

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

CITY OF AUBURN, GA

Jon Gomolak, *Chair*

Mayda Brown, *Vice-Chair*

Susan Long, *Secretary/Treasurer*

Massa Williams

Tina Nix

Layla Contreras, *Social Media*

Dakota Whaley

MINUTES

August 4, 2026

6:15 pm

Auburn Municipal Complex

Rm. 201 – Council Chambers & Courtroom

1 Auburn Way

Members Present: J. Gomolak, M. Brown, S. Long, M. Williams, T. Nix, L. Contreras, D. Whaley

CALL TO ORDER

6:18 pm No one was at City Hall to open the door for us. We had to go through the Police Department to get in the building.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes: July 7, 2026

Action taken: Motion made to approve Minutes of July 7, 2026

J Gomolax	Yes
M Brown	Yes(1 st Motion)
S Long	Yes
M Williams	Abstained(Not present at meeting)
T Nix	Yes
L Contreras	Yes (2 nd Motion)
D Whaley	Abstained (Not present at meeting)

Approval of Workshop Minutes: July 29th, 2026

Action Taken: Motion made to approve Minutes July 29, 2026

J Gomolax	Yes
M Brown	Yes
S Long	Yes
M Williams	Yes (1 st Motion)
T Nix	Yes
L Contreras	Yes
D Whaley	Yes(2 nd Motion)

Action Taken: Motion made to include a Social Media Update as Agenda Item #3

J Gomolax	Yes
M Brown	Yes (2 nd Motion)
S Long	Yes
M Williams	Yes
T Nix	Yes
L Contreras	Yes (1 st Motion)
D Whaley	Yes

NEW BUSINESS

1) Update on Checking Account – Susan Long

City Council has been discussing separating DDA's Money from the City's. A City Council meeting will be held on August 13th to vote on this item. Bank OZK should have everything we need to succeed. They have Business Online Banking and a Treasury Management Team to help us with Invoices and Receivables. At the end of last meeting, Susan was voted in as Treasurer and will be responsible for recording expenses and receivables, administering payments, making deposits and reporting all financial statements to the Board and Public Record. Jon has suggested that 3 people sign checks. He has recommended that we have: the vice-chair, the treasurer, and a non-officer member.

2 Full Budget Discussion/Line Items – Jon/Mayda

While our balance may be 309,000, we were given a budget of \$38,000. That is a very small amount of money. We will have to work together to look for opportunities to make money. Up to \$150,000 has been set aside to move the WhistleStop Shops. Right now the Shops are under control of RGS and they are receiving rent. At last City Council meeting, Mayor Rocquemore was talking in reference to DDA and said "If we deeded the WhistleStop Shops back to DDA"? From the beginning the discussion has been that RGS would take ownership of WhistleStop Shops to give them some revenue and help them get started. After we pay to move the Shops they would return to DDA. The land around the caboose is city owned and not DDA owned. City Council would transfer to DDA. Now there is a question if this will happen and may not be clear in the contract.

Jon and Mayda have a meeting scheduled this Saturday, August, 8th, 2026 with Josh Rowan to discuss the WhistleStop Shops matter and what he has heard. All members are encouraged to talk to their appointed council member and find out what is going on.

It was mentioned that if we are not deeded the Shops, then we are not liable to pay to move them. We are checking legal responsibility.

New Budget begins October 1, 2026

Jon will send out a copy of the new full budget by email. Everyone please look over and gather questions and have ready to discuss at the next meeting.

Mayda wanted to share that we have had a question about why we would have 2 coffee shops so close to each other: Mayda's answered with "Hopefully they can fulfill different needs." They also asked for Family/Kid Friendly places. Mayda then had to leave.

3 Social Media Update - Layla

The August 2026 Social Media Update outlined our strategy to translate digital engagement into physical foot traffic by targeting key growing demographic in Barrow County, specifically the 20-24 (“Lifestyle Seekers”) and 40-44 (“Peak Spenders”) age brackets. Since our launch on June 1st, our platforms have seen strong localized growth. Facebook has reached 389 lifetime followers, generating 83.6K total views and 721 content interactions, while Instagram has grown to 130 lifetime followers with over 35,000 views and a reach of 14,000. Across both platforms, our audience remains predominantly female (over 73%) and highly localized, with Auburn residents comprising 38.3% of our Facebook followers and 44.6% of our Instagram followers. We are currently seeing the highest engagement rates on original, authentic content and posts that directly tag our local Auburn businesses.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Layla invited everyone to a gathering on September 4th or 5th in remembrance of the lives lost and changed forever in the Apalachee School Shooting.

Jon said that DDA Board Members checks should be ready by Thursday. He will contact us when he receives them.

Layla asked if September's Meeting could be moved or postponed. It is also Labor Day Weekend. Discussion was to postpone the September 1st meeting, but possibly call a special meeting to update everyone on the Financial vote by City Council on August 13. If they give us control over our account, we will want to meet before our Budget starts in October.

Action taken: Motion was made to postpone September 1st meeting. Special meeting will be called if necessary.

J Gomolak	Abstain
S Long	Yes
M Williams	Yes (2 nd motion)
T Nix	Yes (1 st Motion)
L Contreras	Yes
D Whaley	Yes

Action Taken: Motion made to adjourn Meeting

J Gomolak	Yes
S Long	Yes
M Williams	Yes(1 st Motion)
T Nix	Yes (2nd Motion)
L Contreras	Yes
D Whaley	Yes

Jon Gomolak, Chair

Susan Long, Secretary