

# Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

December 2008

## City Council

Bill Ham, Jr., Mayor  
501-7260  
bham@auburnalabama.org

Arthur L. Dowdell, Sr., Ward 1  
524-2074  
bishopdowdellministries@yahoo.com

Sheila H. Eckman, Ward 2  
821-9666  
750-9666  
sheilaeckman@bellsouth.net

Thomas Worden, Ward 3  
740-1783  
tworden@charter.net

Brent Beard, Ward 4  
821-4302  
brent@alabamacontractsales.com

Robin Kelley, Ward 5  
501-7947  
887-0033  
robinkelleylaw@gmail.com

Dick Phelan, Ward 6  
887-2071  
dickphelan@yahoo.com

Gene Dulaney, Ward 7  
887-7908  
887-2721  
gdulaney@auburnbank.com

Bob Norman, Ward 8  
821-1901  
bobnorman67@bellsouth.net

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Open Line is produced by  
Office of the  
City Manager  
144 Tichenor Ave., Ste. 1  
Auburn, AL 36830  
phone: 334-501-7261  
fax: 334-501-7299

web:

[www.auburnalabama.org](http://www.auburnalabama.org)

email:

[cduggan@auburnalabama.org](mailto:cduggan@auburnalabama.org)



City of Auburn



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## Making Auburn a Safer City

*The City of Auburn's Comprehensive Approach to Public Safety*

A sense of safety and security is a critical component for a high quality of life in any community. Each year, the City solicits citizens' opinions on safety in the community through the Annual Citizen Survey. In the 2008 survey, 94% of citizens were satisfied with Auburn as a place to raise children and 88% of were satisfied with the quality of police and fire services.

While satisfaction with police and fire is typically high, one area where citizens have voiced some concern is with the enforcement of speed limits in neighborhoods. The City has taken great strides to address neighborhood speeding, and citizens have noticed the results. The 2008 survey shows a 7% increase in satisfaction with neighborhood speed limit enforcement. As part of the new budget approved in September, the Auburn City Council authorized the addition of four new police officer positions in direct response to concerns voiced by residents. These officers will be dedicated to traffic enforcement.



Maintaining adequate equipment and facilities is essential to Public Safety's ability to serve citizens and is a top priority of the City Council.



The City has recently added a fifth fire station and purchased a 95' aerial platform truck. The new station, in concert with a redesign of the City's fire response zones, enables the Fire Division to maintain an average emergency response time of less than five minutes to any location within the Auburn city limits. The City has also added an upgraded communications tower, which allows for more efficient and reliable communication for both the Police and Fire Divisions. These expanded communication capabilities facilitate an even closer cooperation with regional public safety agencies. Finally, the Auburn Police Division's newly implemented Mobile Data System allows officers to spend more time in the field and provides them with more resources at their fingertips.

The City of Auburn's responsive and comprehensive approach to public safety will continue as Auburn grows. Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010 will see the addition of new vehicles to the Public Safety fleet, further expansions to the Mobile Data System, and the first phase of plans for a sixth fire station. State of the art technology such as the Auburn Interactive Growth Model, the Mobile Data System, and Auburn's GIS systems will provide City officials with additional information and resources to use in planning for the future and continuing to provide rapid response to emergency situations.

For more information on the City of Auburn Public Safety Department, please visit [www.auburnalabama.org/ps](http://www.auburnalabama.org/ps) or call 501-3110.





## Auburn Christmas Parade and Auburn University Holiday Celebration

Join the Auburn Chamber of Commerce and Auburn University for an evening of holiday cheer on Thursday, December 4 in downtown Auburn. The evening kicks off at 5:30 p.m. with the Auburn Christmas Parade, sponsored by the Auburn Chamber of Commerce. Immediately following the parade, join the students, faculty, and staff of Auburn University on Samford Lawn for a Holiday Celebration at 6:30 p.m.

For more information, please visit the City of Auburn's website at [www.auburnalabama.org](http://www.auburnalabama.org).

## Auburn's Interactive Government Citizens' Planning Academy Offers Hands-On Experience

Earlier this fall, the City of Auburn's Planning Department hosted the inaugural Citizens' Planning Academy, a six-week curriculum focusing on all aspects of the City's Planning Department. In addition to providing citizens with another way to become involved in their city government, the Academy gives citizens a hands-on, in-depth look at the City's comprehensive planning process.

