



Downtown Development Authority of Augusta

Board Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2025, at 1:00 pm

1101 Greene Street

The Downtown Development Authority of Augusta held its monthly meeting on October 16, 2025, at 1:00 pm at 1101 Greene Street.

DDA Board members in attendance included Chairman Jack Evans, Secretary-Treasurer Stephen King, Judge Ashanti L. Pounds, Pastor Anthony Booker and Phuong Nguyen. Also in attendance were Margaret Woodard, Executive Director of the DDA, Director of Community Development, Tara Wood and Retail Coordinator, Corbin Freeman. Guests in attendance were Brad Usry from Fat Man's Hospitality group and Shaun Andrews, Executive Director of Accelerate Augusta.

Chairman Evans called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and asked Mr. King to present the Consent agenda and financial reports. The Consent agenda, which included the September 2025 Board meeting minutes and financial report, was introduced. Mr. Evans thanked him for the update. There were no additional questions or comments. Mr. Evans made a motion to approve the financials. Judge Ashanti Pounds seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

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

Ramada Hotel Project: Renovation is scheduled for December, with a planned one-year completion, and furniture liquidation offers potential donations for nonprofits by next month. Ramada is also on the HPC Agenda for approval next week 10/23.

Embassy Suites Project: Embassy Suites faces uncertain fate due to safety issues from recent fires, with emergency demolition denied by the HPC but possible city commission

override, linked closely to parking and TIA project timelines. Embassy Suites is on the HPC Agenda next week as well to get approved for the site being a host for temporary parking.

Red Lion Project: Recently purchased on Walton Way and is in the planning phases for restoration, with low-interest loans being arranged to support this project.

Tiffanie Bleu Bridal Shop: They have been approved for their low interest loan that wasn't through the DDA and will be proceeding with moving from their Broad Street location to their new location on 5th Street.

TIA Project: The accelerated timeline is expected to reduce the disruption period, enabling downtown businesses to resume full operations sooner. Messaging and public communication about the Broad Street project have improved through hiring Paquin for updates and public meetings, helping manage community expectations and traffic flow during construction.

Jones Street Alley: This project has completed two design meetings and is fully funded through grants, including demolition costs, with construction imminent using the same contractor as the Linear Park.

Other:

Christmas Parade will be on December 6th and there is a new route that will be on Reynolds Street this year.

Leadership Augusta's Economic Development Day will be held on November 13th and Margaret along with Cal Wray will be co-chairing this event.

Mr. Evans asked if anyone had questions or comments about the Director's Report. When there were none, he thanked Ms. Woodard for her efforts.

New Business

Accelerate Augusta Update:

Shaun Andrews shared a vision to make the center a regional hub for entrepreneurship by providing tailored programs for all stages of business development, from idea to growth. Marketing efforts are primarily grassroots via Facebook and social media, with plans to expand into traditional advertising and storytelling through documentaries to inspire broader community engagement. Their partnerships with Augusta Tech, Augusta University, Paine College, and Alliance for Fort Gordon will channel students and resources to the center, enhancing regional collaboration. Success stories from new entrepreneurs attending Accelerate Augusta classes are already in progress.

TIA Project Request:

Brad Usry explained how the Broad Street TIA project is critical for downtown revitalization, with construction underway and expected to be completed in three years. There is a proposal that seeks to reduce this to two years by investing an additional \$12 million to accelerate the timeline. He also expressed how demolishing properties to create temporary parking will help ease a lot of the worrying from the community and business owners.

Ms. Woodard confirmed that Brad Usry's request is to ask the Downtown Development Authority to support the \$12 million that's available in funding to cut the construction down by a 1-year period. Mr. Evans then requested a motion to approve the DDA's support for the necessary \$12 million that will help reduce Broad Street construction by one year. Judge Ashanti Pounds made the motion, and it was seconded by Pastor Booker. The motion passed.

Mr. Evans thanked everyone for their participation and attendance and reminded everyone to keep in mind that we need to produce some fundraising strategies soon. He then made a motion to adjourn; the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen King

Secretary – Treasurer

