

# Open Line

## A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

March 2011

### 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  
887-0033  
robinkelleylaw@gmail.com

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

Gene Dulaney, Ward 7  
887-7908  
466-3191  
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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### City Finance Director Leaves Legacy

The retirement of Finance Director Andrea Jackson on February 1, 2011 marked the summation of a 16-year career at the City of Auburn characterized by excellence and innovation in financial management. With Andrea at the helm of the Finance Department, the City has enjoyed numerous recognitions for the quality of our budget documents.

"Her passion for excellence created within Auburn a system of financial accountability and award winning reporting that is rarely equaled in the local government arena," said Penny Smith, Deputy Finance Director. This year marks the 23rd consecutive year that the City has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting, and the 8th year the City has received the award for outstanding achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting.

"Andrea has been steadfast in promoting the professional qualifications of her staff and the excellent customer service those employees provide," said Steve Reeves, Human Resources Director. Excellent financial management practices are evidenced by steady improvements in the City of Auburn's bond ratings over time, even during historic recession conditions. Annual reports by an independent auditing firm have reflected the strength of the policies and procedures in the Finance Department.

"Andrea's professionalism will be missed, but we're fortunate that she has instilled it in all of the members of the finance department and they will continue that legacy," said Charles M. Duggan, Jr., City Manager. "Her deep desire to protect public funds is laudable and also important to emulate. We, citizens and employees, have all benefitted from our association with her over the past 16 years," said Duggan.



### Auburn Drought Update

Western Lee County, including the City of Auburn, is currently in an "extreme" drought condition according to the United States Drought Monitor (USDM) ([http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/DM\\_state.htm?AL,SE](http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/DM_state.htm?AL,SE)). Local drought conditions have been characterized as "extreme" since September, 2010. Less than 2% of the state was in an "extreme" drought condition per the USDM as of January 2011. The total rainfall measured at the Auburn-Opelika Airport NOAA rainfall gauge in 2010 was approximately 38 inches, which is 18.5 inches below normal rainfall and nearly 36 inches below the record rainfall received in 2009.

Due to current La Niña weather patterns, the United States Climate Prediction Center (USCPC) forecasts below average rainfall and above average temperatures in the southeastern United States during the spring of 2011. La Niña is the cooling of ocean surface temperatures in the central and east-central equatorial Pacific Ocean that occurs every 3 to 5 years. During La Niña, rainfall typically diminishes over the southeastern United States. Current La Niña weather conditions began in late 2010 and are expected to last through the spring of 2011. The last La Niña weather pattern occurred during the last significant drought in Lee County beginning in the fall of 2007 and lasted until late spring of 2008.



The primary water supply for Auburn residents is Lake Ogletree. The water level in Lake Ogletree is currently below normal for this time of year and approximately 4 feet below the level seen during the winter 2008 drought. The Water Works Board of the City of Auburn (AWWB) has initiated operational changes to minimize the drought impact to Lake Ogletree. The AWWB encourages residents to conserve water and will be evaluating the possibility of implementing voluntary water restrictions and/or drought water rates if drought conditions persist. If you have questions concerning the current drought, please contact the Water Resource Management Department at 334-501-3060.

## Toomer's Celebration Time-Lapse

The City of Auburn congratulates the Auburn Tigers on winning the 2010 BCS National Championship. In honor of the win, the City has released a time-lapse video of the victory celebration at Toomer's corner taken from the City's Toomer's Corner webcam. The live video feed of Toomer's Corner provided by the recently-updated HD web camera has become the most popular destination on the City of Auburn website.

The Toomer's Corner webcam was especially popular after Auburn University's football victory over the University of Oregon. Leading up to and immediately following Auburn's win, the webcam was viewed by 56,737 people from around the world; all participating virtually in the BCS National Championship celebratory rolling of Toomer's Corner. While most of our cyber visitors were from the United States, a number of visitors joined us from outside of the US. The City's website hosted visitors from Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The Toomer's time-lapse video has been viewed over 33,000 times as of this writing.

To see the video and hear Mayor Ham's congratulatory remarks to the Auburn Tigers, visit the City of Auburn's website at [www.auburnalabama.org/PressRelease.aspx?PRID=278](http://www.auburnalabama.org/PressRelease.aspx?PRID=278).