Throughout the Academy, participants studied a number of topics, including the requirements and responsibilities of the Planning Department, the roles and responsibilities of planning-related boards, the City's long-range planning efforts, updates to the comprehensive plan, the role of other City departments in Planning, and zoning enforcement. The Academy concluded with a mock Planning Commission meeting held in the City Council Chamber.

Plans are currently underway for the 2009 Citizens' Planning Academy. Citizens interested in participating are encouraged to check the City's website frequently at [www.auburnalabama.org](http://www.auburnalabama.org) or contact the City of Auburn Planning Department at 501-3040.



## Board Vacancies



- One vacancy on the **Public Park & Recreation Board** was announced at the November 18 City Council meeting and will be filled at the December 16 meeting.
- Two vacancies on the **Cemeteries Advisory Board** will be announced at the December 2 City Council meeting and will be filled at the January 6, 2009 meeting.
- Two vacancies on the **Board of Zoning Adjustment** will be announced at the December 2 City Council meeting and will be filled at the January 6, 2009 meeting.

*Citizens interested in serving are encouraged to contact their City Council member or notify the City Manager's Office at [webocm@auburnalabama.org](mailto:webocm@auburnalabama.org) or call 501-7260.*

## MEETING SCHEDULE

### DECEMBER

- 1 Cemeteries Advisory Board**, 4 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center
- 2 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**, 5:15 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center  
**City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber
- 3 Board of Zoning Adjustment**, 4:30 p.m., Council Chamber
- 5 Tree Commission**, 11:30 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Conference Room
- 9 Greenspace Advisory Board**, 11:30 a.m., City Meeting Room  
**Historic Preservation Commission**, 4 p.m., Development Services Building  
**Board of Education**, 6 p.m., AHS Multi-Media Room
- 11 Planning Commission**, 5 p.m., Council Chamber
- 16 City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber
- 18 Water Works Board**, 4 p.m., Water Board Conference Room

### JANUARY

- 5 Cemeteries Advisory Board**, 4 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center
- 6 Industrial Development Board**, 4 p.m., City Hall Conference Room  
**Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**, 5:15 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center  
**City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber
- 7 Board of Zoning Adjustment**, 4:30 p.m., Council Chamber
- 8 Planning Commission**, 5 p.m., Council Chamber
- 9 Tree Commission**, 11:30 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Conference Room

**Meeting times and places are subject to change**

For more information, including a map of City meeting locations, please visit [www.auburnalabama.org/boards](http://www.auburnalabama.org/boards)

## Job Vacancy

The City of Auburn has full-time and part-time positions in a wide range of areas. One of the current regular, full-time job openings is:

- **Risk Management Analyst**  
(\$2,912.87 - 3,478.12/month)

For updated job opportunities, please visit [www.auburnalabama.org/jobs](http://www.auburnalabama.org/jobs), contact the Alabama State Employment Office, or call the City's job line at 501-7250.

*The City of Auburn is an equal opportunity employer.*



## FEMA Floodplain Maps and Flood Insurance Study Update

Lee County is in the process of updating its Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Floodplain Maps and Flood Insurance Study. The City of Auburn's FEMA Floodplain Maps and Flood Insurance Study will also be updated as part of the countywide map modernization project. State officials will host a Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) community coordination meeting for the City of Auburn in February 2009. The meeting will be open to the public. Additional information regarding the study and the public meeting will be available in an upcoming issue of *Open Line* and on the City's website at [www.auburnalabama.org/fema](http://www.auburnalabama.org/fema).

For more information, please contact the City of Auburn Public Works Department at 501-3000.

## 20th Anniversary Daddy-Daughter Date Night Tickets



Tickets to the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Daddy-Daughter Date Night (DDDn) go on sale Monday, December 8 and will be on sale while supplies last Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road. Due to overwhelming demand, DDDn will be held on three nights, February 12 - 14, 2009, at the Best Western-University Convention Center, 1577 South College Street. The cost is \$30 per couple and \$5 for each additional child. A limited number of

tickets are available. This event sells out quickly, so be sure to purchase your tickets early.

For more information, please contact the City of Auburn Parks and Recreation Department at 501-2930.

### 2009 Daddy-Daughter Date Night

Thursday, February 12	5:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Friday, February 13	6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Saturday, February 14	6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

## Holiday Schedules

City Hall will be closed Thursday, December 25 for the **Christmas** holiday. Public Safety services, including Police, Fire, and Communications, will remain on their regular schedules. All garbage, trash, and recycling collections for the week of December 22 - 26 will remain on their regular schedules with the exception of Thursday's route, which will be collected on Friday, December 26.

