

**Downtown Development Authority  
Meeting Minutes  
September 11, 2008**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Downtown Development Authority was held September 11, 2008 at 8:30 am at the DDA offices located at 416 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Those members in attendance were Paul King, Steven Kendrick, Phil Wahl, Commissioner J. R. Hatney, Julian Roberts, Cassandra Brinson, Legal Counsel Byrd Warlick and Executive Director Margaret Woodard. Guests and observers included DDA Office Manager Roxanne Walls, CADI Program Manager Jessica Fuselier, Tim Rausch of the Augusta Chronicle, Camille Price of Augusta Tomorrow, David Hutcheson of the Book Tavern, Matt Plocha and Lara Plocha of d(a)<sup>2</sup>, Dee Bruker of Sanford Bruker & Banks, Benjamin Casella of Casella Eye Center and Scott Giboney of Red Wolf.

Mr. Kendrick called the meeting to order at 8:35 am and welcomed everyone.

Mr. Julian Roberts asked for any suggestions, alterations or modifications to previous meeting minutes from August 14, 2008. With no changes or additions, Commissioner Hatney made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Wahl made a second to the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

In the Treasurer's Report, Mr. Wahl stated the total income year to date is \$295,854.21 and total expenses year to date are \$403,993.33. The total income shows a negative in the amount of \$108,139.12 due to SPLOSTS expenses. These dollars come out of our SPLOST accounts and even though they are expenses we do not have an off setting income item because they've already been realized as income. The balance sheet reflects total current assets in the amount of \$399,216.47, fixed assets in the amount of \$37,378.70 for total assets of \$436,595.17. Mr. Wahl made a motion to accept the report as information. Ms. Brinson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

In the Director's Report, Ms. Woodard stated the bonding proposal for the parking deck for the proposed hotel at the Commons was accepted by owner. Once details are finalized, the proposal will come before the board for approval.

The Ellis Street Streetscape contract has been signed for a not to exceed cost of \$105,000.00. The improvements will begin at the east side of the Doris Bldg. to the east side of 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The RFP has been issued for the Pilot Lighting Project.

Ms. Woodard commended CADI Program Manager Ms. Jessica Fuselier for leading the CADI program. Ms. Woodard is working on voluntary contracts to bring in the 700 block and to date Merryland Properties, the Chamber of Commerce and the History Museum have signed their voluntary contracts. Infrastructure reports have been completed. Safety Ambassador shifts have been extended until 10:00 pm for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings. All zones in the BID are tended to daily by the clean team.

Saturday Market on the River's summer season has ended. The balance in the Saturday Market account is \$14,756.18. Ms. Fuselier is raising money for next year and is on target to meet \$20,000.00 goal by year's end.

The RFP has been issued for the Harrisburg Survey and proposals are due October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Fundraising is underway for Phase II of Christmas decorations with the goal of \$45,000 from the private sector.

A Trolley Steering Committee has been selected and will meet Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>. A trip has been planned for Little Rock on October 16, 2008 and a public meeting has been scheduled for November 5<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Woodard and Mr. Warlick are assisting Mr. Barry White in purchasing the two properties that are necessary for the Tee Center. The property owners have received their appraisals.

The Economic Restructuring video has been unveiled to the Commission and the budget request for 2009 has been submitted to the city. Website updates and a newsletter are underway.

Mr. Kendrick asked Ms. Woodard to explain what the CADI voluntary contracts are about to the board. Ms. Woodard stated the BID boundaries end at Albion Way to the east. Morris Communications agreed to pay approximately \$32,000 annually to include the rest of the 800 block. We are working with the other property owners to agree as well. Even though the initiative was not started until July, Morris has agreed to pay the annual amount of \$32,000.00 while other property owners will pay for six months.

Mr. Kendrick asked about personnel for the Saturday Market now that Ms. Fuselier is the CADI project manager. Ms. Woodard stated Ms. Fuselier will finish out the last two markets and Ms. Woodard will assist in fundraising for 2009. A part-time position may be necessary in the future.

Mr. Kendrick asked Ms. Woodard about the trolley trip to Little Rock. Ms. Woodard stated money was budgeted to take 3 committee members on the trip. Little Rock is a city very similar to Augusta that has a trolley system and those attending will report back to the steering committee.

Ms. Woodard asked for a motion to accept the Director's Report as information. Mr. Wahl made the first motion. Commissioner Hatney made the second motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Under Economic Restructuring, Julian Roberts stated the ER committee had met to discuss support of the mayor's mixed-use baseball stadium at the Georgia Golf Hall of Fame site. This type of project goes to the core of our mission promoting economic

activity and we should support projects that bring commerce and people to downtown. The current facility is just a stadium and this is a mixed-use project will attract a lot more people on a regular and more consistent basis. This is just support of the concept, not the financing of the project. All of those issues will be decided when the city has control of the property. The ER Committee has prepared the following resolution that Mr. Roberts presented in the form of a motion:

“The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) supports the efforts to establish the concept for a mixed-use stadium and entertainment complex in downtown Augusta on the proposed GGHF site. The DDA further believes all efforts should be made to maximize private investment for the project. In addition, the DDA believes that further exploration of a multi-use stadium on the Golf Hall of Fame site should be built upon public support for the project, provide access to the Savannah River to the general public, and create additional entertainment opportunities ultimately improving Augusta’s appeal to its residents and visitors.”

