



**DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**
of Augusta

**Downtown Development Authority of Augusta
Board Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2022**

The Downtown Development Authority held its monthly meeting on September 8, 2022, at 10 am at Buona Caffè, located at 520 Reynolds Street.

DDA members and staff in attendance were Jack Evans, James Heffner, Stephen King, Phuong Nguyen, Pastor Anthony Booker, Commissioner John Clarke, Executive Director Margaret Woodard and Jeb Murray, Legal Counsel.

Guest and presenter Dr. Jermaine Whirl was also in attendance.

Chairman Jack Evans called the meeting to order at 10:04 am and thanked Buona Caffè for hosting the meeting.

Stephen King introduced the consent agenda, which included the August 2022 minutes and financial report. There were no questions or comments. Pastor Booker made a motion to approve the consent agenda, with a second by James Heffner, and the motion passed unanimously.

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

Economic Development:

Tyson Schuetze of Auben Realty has purchased 822 Broad Street (Pyramid Music).
The James multi-family project passed 6-4 through the Planning Commission.
Working with Embassy Suites and Lamar Building on their financing structures.

Design:

Riverwalk Arches are in fabrication. Project completion in October with a November unveiling.
Parks & Rec has received SOOFA bench replacement parts.
Second Quarterly Report submitted to City for ACE downtown maintenance.
Design Committee met 8/11/22 to begin discussions on blighted structures.
5th Street Pedestrian Bridge Wi-Fi project is underway.

Promotion:

Office Inventory Report Update underway.
Chamber of Commerce ad has been submitted.
Twitter account has been created for use on SOOFA Kiosks.

Bi-Monthly Report and Commission Presentation are in progress. 963 followers on Instagram (15.1% increase; 727 followers on Facebook (7.5% increase); and 925 pageviews and 430 sessions on DDA website.

SOOFA kiosks will ship on 9/23 with an October install date.

Organization:

Back to Business city event held 8/11.

Meeting with Mayor-Elect Johnson on 8/19.

Meeting with AU Foundation Site for update held on 8/23.

Choice Neighborhood Grant meeting on 8/25.

Meet Mingle Mesh Chamber Mixer 8/25.

Other:

Budget hearing held with City on 9/7.

Governor Kemp has announced \$250,000,000 in grants for improving neighborhood outcomes in disproportionately impacted communities. Eligible uses include parks, green spaces, recreational facilities, sidewalks, streetlights and neighborhood clean-up. Applications are due November 18. Up to \$2 million award per application and cities may apply for multiple projects.

Stephen King made the motion to accept the Director's Report as information, with a second by John Clarke, and the motion passed unanimously.

Under new business, Mr. Evans introduced Dr. Jermaine Whirl, President of Augusta Technical College, for an update.

Augusta Tech is working on multiple strategic projects, including a facility in McDuffie County for truck drivers and a 70,000 SF facility for welding in Columbia County.

Augusta Tech currently has a waiting list of 600 students for 23 health programs. Piedmont Summerville (old St. Joe's hospital) is providing 60,000 SF in the hospital and two floors in the medical building for training and classroom space as well as teachers. Everything healthcare will be on the campus and a January 9, 2023 opening is planned. They will graduate 200 nurses per year and there is an endowment in place to take care of expenses if the nurses stay and work in Augusta.

Johnson Family Cadillac Center has donated their facility to Augusta Tech on Walton Way. It is a 65,000 SF facility and the largest in Augusta. The project costs \$4 million, and Augusta National and Jim Hudson have each donated \$1 million. Augusta Tech is creating an Automotive Business Program, and the students will be operating the business.

Under new business, Ms. Woodard presented the application for a façade grant at 1119 James Brown Blvd. Before and after photos were included. The applicant spent \$9040 on improvements, and all

paperwork was in order. John Clarke made the motion to approve the façade grant, with a second by Stephen King, and the motion passed unanimously.

Under new business, Mr. Evans asked for a motion to change our board meeting to the third Thursday of the month at 10 am. Stephen King made the motion, with a second by James Heffner, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Evans asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. James Heffner made the motion, with a second by Pastor Booker, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stephen King
Secretary-Treasurer