

**Downtown Development Authority of Augusta
Board Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2024**

The Downtown Development Authority held its monthly meeting on January 18, 2024 at 10am at the DDA offices, located at 1101 Greene Street.

DDA board members and staff in attendance were Chairman Jack Evans, Vice-Chairman James Heffner, Secretary-Treasurer Stephen King, Phuong Nguyen, Pastor Anthony Booker, Executive Director Margaret Woodard, Project Coordinator Corbin Freeman, Media Specialist Tara Wood, Intern Holly Heizer and Legal Counsel Jeb Murray. Also in attendance were Sue Parr President of the Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce and John Clarke from The Augusta Press.

Chairman Evans called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and welcomed everyone to the first board meeting of the year.

Mr. King introduced the consent agenda, which included the October 2023 meeting minutes and October and November 2023 financial reports. There were no questions or comments. Mr. King made a motion to approve the consent agenda, with a second by Jack Evans and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Woodard presented the Director's Report, highlighting the following:

Economic Development

Lamar Building:

Developer is finalizing project financing / and final documents will be prepared for board approval including an MOU and Bond Resolution.

Marion Building:

Project is on pause due to interest rates and the economy.

Brunch House:

GC Loan Application was resubmitted as an SSBCI Loan and currently working on a P & L statement to submit to the foundation.

401 Greene Street:

GC Loan Closing anticipated in the near future. CO has been issued and closing documents are underway.

Microenterprise Center:

Additional grant research underway.

Metrics for Phase 1 have been completed.

Jeb Murray has determined an ad hoc committee under the DDA would be the best way to proceed with Accelerate Augusta in lieu separate board of directors. First Meeting will be scheduled for early February. Project Launch on December 7 was well-attended.

Working with City on budget overrun of \$1.4 million

Ribbon Cuttings:

Brandsmart	10/21
Trellis Coffee Shop	11/4

Earth Pantry 11/8
Coleman's Lunchbox 12/13

Other:

ED Committee met on 11/10. Project incentive checklist is underway.
Sunshine Bakery has been purchase by Brad Usry for a barbeque restaurant (Bradley's)
Will assist Tax Assessor's office on reclassification of downtown property.
Annual statistics will be completed by end of January.

Design

SPLOST Projects:

Arches 8th Street installation week of 10/23. 10th Street will be installed by end of April.
SPLOST reimbursements submitted to City for Marina, 5th Street WIFI, and SOOFA kiosks.
Balance of SPLOST for Jones Street Connector- will need board discussion.
Entertainment District Ordinance. We have been asked to assist on this.

Ace Cleanup:

7th Quarterly Report submitted to City.
\$275,000 remaining for blight program. This will be a priority for Q1 2024.

Other:

We have received \$25,000 from Georgia Power to continue the façade grant program and have received an application from Bradley's Barbeque.

Marketing

Tara is updating the DDA website and will work on a marketing plan for the SOOFA kiosks.

Mr. Evans made a motion to receive the director's report as information with a second by James Heffner and the motion passed unanimously.

Under **New Business**, Ms. Parr updated the board that she has been in conversation with TESLA in regards to charging stations in downtown Augusta. She feels this project would be better led by the DDA Design Committee with our knowledge of future projects and the upcoming TIA projects. Mr. Evans made the motion to approve a DDA subcommittee with a second by Pastor Booker and the motion passed unanimously.

Also under New Business, Mr. Evans asked the board to approve a Georgia Fellows Grant the DDA was awarded in December. The grant is to provide technical assistance from Vinson Institute on our Chronic Vacancy Initiative. They will provide \$8000 and the DDA will provide \$12,000. Pastor Booker made a second to the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Evans closed the meeting by encouraging everyone to continue collaborations and partnerships, keep the momentum going, and continue to create more scenarios for downtown success. Our initiatives this year include Accelerate Augusta and Chronic Vacancy and we need to make sound decisions as we move forward.

The meeting adjourned at 11:06am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stephen King
Secretary-Treasurer