPROVED

**Central Street Evanston
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 9, 2025**

Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Stacia DeSalvo
Dylan Johnson
Eric Green
Drew Beckmann
Sarah Weitz

Not Present:

Bane Srdjevic
Paula Danoff
Jim Konrad
Karen Graham

Staff:

Angela Shaffer

Agenda

I. Call Meeting to order: Stacia DeSalvo

Stacia asked for a motion to call the meeting to order. Dylan motioned to call the meeting to order. Drew seconded the motion. The meeting was called to order at 9:03am.

a. Approve [May 14 Meeting Minutes](#).

Stacia asked for a motion to approve the May 14, 2025 minutes. Drew motioned to approve the May 14 meeting minutes. Dylan seconded the motion. The Board unanimously agreed to approve the minutes.

II. Board Member Discussion: Angela/ Stacia

Angela presented the Board Term sheet and reminded everyone that they have the option to serve two two-year terms. Eric and Bane are set to complete year two in 2025. Angela asked Eric if he has interest in staying on the board. Eric said he does have interest. Bane was not on the call, but Angela and Stacia will follow up with him.

III. Treasurer's Report: Dylan Johnson

a. Tax Delay Discussion:

Dylan asked Paul if he had any updates regarding the delayed second tax levy collection. Paul reported that the tax bill is traditionally due August 1, but it's been reported that the tax bill will be delayed until September 1. Paul said it takes the City about 6 weeks to collect the funds, then there is a period of refunds, and then the City disperses the funds once they have the total net amount. This would mean a possible disbursement in November 1. Paul said if Central Street gets into a cash flow issue, the City might be able to distribute what they've received, but to be aware there might be refunds due, so the next distribution would be a decreased amount.

b. Financial Update:

Dylan reported total cash in the bank = **\$124, 436**

SSA 7 = \$109,627

SSA 8 = \$14,809

c. 2024 Audit in progress

d. Line of Credit Update:

Dylan shared that based on the potential delayed tax levy, if the funds don't come in this year, the SSA is looking at a shortfall of approximately \$46K. We have the option to tap into our \$50K line of credit. Interest rate is a floating prime rate, currently 7.5% +1 if we use the line of credit. If we needed to use the funds for approximately 6 months, we're looking at paying \$2K - \$3K in interest.

Stacia commented that after her conversation with Angela, it might even benefit us to use our line of credit. Our bookkeeper, Amy Ceisel, said some banks are closing credit lines that aren't being used. But for now we'll wait and see what happens.

Drew asked when the money might run out based on the schedule of events and the current cash in the bank. Dylan said it's not something we've discussed yet. Angela said our burn rate has been about \$21K and our heavy event season is just getting underway. Drew calculated that based on the burn rate it gives us about 5 months and we're in pretty good shape. Angela will look into it and report back.

Paul suggested we take a look at our ByLaws or The Ordinance to see what our maximum rate is. There is a possibility to raise the tax levy a bit. Paul doesn't advocate for it, but can help figure it out if that's something we want to consider.

Angela suggested that having Burl pay into the SSA would give us some additional funding, not that it would be significant, but everything helps.

Sarah asked if there's anything we want to cut back for next year so we can start to be proactive in our thinking for 2026.

-Dylan suggested that we take a look at what Ripple has been doing and ask ourselves if we think we're getting the ROI we hoped for with them. He thinks maybe we can cut them next year because \$2400 a month is significant.

-Sarah suggested that things can take time and we've invested so much with them already that we push them to work even harder for us this year and we consider cutting them next year.

-Angela said she had hoped to see them spend more time really getting to know our district and hasn't seen much happen there. However, she said she needs their help pitching for sponsorships and helping with busker fest, since it's the first time we've pitched for sponsorships and hopes to learn as much as she can about the process.

-Stacia said this is a great opportunity for Angela to gain knowledge and media contacts, and build skills for next year.

Sponsorship/Busker Fest conversation

Drew asked if we are looking for sponsorships. Angela said she's starting out with about \$5K in funds and we still need money.

Sarah asked if there is a sponsorship deck to share. She suggested Angela get it from Ripple and cc some of the board members so everyone is connected and we can make sure we are staying on track and that they know the board is wanting updates.

