



Approved

**Central Street Evanston
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 10, 2025
Zoom Meeting**

Attendees

Stacia DeSalvo
Dylan Johnson
Eric Green
Drew Beckmann
Sarah Weitz
Jim Conrad
Paula Danoff
Paul Zalmazek

Not Present:

Bane Srdjevic

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 9:04am.

a. Approve [July 9, 2025](#) meeting minutes.

Stacia asked for a motion to approve the July 9, 2025 minutes. Dylan motioned to approve the July 9 meeting minutes. Drew seconded the motion. The Board unanimously agreed to approve the minutes.

II. Treasurer's Report: Dylan Johnson

a. Financial Update:

Dylan reported total cash in the bank = \$92, 447

SSA 7 = \$86,530

SSA 8 = \$5,917

- Financial audit in the works

b. Budget Discussion / Vote in 2026 Budget

Angela gave an overview of the 2026 budget draft and presented the board with two budgets. One budget showed a negative final balance for SSA #8 and the other budget showed SSA #8 with a \$0 balance. Angela explained that with the current 70%/30% split, SSA #8 is budgeted to spend \$68,175 in expenses with a total income of only \$56,376. \$5,024 of the \$11,979 difference relates to the fact that there is a negative carryover from prior years (SSA #7 may have spent more than 30% some years). The remaining balance is due to budgeting more than the SSA will take in for 2026.

- Angela recommended SSA #7 transfer any SSA #7 dollars to SSA #8, owed from the 70%/30% split, and then modify both SSA budgets for 2026 to bring SSA #8 to a \$0 based budget.

Dylan recommended we consider thinking of Independence Park as a 90/10 split and everything else a 70/30 split. Angela said our SSAs were set up with the bank to allocate everything 70/30.

Angela shared that our Covid reserves have now diminished, and for 2026 she cut back the PR and added a line item for sponsorships. We will need to get sponsorship dollars to help with our event expenses going forward. She said going forward we'll need to plan zero dollar budgets and 2027 will require cutting back on our services if we want to leave two months of reserves for any emergencies.

Angela recommended sending the budget with the \$0 balance in SSA #8 to the City. Angela asked the board if they would like to move forward with the approval of the \$0 based balance in SSA #8.

Stacia asked for a board motion to approve and adopt the 2026 budget with the rebalancing to SSA #8. Drew motioned to approve the 2026 budget with the rebalancing to SSA #8. Sarah seconded the motion. The 2026 budget was adopted.

III. Business/City Updates: Paul Zalmezak

a. Tax Delay Update

Paul said he is hoping for an update at the end of October. Paul also said in 2026 when we prepare the 2027 budget, it's not just about cutting services to save money in the budget. If the SSA needs to increase the budget, that is an option and the SSA could increase the SSA tax. Angela asked how the board felt about that. Drew said he'd prefer not to go that route. Angela and Paul both agreed with Drew.

Angela mentioned the two largest expenses for the SSA are lighting and landscaping. She asked Paul if there was a way to renegotiate the Brightview contract since all three of our districts are using them. Paula and Sarah suggested getting a quote for our planters from The Contained Garden in Evanston. Angela suggested that there is a concern with who will maintain the sidewalk weeds and the trees and the tree

grates. Brightview also maintains the weeds along the mural wall on the side of Hogeve Music in the alley.

b. Burl Agreement

Stacia asked about the Burl Agreement process. Paul said we need to hire a lawyer and paper up a contract and present it to Burl with clear guidelines as to what they can expect. Paul said Katherine Gotsick is currently in the same situation with a business and working up a contract. Paul also explained a bit about how and why that property was not originally included in the SSA and how the building owner didn't want to be included.

c. Other Business

Paul didn't have anything to report

Jim mentioned that he reached out to Paul with a wheel tax question.

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

Overarching Goal: How to attract people to Central Street and spend money.

a. Sidewalk Sale

Angela provided an overview of the Sidewalk Sale.

Highlights: 1) Some businesses reported selling more regular priced items than sale items; 2) Businesses in the construction zone still did okay; 3) Many businesses put out less merchandise than the year before; 4) Rain put a damper on some of the outside sales; and 5) Social post views were up 65% in July / 29% by non-followers.

b. 4th Annual Takeout Picnic:

Angela provided an overview of the event. It was presented in partnership with Evanston's Starlight Concert Series, so the SSA cost was minimal.

Attendance = 700 + 10 businesses offered takeout specials.

Feedback: Businesses had people come into their place for the first time ever.

Drew reported that the turnout was fantastic, but the downside for him was that his business became the restroom stop. Angela mentioned there were portable toilets.

c. Busker Fest: WGN/CBS

Angela shared that the Fest was coming up September 20. Currently have 13+ entertainers, including Mayor Biss juggling fire.

Angela reported she'll be on WGN and CBS is coming to Central Street for 3 hours to promote the event live on television.

d. Hello Lamp Post

Wayfinding signs are installed throughout Central Street. Evanston's Public Works team put up the signs on lamp posts throughout Central Street. The signs capture various questions asked about Central Street from visitors and captures who the visitors are that are asking the questions (Resident, visitor, student)..

Paula asked if we can capture the information about the person asking questions so we can reach out to them. Angela said it's not set up that way but she can look into it. Users are directed to the Art Center by way of the website link. Paula offered ideas for measuring the success of the Hello Lamp Post project - offering to add it to her internal EAC surveys. Angela said she and Paula can discuss.

- e. Central Street Construction. We will not have holiday lighting on Green Bay Road this year. We will be adding lights to Mack's Bike & Goods fence and Heroines and Heroes rooftop.
- f. Stacia asked about the October Moon Fest and if that's happening. Angela explained that she had it on the calendar, but no one from ASPA reached out to her so she didn't know they were still planning to do it. Angela learned that ASPA wanted Central Street to be more involved than originally discussed, and when ASPA finally connected with Angela, she was planning Busker Fest and would have had only two weeks to help promote and put together Moon Fest, which is not sufficient. ASPA said they will revisit in 2026.

V. Annual Meeting Discussion: Stacia DeSalvo/Angela Shaffer (10 minutes)

Angela asked Paula if they could use the Art Center Space again and Paula said she would look into it. The board had no additional comments or questions.

Other Business: Northwestern Updates

Jim provided an update that there had been a lot of restructuring at Northwestern and within his department. Peter Braithwaite is no longer there and they will be hiring a new person involved in connecting with local business outreach and restructuring the Wildcard. Jim might ask Central Street to be involved in the restructuring of the Wild Card.

Jim has been working closely with Turner Construction on initiatives to include Central Street businesses in serving the stadium workers in the west parking lot during lunch. Eric said The Fat Shallot and Ten Mile had been given the opportunity.

Jim said NU now has new buses and they are hybrid eclectic branded buses and he would like to explore the additional cost to expand the route during special events or during Friday and Saturday nights to support dining. He is looking into finding ways to get students to Central Street - especially during special events.

Angela asked Stacia to make a motion to go into closed session to discuss 2026 Board Slate and Governance matters. Dylan motioned and Drew seconded the motion. The Board went into closed session at 9:55 AM to discuss 2026 Board Slate and Governance matters.

-End Open Session & vote to go into Closed Session-

CLOSED SESSION (15 Minutes)

VI. Governance: Stacia DeSalvo/Angela Shaffer

Meeting Ended at 10:02 AM