



**DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**
of Augusta

Downtown Development Authority of Augusta

Board Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2026 at 1 pm

DDA Offices, 1101 Greene Street

The Downtown Development Authority held its monthly meeting on May 21, 2026, at 1 pm at the DDA Offices, located at 1101 Greene Street.

DDA board members and staff in attendance were Chairman Jack Evans, Vice-Chairman James Heffner, Pastor Booker, Judge Ashani Pounds, Phuong Nguyen, Executive Director Margaret Woodard and Project Coordinator Corbin Freeman. Secretary-Treasurer Stephen King attended the meeting over the phone. Our guests in attendance were Director of Accelerate Augusta Shaun Andrews and SME Director John Snider.

Chairman Mr. Evans called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm. Mr. Evans started by giving a warm welcome to everyone. Then Mr. Evans proceeded by asking Mr. King to present the consent agenda and financial reports. The consent agenda, which included February and March Minutes along with February, March, and April Financial Reports. Mr. King asked if we had a motion to approve the consent agenda. James Heffner made the first motion of approval, and Judge Ashanti Pounds made the second, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Evans then asked Ms. Woodard to present her director's report, highlighting the following:

Economic Development

Conroy Hotel: Currently under construction and planning for completion in December 2026.

Framework: Planning for groundbreaking in December 2026.

Sibley Mill: The DDA is working on helping Sibley close a financing gap.

First Baptist Church: SSBCI loan has been completed, so financing is ready for purchasing the building.

Cotton Exchange: SSBCI loan for construction has been completed and will be utilized as a meeting/event space.

Embassy Suites: A bond has been placed over property that requires them to start the project in 2 years which will be in October 2027.

Lamar Building: Construction is scheduled to begin by the end of July 2026.



Downtown Initiatives

Facade Grants: There is a total of \$50,000 left for facade grants. We have received an application for Cotton Exchange. Bradley's Barbeque facade grant is now ready for the Boards approval.

Margaret Woodard called for a motion to approve Bradley's Barbeque facade grant. Mr. Heffner motioned to approve the grant, and Mr. King made a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Jones Street Alley: Construction is underway, buildings have been demolished creating access to the Augusta Commons. This project is scheduled for completion in December 2026.

TIA Project: DDA has partnered with the city, WJBF, and Paquin to produce public service announcements through collaboration with the content creator Rickey Jones.

Blight Ordinance: DDA and Jim Plunkett have a meeting scheduled with the new director of Planning and Zoning, Lisa Cameron. We will have a draft ordinance to review by mid-June.

After Ms. Woodard completed her Directors Report, Chairman Jack Evans asked for motion to accept the report as information. James Heffner motioned to approve, with a second by Pastor Booker. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Accelerate Augusta Update: Multiple grants and sponsorships are underway for the establishment. Shaun has created a new pathway for older entrepreneurs who are in the phase of retiring and wanting to establish a business. Accelerate is now implementing accelerative trades to help bring individuals in and teach them the business of the trade to increase businesses in that specific trade here in Augusta. There is now dual programming to lead them through acquisition. Also, there is another program called 90K where Accelerate staff connects the entrepreneur with local businesses to help further their knowledge and experience of that trade. The goal is to create economic infrastructure around the trade for the individual to succeed and create more jobs.

Other:

We have seen a net-gain of 18 new businesses on the Broad Street corridor since January along with 1725 housing units that have been completed and 731 multi/single family units on the drawing board.

DDA currently has 2 board members in transition. The board went ahead to discuss some of the candidates that have submitted applications. One candidate being considered is Gary Woodhurst. After approval by the Board, the next step would be the City approval. Chairman Jack Evans asked if there were any further questions or concerns about the candidate and called for a motion to nominate Mr. Woodhurst for a DDA Board position. James Heffner motioned to approve, with a second by Judge Ashanti Pounds and the motion passed unanimously.



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Organization:

John Snider presented the 2026 DDA Audit report and financial statements to the Board. A single audit was performed due to the federal funding threshold. There weren't any questions or concerns with the report, so Chairman Jack Evans asked for a motion to approve the 2026 Audit Report. Vice Chairman James Heffner made the motion to approve with a second by Pastor Booker and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Evans ended the meeting by thanking everyone for their support and engagement. He then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. James Heffner made the motion with a second by Judge Ashanti Pounds and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stephen King
Secretary-Treasurer