Mr. Wahl made a second to the motion.

Mr. Kendrick called for discussion.

Commissioner Hatney asked if we were supporting the concept or the initiative. Mr. Roberts replied the concept.

Mr. King stated he is very concerned about funding, and that the lack there of means a big hit to the taxpayers. The existing stadium meets the current needs. Mr. King stated he is a season ticket holder and average attendance is four to five hundred people for forty games a year and he sees very little potential benefit to downtown. Mr. King presented two July 2007 articles he researched on the internet from the Baltimore newspaper, The Sun, regarding Ripken’s stadium in Aberdeen. Both articles state it was a dismal failure and therefore was a huge burden to the taxpayers, he could not support the project.

Commissioner Hatney made a substitute motion to postpone the vote until more details on financing are available.

Mr. King made a second to the motion.

Mr. Kendrick called for discussion.

Mr. Roberts stated that we have been asked to support the concept and the commission will have the final say on the financing.

Commissioner Hatney stated he made the substitute motion because he has a problem with the DDA, a subsidiary of the city, endorsing something the commission has not yet endorsed.

Mr. Kendrick stated the issue at hand is for the city of Augusta to gain control of the land and when financing details are available, the DDA's voice should be heard.

Mr. Wahl stated that while we respect the fact that we are funded by the commission, we do have the ability to make decisions separate from the commission and make recommendations to the commission. The Richmond County Development Authority, the Chamber of Commerce and the Convention and Visitors Bureau have unanimously supported this concept and we should support the concept and further investigation of it as well.

Mr. Roberts asked Ms. Woodard, whom he appointed to the Baseball Exploratory committee to comment on the proposed concept.

Mr. King called the question.

Mr. Bruker asked if it was possible for citizens to speak.

Mr. Kendrick stated there would be no comments from the floor.

Mr. Kendrick stated the motion to postpone the vote has been made and properly seconded. Commissioner Hatney, Ms. Brinson and Mr. King voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Kendrick, Mr. Wahl and Mr. Roberts opposed the motion. With a 3-3 vote, no action by the board was taken.

Mr. Kendrick stated that the previous motion to endorse the resolution by the ER Committee had been made and properly seconded.

Ms. Brinson stated she has no problem supporting the statement but is afraid the citizens will pay by additional taxes or higher ticket prices.

Commissioner Hatney stated he personally has no problem with the concept but does have a problem endorsing the location when the proponents of the concept have not conveyed to the governing authority the financing components.

Mr. Roberts stated support of the concept is to lobby to the governor to get the land in the city's control.

Mr. Wahl stated again that support of this project in concept enable a response to the RFI.

In closing, Mr. Kendrick stated that if we were to generically support an economic development project for the site, the question of financing still comes into play.

Mr. King stated the letter we have been asked to sign off on endorses a specific project with essentially a blank check.

Mr. Warlick stated the language of this letter is a statement in support of a baseball stadium on the river as an investment and it cannot be read any other way.

Mr. Wahl stated this is a concept.

Mr. Roberts stated there is no blank check.

Mr. Kendrick stated the question has been called and there is a motion on the floor to support the position statement presented by the Economic Restructuring Committee.

Mr. Kendrick, Mr. Roberts and Mr. Wahl voted in favor. Commissioner Hatney, Mr. King and Ms. Brinson were opposed. With a 3-3 vote, no action was taken by the board.

Under the Nominating Committee Report, Mr. Kendrick stated the committee had met to discuss replacements for Dr. Carter and Mr. Wahl whose terms have expired. The committee is recommending Mark Bowling, the owner of a medical management business and downtown resident and Cameron Nixon, Senior Vice-President of First Bank. Mr. Wahl made a motion to accept the committee's recommendations. Mr. King made a second to the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Bowling and Mr. Nixon's names will go the Commission for approval to the DDA Board.

Mr. Kendrick asked for a motion to have Commissioner Hatney re-appointed to the DDA Board. Mr. Wahl made the first motion and Mr. King made a second to the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Hatney's name will go to the Commission for approval for re-appointment to the DDA Board.

Under New Business, Mr. Kendrick reviewed the committee chairs for 2008 for all DDA committees. Ms. Woodard will speak with Commissioner Hatney regarding individuals for an East Augusta Committee.

Under New Business, Ms. Woodard stated the annual Terry School of Business Economic Development luncheon is forthcoming in January and we have been asked to continue our sponsorship in the amount of \$1,500.00. Mr. Wahl made the motion to approve the sponsorship. Mr. King made a second to the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

With no further business, Mr. Kendrick adjourned the meeting at 9:23 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julian Roberts, Secretary