Sarah asked if Angela went to the Main Street event. Angela did not attend, but she saw photos. Paul commented that the Main Street event is actually put on by Rotary. Angela commented that Main Street and Downtown are in a great position to partner on events with some of the bigger organizations. Central Street doesn't have the same opportunities. Angela did provide a list to Ripple of organizations that sponsor Evanston events.

Drew suggested we need banks and realtors or realty companies to sponsor Central Street events. He said this is a good time because not everyone has spent their sponsorship dollars yet and they may still have some funds set aside. Angela said she's struggled to get Byline to respond with any interest after several rounds of correspondence.

Eric asked if the deck mentions the sponsorship dollar amounts. Angela confirmed that it does. Angela also said she consulted with Downtown Evanston and Main Dempster to understand where they start their sponsorship dollar asks. Our opportunities are in line and start at \$250.

IV. **Marketing/Events/Business Updates:** Angela gave a [slideshow presentation](#) with an overview of marketing/event/business updates.

a) MARKETING

2025 Marketing Goals:

Angela shared her big marketing goals in everything she does:

- * How to attract people to Central Street?

- * Will our initiatives attract visitors?

- Angela reported we are still on track with our overall marketing goals.

- Angela said she is bringing in two interns to help with some projects: Connie Harwood and Ellie Rosenberg.

b) EVENTS

- Angela said this year we have 10+ events on our calendar, and that's the largest number of events we've ever done. She said this gives us the chance to see what we think worked and didn't work and what we want to repeat in 2026.
- Angela reported that this year we've tried more consistent programming. First Fridays is a new concept for us, and one that takes place in many communities. Based on the turnout and feedback, she doesn't think Friday is the best night of the week for Central Street. She said we did get some business participation. She said Tag's Bakery has really stepped up to try new things this year. The Central/Prairie gallery district has also been participating for the first time.

First Friday event Feedback:

- 22 businesses participated in the first event. 13 participated in the second event.
- We received some negative feedback around the Pride theme from the community.
- Some businesses said they'd participate again, but suggested picking a different night.
- Some businesses said they don't want to pay employees to stay longer.
- Some businesses said they won't do it again. Not enough traffic.
- Stacia reported getting extra foot traffic on those Fridays.
- Drew said it was a good effort that we tried something new and that Heroines & Heroes gave people a place to be while they were waiting for their tables next door at Celtic Knot.
- Drew said he was disappointed to hear about the negative reaction to the Pride event. He said some people wished he had done more and even decorated.
- Angela said the reason this event worked well in other communities, especially with retailers, is that the retail businesses stepped up and embraced the theme. Ripple provided so many ideas for businesses to participate. Tag's was the only business that really embraced the theme and went all out.
- Retailers prefer to participate on a Saturday when they are already open.

Up Next: Sidewalk Sale, Sullivan Sisters Starlight Concert/Takeout Picnic, Busker Fest

Independence Park Grand Opening

- Angela thanked Drew for coming out and said it was a nice turnout and the park looks fabulous.

V. Business/City Updates: Angela/Paul

a. Construction Update

Angela reported that she has been attending weekly construction meetings and shares any questions or concerns from the businesses. She said the construction team has gone to great lengths to manage challenges and questions faced by business. The construction team is doing a great job of making their presence known.

b. New Business

- Outdoor Cafe opened in the former Tag's Cafe space
- Tea shop is taking over two spaces on the east end next to Poplar Pastries

c. Paul/City updates

Paul reported that he hasn't heard any complaints regarding the construction project, and he usually hears a lot of complaints. He said Sat Nagar and his team seem to be handling things well.

Paul reported that Central Street is the best performing district in the city. It has the highest occupancy rate and a strong retail mix and that the board should be proud of the work happening in the district.

With regard to sustainability projects, Paul said the City really needs to imbed some of those projects into their daily practice. He said the sustainability grants are primarily there to help individual businesses upgrade their systems and the funds run out quickly.

Paul said there are discussions happening to reduce fees associated with the events that take place in the SSA districts. For example, instead of the districts having to pay for additional garbage disposal or recycling during events, the City should create the budget to pay for things like that automatically as part of their policy.

Meeting Ended at 10:03 AM