

**Downtown Development Authority  
Meeting Minutes  
August 13, 2009**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Downtown Development Authority was held August 13, 2009 at 8:30 am at the DDA offices located at 936 Broad Street, Suite 107. Those members in attendance were Steven Kendrick, Paul King, Commissioner J. R. Hatney, Cameron Nixon, Mark Bowling, Julian Roberts, Legal Counsel Byrd Warlick, and Executive Director Margaret Woodard. Guests and observers included Commissioner Joe Bowles, hotel developer Cortland Dusseau, DDA Office Manager Roxanne Walls, CADI Project Manager Jessica Fuselier, Tim Rausch of the Augusta Chronicle, Barry White of the Convention and Visitors Bureau, Rev. and Mrs. Kelly McKnight of Bible Deliverance Temple, Charlotte Ginn of Bible Deliverance Temple, Camille Price of Augusta Tomorrow, Chris Thomas of WRDW News 12, and businessmen Ben Hasan and David Penix.

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

Mr. Roberts presented the previous meeting minutes from June 11, 2009. With no additions or corrections, Commissioner Hatney made the motion to accept the previous meeting minutes with a second by Mr. Roberts. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

In the Treasurer's Report, Mr. Nixon presented the financials for July. The June financials were not discussed but were included in board books for board members to review.

The DDA Profit & Loss Budget Performance (DDA Operating) report is for the DDA operating activities and does not include SPLOST or Saturday Market. The city billed the DDA in June and July for the past 2 ½ years of salary paybacks to the city. Through July the DDA has paid \$255,341.29 to the city for salary payback. This represents 2007, 2008 and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2009.

The DDA receives payment from the city on a regular basis. That is used to pay all of the operating expenses. We are then supposed to be invoiced by the city to pay them back for salaries. The DDA is now up to date on salary paybacks to the city.

Net income is in the amount of -\$174,261.96 which is a deficit amount. We are on a cash basis accounting which means income and expenses are recorded when they occur. It was known that when the city invoiced us it would alter the appearance of our cash basis financials. There was \$450,349.36 total cash in the bank at the end of May. Our balance is now \$193,675.33 after invoices have been paid.

The financials will look funny for the rest of the year because we did not know the timing of the invoice from the city. Mr. Nixon explained that this is a wash. The DDA is paid through the city so that the DDA employees can receive city benefits.

Mr. Kendrick asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Commissioner Hatney made the motion with a second by Mr. Roberts. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

In the Director's Report, Ms. Woodard stated that Cranston Engineering was awarded the James Brown Blvd. streetscape project made possible by a \$250,000 Transportation Enhancement Grant for James Brown Boulevard. They were the lowest and the most creative bidder.

We are going to begin the project at Telfair Street and start going toward the railroad tracks at Fenwick Street on James Brown Boulevard. This was selected because it combines two other Transportation Enhancement Grant projects for the library (Greene Street to Telfair Street) and the Third Level Canal (railroad tracks on Fenwick to Laney Walker Boulevard). By combining these we will get a good portion of the streetscape done. The next round is due in December and it is our hopes to apply again and be able to finish up all the way to the Courthouse on Laney Walker Boulevard.

The Pilot Lighting Project for the 900 block of Broad Street is slated to begin in December. Mr. Cassell of Traffic and has applied for additional stimulus funds in the amount of \$3 million dollars for the project. The city originally had \$3 million to do the project with a contribution by the DDA in the amount of \$100,000.00. If stimulus funds are received all of Broad Street will get new signals and new lights. In addition, our contribution can be reallocated to another project.

Mr. Bowling asked Ms. Woodard about the Pilot Lighting Project. He thought the intent was that after bids the project was going to be started and now the project is going to be delayed as we are waiting on stimulus money. Ms. Woodard told him he was correct. If stimulus money is not received then we will still proceed with the project. She says Mr. Cassell is negotiating with the low bidder to look at cost options to get the project down to the \$3.1 million that is in the bank for the project.

Ms. Woodard explained that the city is initiator on the Pilot Lighting Project. On some of the SPLOST projects the DDA takes the initiative and coordinate the private partners and on some we assist by simply writing a check.

We have been working really hard to finish the Harrisburg Preservation Grant. Our deadline to complete is Friday and we have hit that deadline. The draft report will be issued.

Historic Augusta applied for another grant and we were awarded \$8,400.00 for Phase 2 of the Harrisburg Survey. This is to include about 300 historic structures around Tuttle Street. The RFP has been written. The Procurement Department has it and it should be issued in the next 30 days to begin Phase 2.

The Harrisburg Substation opened and the ribbon cutting was on July 27<sup>th</sup>.

When the DDA boundaries were extended we were also looking at other areas such as East Boundary. Ms. Woodard is looking to possibly put together a steering committee to start looking at East Boundary initiatives.

The CADI statistics were in the board books for members to review. Ms. Woodard explained the weekly report. In this economy and after having to cut out services we felt it was needed to show property owners our accomplishments, merits of the program, and to give them more detail as to what CADI is doing on a weekly basis.

CADI services have been cut on Sundays throughout the rest of the year due to the fact that about 12% of property owners have not paid their taxes. A report has been received and that is now down to 1%. Usually we plan 2% of people will not pay their taxes which is about \$7,000.00 a year. We closed out yesterday at \$3,900.00.

