



**DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**
of Augusta

**Downtown Development Authority of Augusta
Board Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2022**

The Downtown Development Authority held its monthly board meeting June 9, 2022 at 10 am at the Miller Theater located at 708 Broad Street.

DDA board members and staff in attendance were Jack Evans, James Heffner, Stephen King, Phuong Nguyen, Ashanti Lilley Pounds, Pastor Anthony Booker, Commissioner John Clarke, Executive Director Margaret Woodard, Project Coordinator Katherine Bonner and Jeb Murray, Legal Counsel.

Guests and presenters included Interim City Administrator Takiyah Douse, CSRA Lending President Randy Griffin, and Sue Parr, President & CEO of the Greater Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce.

Chairman Jack Evans called the meeting to order at 10 am and welcomed board members and special guests Takiyah Douse, Randy Griffin and Sue Parr.

Secretary-Treasurer Stephen King asked if there were any questions or comments on the consent items, which included the May 2022 minutes and financial reports. Mr. King referred to Note E on the financials. Georgia Power is finalizing numbers for the DDA façade/blight program. James Heffner made a motion to approve the consent agenda, with a second by Stephen King, and the motion passed unanimously.

In the Director's Report, Ms. Woodard updated the board on the following:

Economic Development:

1812 Slaton Street is completed and the CO was issued on May 27. Carla Delaney and her department were awesome to work with.

New business announcements and openings include Edwards Mercantile and Co., Manny's Sports Bar, Buona Caffè Coffee, Tip Top Taps Bar & Restaurant and Fetch 501. Taco Cat is hiring and will open soon. Pineapple Ink Tavern is rebranding and will open soon as well. Mellow Mushroom is expanding and moving to 1102 Broad Street.

The Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony for Georgia Legal Services on 5/19, and DDA staff coordinated the Embers of Hope Ribbon Cutting on 6/3 on Laney Walker Blvd.

Design:

Riverwalk Arches. Contract awarded to RD Brown in the amount of \$314,000. Jeb has contract under review. Once executed, the project will take 14 to 16 weeks.

DCA Grant. Application was submitted June 3 for Jones Street Alley Improvements. Project costs are \$1,145,661. Grant amount was \$1,031,095 with a city match of \$114,566.

City/DDA MOU. DDA has received the first allotment of \$175,000, and the check has been deposited in a dedicated account. MOU between the DDA and ACE for downtown maintenance has been drafted, reviewed by Jeb and forwarded to ACE. First quarterly update has been submitted to Dr. Malik and Ms. Donna Williams per the MOU.

Facade Grants. Available funds \$23,500. Taking no more applications. On the agenda today for approval is 1501 Broad Street.

Promotion:

Website refresh underway. New Customer Journey Reports and Downtown Highlights page has been updated. Phuong will update the office inventory report and manage the available properties page.

DDA was a sponsor for CANIKICKIT on 5/20.

The DDA website had 385 sessions and 856 page views over the last month.

Kiosks. Design is completed and expecting an August delivery. Azalea has started selling advertising and sponsorships. We are doing a 60-40 split. DDA can use the funds for maintenance and adding additional kiosks.

Organization:

Commissioner Jordan Johnson breakfast at May Park on 5/14.

Georgia Chamber Luncheon on 5/26.

Tniya Collins is our intern for 6 weeks thanks to Georgia Power.

Katherine Bonner has been accepted to the Leadership Augusta Class of 2023.

Under new business, Interim City Administrator updated the DDA on the following:

The Commission approved \$700,000 for Riverwalk improvements and \$333,000 for ongoing electrical issues at the Saturday Market. The City received \$8 million from Senator Warnock's office for infrastructure. Current projects include Boykin Road and Wilkinson Garden Basin areas.

The Commission will hold a retreat in August; \$25 million in ARP funds has been designated for greenspace and maintenance services; Juneteenth celebration on June 19 at the Augusta Common and July 4th celebration will be held at the Common as well.

Under new business, Randy Griffin with CSRA Lending shared with the board that they have made \$800 million in loans since 1987 with only 2 defaults. He is currently working with Jay Klugo on the Woolworth Building. Other SBA504 loans include Buona Caffè, Tacocat, Mellow Mushroom and Laziza. There is a fund of \$1.4 million ready to lend if you have a credit score above 630, use 10 percent of your own money and have a community impact such as minority-owned businesses. In closing, CSRA Lending has applied for new market tax credits for use outside of the Atlanta area in Georgia.

Under new business, Sue Parr presented a potential Wi-Fi project for the new 5th Street Pedestrian Bridge. The project has line of site technology for a public space and is cost-effective. The project has been peer-reviewed, and funding sources have been identified, along with potential partners. The installation and operation will be done by a downtown minority business. The right-of-way has been approved by the Engineering Department and the only box to check is the vertical infrastructure. The capital investment is \$12,500 and the annual operations cost is \$9,000. The Chamber will cover the first year of operations with a grant. Ms. Woodard said that the DDA has SPLOST VIII funds available to cover

the capital investment and asked the board to support the \$12,500 investment. James Heffner made the motion with a second by Stephen King and the motion passed unanimously.

Under new business, Chairman Evans directed conversation to the city ARPA funding and ongoing discussions with ACE regarding downtown clean-up. The Executive Committee recommended giving Ms. Woodard the authority to finalize the agreement with ACE and Augusta Tomorrow. The recommendation carried unanimously.

Under new business, Chairman Evans brought forward the Executive Committee recommendation for Ms. Woodard to finalize the Riverwalk Arches agreements. The recommendation carried unanimously.

Under new business, Ms. Woodard presented a façade grant request for 1501 Broad Street submitted by Jefferson Morris. The request was for \$5,000, and all invoices and paperwork were in order. Stephen King made the motion to approve, with a second by James Heffner, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Evans asked for a motion to go into closed session to discuss the potential purchase and sale of real estate. James Heffner made the motion, with a second by Commissioner Clarke, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Evans asked for a motion to come out of closed session. Stephen King made the motion, with a second by Ashanti Lilley-Pounds, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Evans asked for a motion to approve the sale of 26 8th Street to Morris Communications. Stephen King made the motion, with a second by Ashanti-Lilley Pounds, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Evans asked for a motion to approve the Purchase, Sale & Lease agreement with PJR Investments, LLC for the Lamar Building. Commissioner Clarke made the motion, with a second by Pastor Booker, and the motion passed unanimously.

In closing, Chairman Evans thanked the board for their engagement and time for this meeting of historical significance.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen King
Secretary-Treasurer