Special Service Area #76 Commission

Date: August 25, 2026
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: The Magnificent Mile Association Offices / Hybrid
Attendance: Stephanie Knight, Julie Cameron (Commissioners); Austin Faison, Kimberly Bares, Liz Gilbert, Sarah Kedas, Drew Polinsky (virtual) (TMMA Staff); Randall Harrington (Ward 42), Oscar Gomez (Starbucks), Gail Spreen (Public)

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Julie Cameron called the meeting to order. The Commission reviewed the agenda and proceeded with the scheduled business of SSA #76.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed and approved the minutes from its previous meeting.

Financial Report

Austin Faison provided an update on SSA #76 finances, including expenditures to date, anticipated year-end expenses and the need for budget reallocations prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Faison noted that the City's final levy amount was approximately $15,000 below the amount reflected in the Commission's adopted 2026 budget. He also reviewed accounts that were projected to exceed their existing allocations and accounts where funding remained available.

Commissioners discussed the Commission's authority to move funds among approved SSA budget categories during the year. Staff indicated that a formal reallocation schedule would be prepared for Commission consideration.

The Commission also discussed the timing of the remaining financial meetings for 2026, including the year-end budget and audit process.

Wayfinding and Signage

Staff provided an update on the SSA-funded wayfinding and signage project.

Commissioners discussed the intended outcome of the project, including the relationship between wayfinding, district identity and potential logo or icon development. The Commission also discussed how previous work completed by Firebelly should inform the current project rather than unnecessarily duplicating previous expenditures.

The Commission requested additional clarity regarding the scope of work, deliverables and potential options before committing additional SSA funding. Staff will continue discussions with the consultant and return to the Commission with additional information and next steps.

Business Improvement District Update

Faison provided an update on the effort to establish the Magnificent Mile Business Improvement District. Property-owner support had continued to increase, with approximately 58 percent support secured at the time of the meeting. Staff continued outreach to remaining property owners while preparing the filing materials required by the City of Chicago.

The Commission discussed the relationship between the proposed BID and the existing SSA and the importance of continuing the SSA's current work while the BID formation process proceeds.

Professional Development / IDA

Faison discussed his participation in the International Downtown Association Emerging Leaders Fellowship and lessons applicable to district management and the Magnificent Mile. Discussion included approaches used by other downtown and commercial districts and opportunities to apply relevant practices locally.

Additional Items

Staff provided updates on current SSA initiatives, including public art, district maintenance and other public-way activities.

The Commission discussed ongoing signage and wayfinding work and requested continued follow-up as project scopes and funding requirements become clearer.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:12 p.m.