



**DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**
of Augusta

Downtown Development Authority of Augusta
Board Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2025 at 10 am
DDA Offices, 1101 Greene Street

The Downtown Development Authority held its monthly meeting on February 20, 2025, at 10 am at the DDA Offices at 1101 Greene Steet.

DDA board members and staff in attendance were Vice-Chairman James Heffner, Commissioner Jordan Johnson, Secretary-Treasurer Stephen King, Phuong Nguyen, Pastor Anthony Booker, Executive Director Margaret Woodard, Media Specialist Tara Wood, Project Coordinator Corbin Freeman and Legal Counsel Jeb Murray.

Vice-Chairman Mr. Heffner called the meeting to order at 10:03 am and thanked everyone for attending our monthly Board meeting. Mr. Heffler continued by asking if there were any questions or comments about the consent agenda, then moved for a motion to approve. The first motion of approval was made by Pastor Booker, and Jordan Johnson made the second, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. King introduced the consent agenda, which included the January 2025 meeting minutes and Financial Reports. There were no questions or comments. Mr. King asked for a motion to accept financials. Mr. Heffner motioned to approve the financials with a second from Pastor Booker, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Heffner then handed it over to Ms. Woodard to present her director's report, highlighting the following:

Economic Development

Marion building: Going under contract with Crossgate partners based out of Birmingham, the team is waiting for confirmation on when the contract will be finalized.

Framework: Making significant progress, the Curtis Baptist Church has consolidated all its students and is planning student relocation.

Bradley's Barbecue: SSBCI loan has been approved.

New Business: Downtown is experiencing a net gain of 42-45 new businesses for 2024. There were 18 closures this past year.

Accelerate Augusta: Project is set for completion by the end of April, and we are planning a ribbon cutting ceremony for mid-May. The city has approved \$200,000 for roof repairs on the building. The logo was unveiled at a press conference held on January 28. Phase 2 discussions are already underway with partners about more incubators.



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Outdoor Adventure Center: An Illinois developer has been hired to design and manage the project, which is currently underway. The project includes a zipline and a ropes course.

AT Masterplan: Met with stakeholders and Gem consultants on 2/5. Coordination with the city master plan efforts is essential to ensure that proposed projects align with the overall vision of urban development.

Broad Street TIA Project: The public meeting was held on 2/6.

Other

Tech Net: The Tech Net event planning aims to highlight Augusta's offerings and engage visiting companies in local housing projects. We could contribute by collaborating with the GDED and local agencies to showcase projects like King Mill and our 5-star restaurants, Craft and Vine.

Organization: Our staff members have completed another milestone. Tara has completed her fourth training class for her CDP designation. Corbin has started her retail recruitment program and shipped out her first 20 packages.

Mr. Heffner congratulated Tara and Corbin on their accomplishments and thanked Ms. Woodard for her report. He made a motion to approve the director's report as information. The motion to approve was made in a second by Pastor Booker, with a second by Commissioner Jordan Johnson and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business: Stephen King then discussed the DDA Operating budget. The 2025 operating budget reflects minimal changes compared to the previous year. The funds received for the ACE program have been fully disbursed, and ongoing reporting is required for the following year. Overall, the budget is considered routine, with no significant alterations expected in operations or expenses. Mr. King asked if there were any questions or concerns and then motioned to approve the operating budget. Mr. Heffner motioned for approval with a second from Pastor Booker, and the motion passed unanimously.

James Heffner wrapped up the meeting by addressing how we will proceed with the Vinson Institute Report. He stated that he liked the Reynolds Steet project, which everyone agreed on. Reducing Reynolds Street to two lanes would alleviate parking issues and improve traffic flow. It was suggested that we explore funding options through grants or city funding. Mr. Heffner concluded that the next steps would be scheduling a design committee meeting to discuss it with everyone and then take it to the next level for the final decision.

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:38 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen King

Secretary-Treasurer



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