



Downtown Evanston Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 9, 2025, 9:30AM

Creative Coworking, 922 Davis Street

Board Members Present:

Angela Valavanis, Creative Coworking (*Chair*)
Nathan Kostant, Golub (*Vice Chair*) *via phone*
Sarita Kamat, Artem Pop Up Gallery
Jim Nash, Farnsworth Hill

Not Present:

Gretchen Brauer, Wheel & Sprocket (*Secretary*)
Andrew McDonald, Rotary International (*Treasurer*)
Marty Cless, Core & Rind Hospitality
Paul Zalmezak, City of Evanston

Staff: Andy Vick, Laura Brown

- I. Call to Order at 9:31AM (Angela)
- II. Approval of September Minutes (Angela) **[Vote]**
 - a. Jim motioned; Sarita seconded. Board unanimously approved minutes.
- I. Treasurer's Report (Andy)
 - a. September Financials: We have dipped into negative numbers because we are still waiting for our 2nd tax levy payment. We have enough reserves to cover us for the remainder of the year, but we are also keeping our line of credit open at Byline Bank in case we need to use it.
 - b. Our request to increase the SSA #9 tax rate for 2026 has been submitted, and we are waiting for final approval from City Council in November.

II. Executive Director update (Andy)

- a. Andy's International Downtown Association (IDA) panel presentation went well, and the conference was good opportunity to learn and network with other town-gown cities
- b. Northlight Theatre Welcome Event was successful
- c. Moved into a new storage space at Sherman Plaza (more space/same cost)
- d. Downtown Evanston History Tour with Vibemap – ongoing promotion
- e. Street pole banner replacements and additions in progress around downtown
- f. Holiday lighting estimate coming soon; coordinating with Orrington Plaza, and adding lights to Chicago Avenue between Church and Davis
- g. 2025 Evanston Made Holiday Market Pop-Up a likely possibility at Church Street Plaza thanks to a connection from DTE
- h. Two possible mural projects on Elmwood and on Maple, both south of Davis
- i. Fountain Square fountain renovations planned for 2027, and updates on track to south plaza area in spring 2026
- j. Already started reaching out about 2026 event sponsorships

III. Director of Marketing update (Laura)

- a. Website visits were down in September due to less advertising and fewer events; ramping up advertising in November/December for the holidays
- b. Big Bite Night (Oct. 5): approximately 600 students attended; good feedback from restaurants
- c. Trick or Treat Stroll (Oct. 25): 35 businesses signed up to date

IV. Economic Development update (Paul was not in attendance)

V. Other Business (Angela)

- a. Approval of Evan Meador to replace Mitch Goltz on the DTE Board **[Vote]**
 - i. Sarita motioned to approve; Jim seconded. Exec Board unanimously approved Evan Meador as a new Full Board member.
- b. Approval of Brianna Gray to replace Brittany Wright on the DTE Board **[Vote]**
 - i. Sarita motioned to approve; Jim seconded. Exec Board unanimously approved Brianna Gray as a new Full Board member.
- c. November Full Board Meeting (*Tuesday, November 18, 4-5:30PM*)
- d. Canceling the November 13 Exec Meeting

VI. Open Discussion (All)

- a. Andy joining committee to support Chicago Stars move to Ryan Field in 2027

VII. Adjournment at 10:07AM (Angela)