City Hall will be closed Thursday, January 1 for the **New Year's** holiday. Public Safety services, including Police, Fire, and Communications, will remain on their regular schedules. All garbage, trash, and recycling collections for the week of December 29 - January 2 will remain on their regular schedules with the exception of Thursday's route, which will be collected on Friday, January 2.

## Making the Grade... City Receives Bond Rating Upgrade

Auburn citizens recently received outstanding news relating to their bond ratings. Standard & Poor's, the world's foremost provider of independent credit ratings, has upgraded the City of Auburn's bond rating from AA to AA+. Auburn and Huntsville are the only municipalities in the State of Alabama to hold an AA+ rating. Out of the more than 28,000 ratings Standard & Poor's assigns to municipalities, counties, states, hospitals, utilities, and boards of education, Auburn's AA+ rating ranks in the top 1% of all S&P ratings.

The new AA+ rating reflects the City's consistent track record of sound financial management, a strong and diversified revenue base, and solid financial reserves. Cities holding such a high rating exemplify excellence in both their financial standing and reporting. The City's current financial plan for Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010 is meticulously outlined in the current Biennial Budget passed by the City Council in September of this year.

"In the midst of these uncertain economic times, Auburn residents can take comfort in knowing that the City's finances remain strong, as evidenced by our rating upgrade," commented Mayor Bill Ham, Jr. "Our citizens expect a fiscally sound municipal government and that is what we will continue to deliver."

What does the rating upgrade mean to citizens? Much like an individual's credit score, a city's bond rating indicates its financial strength and ability to repay debt. Rating agencies such as Standard & Poor's assess the local economy, the City's debt structure and financial condition, and the administrative practices of the City Council and City management in assigning a score.

The 2008 Citizen Survey showed that 74% of citizens were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall value they receive for their tax dollars. Citizens will directly benefit from the rating upgrade in the form of lower interest paid on money the City borrows to construct new facilities or provide additional infrastructure for water, sewer, and roads.

For more information, please contact Auburn City Hall at 501-7260.

## City of Auburn Non-Emergency Number

Please note the City of Auburn's 24-hour non-emergency number is 501-3100. Citizens are encouraged to use this number when contacting the Public Safety Department with non-emergency requests and issues such as cars blocking the roadway and noise complaints. In addition, this number may be used for all after-hours issues.

This number was established to keep 911 lines open for true emergencies. In the event of a true emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

# City Management

Charles M. Duggan, Jr.  
501-7261  
City Manager  
cduggan@auburnalabama.org

Kevin A. Cowper  
501-7262  
Assistant City Manager  
kcowper@auburnalabama.org

James C. Buston, III  
501-7201  
Assistant City Manager/CIO  
jbuston@auburnalabama.org

Economic Development  
Department  
Phillip Dunlap, Director  
501-7270  
pdunlap@auburnalabama.org

Environmental Services  
Department  
Timothy L. Woody, Director  
501-3080  
twoody@auburnalabama.org

Finance Department  
Andrea E. Jackson, Director  
501-7220  
ajackson@auburnalabama.org

Human Resources Department  
Steven A. Reeves, Director  
501-7240  
sreeves@auburnalabama.org

Library  
Margie B. Huffman, Director  
501-3190  
mhuffman@auburnalabama.org

Municipal Judge  
Joe S. Bailey  
501-3180  
jbailey@auburnalabama.org

Parks and Recreation Department  
Rebecca O. Richardson, Director  
501-2930  
brichardson@auburnalabama.org

Planning Department  
Forrest E. Cotten, Director  
501-3040  
fcotten@auburnalabama.org

Public Safety Department  
William H. James, Director  
501-3110  
bjames@auburnalabama.org

Public Works Department  
Jeffery L. Ramsey, Director  
501-3000  
jramsey@auburnalabama.org

Water Resource Management Dept.  
Laura A. Koon, Director  
501-3060  
lkoon@auburnalabama.org

Auburn City Schools  
Terry Jenkins, Superintendent  
887-2100  
tjenkins@auburnschools.org

# up COMING EVENTS



## Open Line Feedback

Do you have any suggestions, feedback, or story ideas that you would like to share? If so, please contact us at [openline@auburnalabama.org](mailto:openline@auburnalabama.org) or call 501-7255.

