



**DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**
of Augusta

Downtown Development Authority of Augusta
Board Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2026, at 1:00 pm
1101 Greene Street

The Downtown Development Authority of Augusta held its monthly meeting on January 22, 2026, at 1:00 pm. 1101 Greene Street.

DDA Board members in attendance included Chairman Jack Evans, Co-Chairman James Heffner, Secretary-Treasurer Stephen King, Pastor Anthony Booker, Phuong Nguyen, and legal counsel Jeb Murray. Also in attendance were DDA Executive Director Margaret Woodard and Director of Community Development Tara Wood.

Chairman Evans called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and asked Mr. King to present the consent agenda and the financial reports. The consent agenda, which included the October 2025 Board meeting minutes and financials, was introduced. Mr. King noted that he and Ms. Woodard met with City Administrator Tameka Allen to discuss the impact of the city's budget cuts on the DDA. DDA was negative \$67,000 before the last cut. After the most recent budget cut, DDA is now at a deficit of approximately \$112,400. Mr. King stated that funds from other accounts, including projects and donations for downtown economic development programs, are available and should serve as the last line of defense for operations. Still, he wants to discuss additional funding opportunities. Mr. King then asked if anyone had any questions or comments. Ms. Woodard mentioned that Ms. Wood is exploring creative fundraising options and that DDA is open to ideas and suggestions to bridge the operational gap. Mr. King and Ms. Wood plan to meet in the coming weeks to discuss strategies.

Mr. Evans then called for a motion to approve the financials. Mr. Heffner seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

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

Lamar Building: The building owner has secured an equity partner and expects to close by the end of the month. There will be a groundbreaking ceremony once the deal is complete.

First Baptist Church Property: The owner, Joe Edge, is selling the property. DDA has had several phone calls with the new developer to offer assistance with the project.

Marion Building: The building is back under contract with the same group. They are applying for the next round of housing credits through the city. Cal Wray with AEDA and Commissioner Stacy Pulliam have also been assisting, as this project will offer workforce housing.

Cotton Exchange Building: The building has been sold to Dr. Troy Akers. We will be assisting him with an SSBCI loan and facade grant application. He is also requesting SPLOST funds.

Depot: Margaret and Cal Wray have a meeting scheduled for next week with the Mayor, commissioners, and city legal to discuss the project again. There are still some unresolved issues concerning PILOT payments, usufruct, and abatement amounts.

Demolition of 1140 Broad Street: The HPC approved the demolition of two Federalist buildings and the former Sky City store, contingent on the developer agreeing to a performance bond. Demolition has begun and is expected to be completed within the next couple of weeks.

Georgia Power Foundation- DDA met with the Georgia Power Foundation and will be requesting funding from the foundation soon.

New Augusta Tech President: Dr. Kendrick Hooker has been named Augusta Technical College's new president. Mr. King organized a luncheon with DDA, the Chamber, and Textron to meet Dr. Hooker. The Accelerate Augusta Executive Committee also held a lunch to welcome him.

Grant for Accelerate Augusta Phase II: Ms. Wood is working with Georgia Power on an economic recovery grant to fund Phase II of Accelerate Augusta.

Expedited TIA timeline Approved: The Augusta-Richmond County Commission approved \$2 million in discretionary funds to expedite the TIA streetscape project. The contractor will now complete the Broad Street construction in November 2026, instead of April 2027. DDA, Destination Augusta, and the Chamber wrote a joint letter in support of approving funds to complete the project sooner.

Blight and Chronic Vacancy: DDA has held two meetings with the city to discuss amending the blight ordinance. The draft is nearing completion and will include a definitive timeline for completing repairs to address violations, fines, code enforcement, and a vacant building tax.

Accelerate Augusta: The next issue of Georgia Trend magazine will feature an article on Accelerate Augusta.

Leadership Augusta: Ms. Woodard and Cal Wray hosted Economic Development Day for Leadership Augusta in November.

CDS Grant through Senator Warnock's office: Ms. Woodard has been in touch with Maria Cook with Senator Warnock's office and hopes to learn the status of the grant DDA submitted soon.

Chamber Retreat in Atlanta: Ms. Woodard attended the retreat and then participated in Eggs & Issues to learn what the state platform.

2025 Statistics: DDA is finalizing the 2025 statistics and will present a budget at the next Board Meeting.

State Historic Tax Credits: There are no available state tax credits until 2030. This will prove challenging for developers who didn't apply soon enough.

Ms. Woodard concluded her report. Mr. Evans moved to approve the Director's report. Mr. Heffner seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

New Business

Sidewalk Repaving/Infrastructure Improvement at Conroy Hotel Development Site:

Matt Brendle of Breakwater has requested \$114,854 in SPLOST funds for sidewalk repairs at the Ramada renovation site. The city has chosen not to repair the damaged sidewalk along the Ellis Street block. The Board discussed the importance of supporting developers investing in downtown Augusta and improving public infrastructure. Mr. Evans moved to approve the requested funds. Pastor Booker seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Facade Grant:

There was a \$5,000 facade grant application for 1028 Broad Street. Mr. Evans moved to support the facade grant. Pastor Booker seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Budget Deficit: Chairman Evans highlighted the DDA's budget deficit following the city budget cuts. He asked the Board to consider an outside-the-box fundraising campaign and to solicit support from community partners to continue the DDA's mission of economic development, growth, and recruitment. Mr. King and Ms. Wood will meet in the coming weeks to develop sponsorship tiers and an informational packet for funding requests.

Chairman Evans wrapped up the meeting, thanking everyone for their attendance and hard work on behalf of the DDA.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stephen King, Secretary-Treasurer

