

Downtown Development Authority of Augusta, Georgia
Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2015

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Downtown Development Authority of Augusta, Georgia was held on March 12, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. at the DDA office located at 936 Broad Street, Suite 107. Those members in attendance were Commissioner Fennoy, Joey Hadden, Natalie McLeod, Cameron Nixon, Scylance Scott, Jr., Executive Director Margaret Woodard, and Legal Counsel Byrd Warlick. Guests and observers included DDA Office Manager Roxanne Walls, Jennifer Bowen of the Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau, Kevin Laird of Comcast, Jenna Martin of *The Augusta Chronicle*, Dayton Sherrouse and Russell Foster of the Augusta Canal Authority, Augusta resident Melvin Kelly, Rick Keuroglan of City Hope Alliance, Angela McNair of Ashton Brooke Ltd., Jack Wilde of Augusta Regional Collaboration (ARC), and Camille Price of Augusta Tomorrow.

Mr. Nixon called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m. and welcomed everyone.

Mr. Nixon went to the Treasurer's Report as the approval of the previous meeting minutes from December 11, 2014 will be presented pending the arrival of Mr. Hadden.

In the Treasurer's Report, Mr. Nixon presented the financials for December 2014 and February 2015 due to the vacancy of a treasurer. Appointing a treasurer is on today's agenda under the Chairman's Report.

The balance sheet as of December 31, 2014 was reviewed. The majority of our money is in checking as we receive a higher interest rate on our checking account.

The Profit & Loss Budget Performance (DDA Operating) Report for December 2014 reflected the following for year-to-date: total income in the amount of \$178,286.38; total expenses in the amount of \$211,961.64; net ordinary income in the amount of -\$33,675.26 with our annual budget in the amount of -\$38,507.00. Most of our income is city funding in the amount of \$154,610.00 and we also received retail recruitment sponsorships in the amount of \$14,700.00 which is private support for the retail initiative.

The Profit & Loss Budget Performance (DDA Operating) Report for February 2015 reflected the following for year-to-date: total income in the amount of \$26,048.16 which is mostly city funding; net income in the amount of \$19,577.66 which is due to receiving city funding monthly and paying the city back for salaries on a quarterly basis.

Mr. Nixon asked if there were any questions regarding the Treasurer's Report. Hearing none the board accepted the Treasurer's Report as information.

The December 2014 and February 2015 financial reports which include year-to-date are in board books.

Mr. Nixon asked Ms. Woodard to go the Director's Report as still no quorum present.

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

Active Economic Development Projects

Georgia Cities Foundation (GCF) Loans

- The loan for 905 Broad Street (WAGT Building) has been resubmitted and is in underwriting at GCF.
- A loan closing and ribbon cutting was held January 29 for 334 Greene Street (The Vine Inn) in which it was 60 percent leased at that time.
- The project at 1022 Broad Street has been completed, CO has been obtained, and the loan closing will be scheduled soon. Also half of the retail space has been leased for a skateboard shop called "Sweet Sticks" and upstairs apartments are being leased.
- We are at that point where we may have one more loan that we can apply for and then we will be placed on hold until reserves are built back up.
- There are two loans in the pipeline and they are for Boots Factory (912 Ellis Street) and Salon DUO (923 Broad Street).

GCF Loans in the Pipeline (Approved by DDA Board for Submission to GCF):

- 1033 Broad Street which has been pre-approved by GCF, currently in underwriting and is under construction.
- 1162 Broad Street has been submitted to GCF.

Other

- A hotel investor from New York City was in town for a site visit for the proposed hotel on February 25 along with Mr. Cortland Dusseau and Mr. Charles Perry.
- A developer from Birmingham will be in town on March 19 to look at sites for mixed-use projects.
- Mr. T.R. Reddy has purchased the Woolworth Building and is in conversations with Retail Strategies.
- Ashton Brooke Ltd. located at 12 9th Street has opened.
- Kawa Japanese Restaurant has opened at 1135 Broad Street.
- Etched Memory has opened at 1124 Broad Street.
- Mr. Eric Kinlaw is opening a second restaurant called "The Hive" which is in the old Rooster's Beak location on 10th Street.
- A new restaurant at 1002 Broad Street to open after Masters.
- We are working with Mr. Davis Beman on the Lamar Building.
- We are working continuously with Mr. Dennis Trotter on the retail portion of the Discovery Plaza project.