*Due to space considerations, we are unable to publicize any events that are not directly affiliated with a City department*



**Now Showing...Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center Exhibition** - Mark your calendar for the following Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center Exhibition. The exhibit is free and open to the public Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. For more information on the Gallery or future exhibitions, contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.

• **Photo X Juried Exhibition**, through December 30. Works in a variety of media by area and regional artists.

**Wednesdays in December...Preschool Story Time** - Preschoolers ages 3 - 5 years are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for Preschool Story Time every Wednesday this month at 10 a.m. Please note there will be no Preschool Story Time December 24 or 31. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



**Thursdays in December...Toddler Time** - Toddlers ages 18 months - 3 years are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for Toddler Time every Thursday this month at 10 a.m. Please note there will be no Toddler Time December 25 or January 1. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

**Available December 1...2009 Parks and Recreation Events Calendar** - Be sure to pick up your copy of the 2009 Parks and Recreation Events Calendar beginning December 1 at various City facilities or download a copy online at [www.auburnalabama.org/parks](http://www.auburnalabama.org/parks). This FREE calendar lists all special events, program quarters, brochure release dates, Auburn City School holidays, facility closings, athletic registration dates, City holidays & events, and much more. For more information, contact the Dean Road Recreation Center at 501-2930.



**December 3...Magic Tree House Club** - Youth in grades K - 5 are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for the Magic Tree House Club December 3 at 3:30 p.m. This month's featured book title is *Revolutionary War on Wednesday*. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

**December 4...Young Adult Coffeehouse** - Young adults in grades 6 - 12 are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for Young Adult Coffeehouse December 3 at 6:30 p.m. Don't miss a medieval feast with the Shire of the Eagle, SCA, a local branch of the internationally-known organization dedicated to researching and recreating the arts and skills of pre-17th Century Europe. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



**December 9...Puppet Show** - Youth of all ages are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for a puppet show entitled *Donkey's Christmas Wish* December 9 at 3:30 p.m. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

**Through December 10...Adult Basketball Registration** - Adult basketball registration will be held at the Dean Road Recreation Center Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. through December 10. The season runs January 5 - March 13. A mandatory manager meeting will be held December 11 at 5:30 p.m. at the Dean Road Recreation Center. For more information, contact Ryan Molt at 501-2943.



**December 11...Auburn Public Library Christmas Party** - Youth ages 3 - 11 are invited to join the Auburn Public Library for their Annual Christmas Party December 11 at 6 p.m. Don't miss arts & crafts, carols, and stories. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

**Register by December 17...Montgomery Zoo Holiday Field Trip** - All 3rd - 6th graders are invited to join Parks and Recreation for a holiday field trip to the Montgomery Zoo December 22. Participants are asked to bring a brown bag lunch and meet at the Dean Road Recreation Center at 9 a.m. The cost is \$10, payable in cash on the day of the trip. Registration ends December 17. For more information, contact the Dean Road Recreation Center at 501-2930.



**December 18...American Girls Club** - Youth in grades K - 5 are invited to join the American Girls Club at the Auburn Public Library December 18 at 3:30 p.m. This month's featured character is Molly. Program space is limited. Contact Youth Services at 501-3196 to sign up.

**Register by January 2...X-Cell Field Trip to Cloudmont Ski Resort** - Who knew you could snow ski in Alabama?!? Join Parks and Recreation for a day of winter fun at Alabama's only alpine ski resort on January 10 from 5 a.m. - 6 p.m. The cost is \$50, payable in cash on the day of the trip, and includes admission, lift tickets, beginner lessons, and ski equipment. Participants must bring a brown bag lunch. Registration ends January 2. For more information, contact the Dean Road Recreation Center at 501-2930.



**Due January 5...Spring Baseball Coaching Applications** - The Auburn Dixie Baseball/Softball Association (ADBSA) is recruiting coaches for spring baseball. Applicants are available at the Dean Road Recreation Center and may be emailed by request. All applications must be postmarked by January 5. For more information, contact the Dean Road Recreation Center at 501-2930.

**April 25, 2009...Auburn CityFest 2009** - Auburn CityFest 2009, presented by the *Opelika-Auburn News* is set for April 25 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Kiesel Park. Applications for fine arts, arts & crafts, food, and non-profit exhibitors are now available on the CityFest website at [www.auburncityfest.com](http://www.auburncityfest.com). A limited number of spaces are available for exhibitors, so be sure to apply today! Event sponsorships are also available. For more information, visit [www.auburncityfest.com](http://www.auburncityfest.com) or contact CityFest Headquarters at 501-2930.