CADI has picked up three fee for service jobs which is about \$5,000.00 in outside contracts.

Ms. Woodard stated the recommendation for the downtown trolley will come to the board in September. The meeting in Little Rock was very successful.

The last Saturday Market for the summer was on August 8<sup>th</sup>. There will be a Fall Market on October 24<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Woodard pointed out that the market is now a privatized event. The city gave us the money for the first two years. This is the healthiest end of the year balance that the market has ever had. The balance is in the amount of \$18,722.10. There are still some outstanding bills but this includes the check written for city salary reimbursement in the amount of \$3,524.50. The city salary reimbursement was for Mrs. Fuselier when she was a full-time coordinator before she went to CADI. Ms. Woodard thanked Mrs. Fuselier for a great job.

We are actively working on several projects. One project is with a Columbia developer on 52 market rate apartments at the Marion Building. Also there is a project with a microbrewery that is looking for 6000 sf in the downtown area.

The budget request for 2010 has been submitted to the city.

We have also applied with the CVB to have the 2010 statewide Downtown Conference here in Augusta. We have been short listed.

Mr. Nixon mentioned that he and Ms. Woodard met regarding the budget request. It would be helpful to add personnel to allow Ms. Woodard more time on RFPs and a global look at downtown as she gets caught up in the minutiae of the work.

Mr. King asked Ms. Woodard if she would ask Mr. Cassell to attend the next board meeting to give the board an update and a timeline regarding the lighting on Broad Street.

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

Under New Business, Ms. Woodard presented a draft of the DDA informational brochure. This was one of the initiatives from the planning retreat. The DDA would like to start looking at revenue generated activities. Ms. Woodard gave full credit for the brochure to Mrs. Walls as Mrs. Walls took this initiative and created the draft brochure on her own. Ms. Woodard worked on the draft and feels it is now time for the draft brochure to go to the Economic Restructuring Committee for review and approval. Ms. Woodard will schedule an Economic Restructuring Committee meeting.

Under New Business, Ms. Woodard spoke of shifting SPLOST money from the greenway space at the Augusta Museum of History to the planters on Broad Street. Ms. Woodard spoke with Augusta Museum of History Executive Director Ms. Nancy Glaser and Ms. Glaser would like to continue to put the Greenway Project on hold pending future property the museum may purchase.

Mr. Kendrick asked Ms. Woodard how much is allocated to the Greenway Project. Ms. Woodard stated \$53,000.00. This is for the alley that runs in front of the Augusta Museum of History that kind of connects lower Broad Street, the Depot property. It would be a public walkway and included a sidewalk, some up lighting, and some paving over the rail road tracks.

Mr. King made the motion to transfer the allocation of funds in the amount of \$20,000.00 from the Augusta Museum of History Project to the Paver Project. Mr. Roberts seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. King asked Ms. Woodard about the lighting behind the White's Building which is incomplete due to the White's building developer failing to provide the power source for that wiring. Ms. Woodard says that Cranston redesigned the plan and it has been approved by the city. The boxes are in. The paperwork has been sent to Georgia Power. The lights should be on in five days.

Under New Business, Mr. King spoke of the Riverwalk Initiative to restore the Riverwalk. Several surveys have been done. Mr. Tom Robertson of Cranston Engineering has volunteered to help as he is one of the original designers of the Riverwalk. The overall idea of the project is to try to do a public/private partnership.

The needs of the Riverwalk are being divided into different types of needs. One may be a piece of broken sidewalk that the DDA could handle with SPLOST funds. Another would be the vinyets like the Japanese garden for example, where we could may be bring in some type of public/private partnership like a downtown business or bank that might be interested in having a plaque that they support and maintain it.

Mr. King asked for a motion to send the Riverwalk Initiative to Design Committee for further review before going back to the board with a proposed motion on how to proceed. This item will go to committee as a vote was not needed.

According to the agenda the meeting was to be adjourned but Mr. Kendrick introduced guest Mr. Cortland Dusseau and he was allowed to speak to the board. Mr. Dusseau spoke to the board regarding the pending hotel and the importance of the TEE Center. Mr. Dusseau told the board how much he appreciated the assistance that he has received from Ms. Woodard and Mrs. Walls. Ms. Woodard was instrumental in getting the title issues worked out.

The hotel that may be built is the Hyatt Place and the location would be at the Augusta Common. The option runs out August 30<sup>th</sup> and Mr. Dusseau may ask the property owners for an extension. The hotel will create 80 jobs as well as a substantial increase in the city's tax base.

Mr. Kendrick thanked Mr. Dusseau.

For the record Mr. King spoke of a very large tree that fell next door to one of his buildings due to the storm. The city was there promptly and is still there with contractors cleaning it up. He is very impressed.

Commissioner Hatney asked Ms. Woodard about replacing the old trees. He was on his way to a meeting on Tuesday and a tree would have fallen on his vehicle if he had not had decent brakes.

There is a Tree Commission in existence. Mr. Kendrick asked Ms. Woodard to put something together for the board by the next meeting to address the tree issues. Ms. Woodard would like to set up a meeting with Mr. King, Mr. Mike Greene, Mr. Dennis Stroud, Mr. Roy Simpkins, and Commissioner Bowles to discuss.

Mr. Kendrick asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hatney moved the motion with a second by Mr. Nixon. Mr. Kendrick adjourned the meeting at 9:20 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julian Roberts, Secretary