Pilot SPLOST Project

- Olde Town Wayfinding signage was completed in January.
- Electrical Signal Art Project has been named “Art the Box” and the city approved \$17,000 in additional funds to paint electrical boxes all over the city. The DDA approved \$7,000 which will cover seven boxes on Broad Street from 13th to 7th. Two additional boxes have been selected on Reynolds Street at The Augusta Convention Center for a total of nine boxes downtown. A press release has been issued, call for artists underway, jury selection April 24 with project completion May 29.

SPLOST VI Project/Riverwalk

- The RFQ should be completed by the end of the week.
- Committee will have a pre-bid session and will have to determine which improvements and/or repairs will be made with the \$1 million in SPLOST funds.

Downtown Programs

Retail Strategy

- All of the market analysis has been completed for 2014 and is ready to be posted on DDA website.
- Our goal was to raise \$30,000 in private sponsorships and we have surpassed that goal with \$31,000 raised to-date which includes an additional \$5,000 received at the end of the year from Georgia Power and an additional \$1,000 from Golden Living.
- Retail Strategies has developed relationships with local brokerage community and is in conversations with key property owners and stakeholders.
- Retail Strategies made contact with Which Wich and Dunkin Donuts in 2014. The Jordan-Trotter 3400 sf development at 1640 Walton Way which will include both businesses is a direct result of Retail Strategies. Both businesses are expected to be operational by late June with 45 employees.
- The next International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) Conference to be held in Las Vegas in May and appointments are being made on behalf of downtown Augusta.

Other

- The vacant building inventory has been updated.
- The housing inventory for the Broad Street Corridor is completed.
- The downtown activity report for 2014 will be completed in April.
- We are partnering with ARC on available office space statistics.
- A retail update was given to the Augusta-Richmond County Commission on January 26 and was well received.

Ms. Woodard thanked Mr. Wilde for his work on the vacant building inventory. He is also working with Ms. Woodard on available office space.

Grant Projects

James Brown Boulevard Phase I

- Construction is about 40 percent completed.
- The completion date has been moved from May due to weather to an anticipated completion date of June 9, 2015.
- We are working with the city on tree issues for the project (removal and replacement)

James Brown Boulevard Phase II

- We are working with Mr. Don Grantham on next steps for this phase.

James Brown Boulevard Phase III

- We applied for a TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) Grant in 2014 and have been awarded the grant in the amount of \$450,000.
- The grant will be used for new improvements and will start at Twiggs Circle and move back towards Laney Walker Blvd.

GRU Day

- The next GRU Day will be held in April.

Parking

- Concerns and comments from the community forums were taken back to the Commission on January 12.

Other

- The 2014 audit is underway for May presentation.

February Board Retreat

- Staff was asked to put the “Decade in Review” Report into Microsoft PowerPoint™. That has been completed and is in board notebooks. Ms. Woodard will follow-up with Commissioner Fennoy to have item placed on Commission agenda for DDA Chairman Nixon and another board member to present.
- Next Steps:
 1. Develop a fundraising strategy to look at what we need to do to increase funding levels.
 2. Complete incentives for retail and small business development which can be done by committee.
- The retreat was facilitated by Mr. Billy Parrish of Billy Parrish Consulting and his summary is in board books.

Mr. Hadden and Commissioner Fennoy joined the meeting during the Director’s Report.

With a quorum now present, Mr. Nixon asked if there were any questions for Ms. Woodard. Hearing none the board accepted the Director’s Report as information.

Mr. Nixon asked the board to flip backwards and approve meeting minutes from December 11, 2014.

Mr. Hadden presented for approval the previous meeting minutes from December 11, 2014. With no additions or corrections, Mr. Hadden made the motion to accept. Mr. Scott seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

In the Chairman's Report, Mr. Nixon presented for approval the proposed operating budget for 2015.

