

**Downtown Development Authority of Augusta, Georgia**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**December 11, 2014**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Downtown Development Authority of Augusta, Georgia was held on December 11, 2014 at 8:30 a.m. at the DDA office located at 936 Broad Street, Suite 107. Those members in attendance were Joey Hadden, Cameron Nixon, Dennis Welch, Commissioner Marion Williams, Executive Director Margaret Woodard, and Legal Counsel Byrd Warlick. Guests and observers included DDA Office Manager Roxanne Walls, Camille Bruce and Chrissy Engel of Golden Living Center, Wright Montgomery of Cranston Engineering Group, P.C., downtown businessman Jackson Brown, GRU student Jack Wilde, David Hutchison of The Book Tavern, Camille Price of Augusta Tomorrow, Jenna Martin of *The Augusta Chronicle*, and Al Dallas of the Mayor's Office.

Mr. Nixon called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

Mr. Nixon, in lieu of Mr. Hadden, presented the previous meeting minutes from November 14, 2014 for review. Due to lack of a quorum, the board could only accept as information.

Mr. Nixon told the board that Mr. Loyd, who served as treasurer, has tendered his board resignation. Mr. Loyd wanted to be able to freely express his personal observations without it being reflected on the board. The Nominating Committee will meet to put together a slate of possible candidates for board approval to fill the vacancy.

In the Treasurer's Report, Mr. Nixon presented the financials for November 2014 which also include year-to-date.

The Profit & Loss Budget Performance (DDA Operating) Report reflected the following for year-to-date: total income in the amount of \$151,679.06; net ordinary income in the amount of -\$5,991.64; net income in the amount of -\$55,991.89 which includes depreciation which is for accounting purposes and not a cash loss.

The balance sheet as of November 30, 2014 reflected a combined total for checking and savings in the amount of \$80,404.95. The majority of our money is in checking as we receive a higher interest rate on our checking account.

Mr. Nixon concluded the report. Due to lack of a quorum, the board could not accept as information.

The November 2014 financial reports which include year-to-date are in board books.

In the Chairman's Report, Mr. Nixon stated that the initial 2015 proposed budget from the city had a 25 percent cut for all outside agencies. The approved budget funds outside agencies at 2014 levels with no cuts for 2015. The city administrator will evaluate outside agencies in the next year to understand what those agencies do and prioritize funding for 2016.

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

### **Active Economic Development Projects**

#### **Georgia Cities Foundation (GCF) Loans**

- We have several loans pending approval by GCF.
- The owners of 905 Broad Street (WAGT Building) are reapplying for a federal loan through GCF.
- There could possibly be three loans approved at the beginning of 2015.
- Possible loan closing for 334 Greene Street in January.
- We will then be placed on hold by GCF until reserves are built back up.

### **Pilot SPLOST Projects**

#### **Olde Town Wayfinding Signage**

- Project is underway.

#### **Electrical Signal Box Art Project**

- The Arts Council has gone to the Engineering Services Committee to get additional SPLOST money.
- Ms. Durant has put together a committee and asked Ms. Woodard to be on it.
- Seven boxes will be painted on Broad Street from 12<sup>th</sup> Street down to 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- This project should begin in first quarter of 2015.

### **SPLOST VI Project/Riverwalk**

- The RFP will be issued in January.
- SPLOST funds in the amount of \$600,000 are available to begin project.
- Design firms will come back with recommendations based on committee concerns and committee will then meet to determine how to proceed.
- Possible SPLOST VII request for additional improvements.
- Possible mid-year construction start date pending results of committee meeting and putting project out for bid.

### **Downtown Programs**

#### **Retail Strategy**

- Downtown Augusta is being represented by Retail Strategies this week at the New York ICSC.

## **Grant Projects**

### **James Brown Boulevard Phase I**

- Construction has started with a six month anticipated completion date.

### **James Brown Boulevard Phase II**

- Awaiting PI Number

### **GRU Day – November 20<sup>th</sup>**

- This was the last GRU Day for 2014 and was a huge success.
- We partnered with Mellow Mushroom and Sky City and there was free pizza and soft drinks for students with ID.
- A Block Party was held with Mr. Coco Rubio spinning records.
- GRU has requested a big event for February as that is Homecoming Week.

### **Parking**

- The community forums were held on December 9<sup>th</sup> at noon and 6:00 p.m. and were well-attended with approximately 60-70 people at each forum.
- Dr. Tony Robinson facilitated both forums.
- Panels were set-up to spark good discussion.
- GRU student Jack Wilde took notes and will meet with Ms. Woodard on Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup> to prepare the final report that will be uploaded on the DDA website when available.
- Ms. Woodard and Interim Deputy Administrator Steve Cassell will take concerns and comments back to the Commission in January.
- Majority of attendees acknowledged that downtown has grown significantly and that there is a parking problem.

### **Christmas Light-Up Spectacular – Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>**

- It was a huge success and was well-attended.

### **Other**

- We have completed and submitted a TAP Grant for James Brown Boulevard Phase III and should receive a response at the beginning of 2015. Phase III would start at Twiggs Circle and move back towards Laney-Walker Boulevard.

With the presence of a quorum, Mr. Nixon asked the board for a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes from November 14, 2014. With no additions or corrections, Mr. Hadden made the motion. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

The board accepted the Treasurer's Report and Director's Report as information.

Under New Business, Mr. Nixon introduced Ms. Camille Bruce and Ms. Chrissy Engel both from Golden Living Center.

Golden Living Center is a tremendous supporter of downtown Augusta and the DDA. Ms. Bruce thanked the board for allowing them to be a part of the Christmas-Light Up Spectacular as a fireworks sponsor. This year they gave \$5,000. Ms. Bruce thanked the board for the work they do.

Mr. Nixon thanked Ms. Bruce and Ms. Engel for the work they do in the community and for their support.

Under New Business, Mr. Nixon introduced Mr. Wright Montgomery for a presentation on how to increase on-street parking.

Mr. Montgomery attended both parking forums held on December 9<sup>th</sup>. He is in support of parking meters. We need to look beyond Broad Street to solve some of those problems. His suggestions were to paint stripes on areas of Greene Street for parking. Ms. Woodard told the board that Greene Street was resurfaced this year and stripes were not repainted. Ms. Woodard will follow up with the city in regards to stripes for parking. Mr. Montgomery also suggested adding parallel parking to Reynolds Street thereby reducing Reynolds Street to two lanes for traffic.

Under New Business, Mr. Nixon introduced Mr. Jackson Brown for his presentation "Bright Lights River City".

Mr. Brown would like for the Riverfront to be utilized from the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge to the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge and from Broad Street to the river and turn it into a dining and entertainment district with different types of amusement such as an urban themed putt putt course. His suggestions included putting a large screen on top of the TEE Center and advertise it as an urban drive-in theatre with food trucks and dividing the Depot property into 50 foot squares for booth rental for a garage sale.

Mr. Nixon thanked Mr. Brown for his information and encouraged him to continue with ideas as there are many complimentary groups that are trying to come up with a vision or put visions in place.

Ms. Woodard also had an addition to her Director's Report. Georgia Power, an original retail sponsor, will give us an additional \$5,000 sponsorship for the retail strategy.

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Nixon adjourned the meeting at 9:07 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joey Hadden, Secretary