We anticipate raising \$15,000 in sponsorships from the private sector for retail recruitment. The bulk of our income is city funding. Projected for 2015 is total income in the amount of \$178,610 and total expenses in the amount of \$216,920 for a deficit in the amount of \$38,310. Until something changes we will continue with operations until we run out of money.

Ms. Woodard estimates it will cost \$30,000 for a new website and to also maintain it. Out of the 90 reports provided by Retail Strategies there are 19 that would be useful to not only current businesses downtown but prospects as well. A form will also be loaded on the website that the user will complete.

Mr. Nixon asked if there were any questions. Hearing none Mr. Nixon asked for a motion. Mr. Scott made the motion to approve the 2015 operating budget. Mr. Hadden seconded the motion. Mr. Nixon asked if any further discussion. Commissioner Fennoy suggested using the city's IT Department for our website and print shop for our printing needs. If there are any resources within the city that the development authority, canal authority or any other authorities to take advantage of it as it would be worthwhile to look at these resources to save some money.

Mr. Nixon mentioned that the Finance Committee will have a meeting to discuss the retreat facilitator report and discuss fundraising strategies.

With a motion on the table which was properly made and seconded all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

In the Chairman's Report, Mr. Nixon asked the board to consider appointing Ms. McLeod as treasurer due to the resignation of Mr. Sanford Loyd.

Mr. Nixon asked for a motion to accept appointing Natalie McLeod as treasurer of DDA. Commissioner Fennoy made the motion. Mr. Scott seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

In the Chairman's Report, Mr. Nixon recommended the following appointments to the Finance Committee: Natalie McLeod, Commissioner Fennoy and Scylance Scott, Jr. Commissioner Fennoy declined. Mr. Nixon then appointed himself in lieu of Commissioner Fennoy.

The Finance Committee members are Chairman Nixon, Vice-Chairman Scott, and Treasurer McLeod. Mr. Nixon asked for a motion. Mr. Scott made the motion which was seconded by Mr. Hadden. Mr. Nixon asked for any further discussion. Hearing none all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Under New Business, Mr. Nixon introduced Mr. Dayton Sherrouse, executive director of the Augusta Canal Authority, for an Augusta Canal Authority update presentation.

Copies of the presentation were distributed to board members along with an informational handout. Both items are in board books.

Under New Business, Ms. Woodard discussed SB 63 which is the Beer Jobs Bill for DDA support.

We have been asked by Mr. Chris Higdon of the Georgia Municipal Association and also Retail Strategies has asked us to come out in support of this bill. This bill would allow Georgia breweries to sell retail. Currently, Georgia breweries have to go to a third party. Valdosta, Savannah and the Georgia Beer Guild are in support of this bill.

There are two breweries that are interested in coming to downtown Augusta but they are awaiting the outcome of SB 63. The Guild asserts that the passage of this bill will bring more breweries and tourism to Georgia and boos the industry's economic impact to over \$1 billion dollars. Georgia is only one of the five states left where a brewery cannot see beer directly to consumers. Other cities have been asked to take a position. There has been little opposition to the bill with most coming from the wholesalers.

Ms. Woodard has received a copy of the resolution for the Chairman to sign in support. Copies of the resolution were distributed to board members. Board members will review and come back to this item.

Under New Business, Mr. Nixon recommended for board approval Mr. Rick Keuroglian as a new board member for Commission approval.

Mr. Keuroglian is the director of community development for First Presbyterian, executive director of City Hope Alliance and a resident of Olde Town.

Mr. Nixon asked for a motion to recommend Mr. Keuroglian for Commission approval. Ms. McLeod made the motion. Mr. Hadden seconded the motion. Mr. Nixon asked for any further questions. Hearing none all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Under New Business, Ms. Woodard went back to SB 63 agenda item and read the resolution to the board.

Mr. Nixon asked the board if there was a motion to support SB 63. Mr. Hadden made the motion. Commissioner Fennoy seconded the motion. Mr. Nixon asked if any further discussion. Hearing none all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Nixon adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joey Hadden, Secretary