## City Completes CompPlan 2030 Recommendations

The City of Auburn's comprehensive plan for future growth and development, CompPlan 2030, is entering its final stages before adoption. The plan's draft recommendations and Future Land Use Plan map were made available online for public review and comment for approximately six weeks beginning December 10 through January 23. During that period, staff gave several presentations and held an open house to present and explain the recommendations and Future Land Use Plan.

After the close of the public comment period, staff summarized comments from the public and presented them, along with the draft recommendations, to the Planning Commission and City Council at a joint meeting on Tuesday, February 8. The plan will then proceed to the Planning Commission for its recommendation and to the City Council for adoption. Following adoption by the City Council, the implementation phase for the plan will begin. Staff will review existing regulations and codes as well as existing zoning to determine what priority changes should be made to implement the recommendations. Priority changes will be made during calendar year 2011, following additional opportunities for public input and review. For more information, visit [www.auburnalabama.org/compplan2030](http://www.auburnalabama.org/compplan2030) or contact Justin Steinmann at 334-501-3045 or [jsteinmann@auburnalabama.org](mailto:jsteinmann@auburnalabama.org).

## Daylight Saving Time Begins March 13

Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 13. Remember to move your clocks up one hour when you go to bed Saturday night, March 12, and to change the batteries in your smoke detectors.



## CDBG 2011 Action Plan

The City of Auburn wants your input for the distribution of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds the City will receive from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) beginning June 1, 2011. The public hearing will focus on gathering input about housing and community development needs that will benefit low to moderate-income citizens of Auburn. The hearing will be an opportunity for citizens to guide the FY2011 Action Plan as it is developed. All funding recommendations must conform to the 2010-2014 CDBG Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan is available for review at the Community Development Office located at 122 Tichenor Avenue and the Public Library.

The public hearing will be held on Thursday, March 17, 2011 at 10:30 am at the Boykin Community Center (Meeting Room C) located at 400 Boykin Street. Please direct all questions regarding the public hearing to the Community Development Division at (334) 501-7280.

## Income Tax Forms Available at Auburn Public Library

A variety of income tax forms are available at the Auburn Public Library. Federal tax forms, information, and frequently asked tax questions are also available on the Internal Revenue Service website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

## Portion of Cox Road Closes

Construction on the City of Auburn's third I-85 interchange is underway. As part of the construction process, Cox Road was closed on January 31<sup>st</sup> at the locations indicated on the map below. Construction is anticipated to last through July, 2012. During construction, drivers using Cox Road should seek alternate routes and allow additional travel time. Motorists traveling south on Cox Road should use West Veterans Boulevard and South College Street to access Beehive Road. Cox Road will be reconfigured to cross I-85 and provide access to Beehive Road and South College Street.

Auburn's new interchange will provide enhanced interstate access to residents of west Auburn and western Lee County as well as to businesses locating in Auburn's Technology Park West. The interchange

project is being managed by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT). For more information, please contact the ALDOT Project Engineer Jamie Davis at (334) 466-8937.



## City Spruces Up Downtown Auburn



The City of Auburn has installed a new historic marker that was provided by the State of Alabama in honor of the Year of Alabama Small Towns and Downtowns, which culminated in a Homecoming Event held on November 4-7, 2010. The sign is located on Magnolia Avenue, opposite St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church. The marker's text, written by Ralph Draughon, provides visitors to downtown Auburn with a brief history of the "Loveliest Village."

The historic marker isn't the only recent downtown improvement. In addition to the recently installed downtown recycling bins, pedestrian crossing signals and the illuminated street signs at two downtown intersections, the City's Parks and Recreation has constructed tree wells and planted new trees along Gay Street downtown. More illuminated street signs as well as additional countdown crossing signals for pedestrians are scheduled for installation.



## March 26<sup>th</sup> Proclaimed "The Big Event Day"

Auburn Mayor Bill Ham has declared Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup> as "The Big Event Day" in the City of Auburn. The Big Event is a student-run volunteer day hosted by Auburn University's Student Government Association, which encourages college students and faculty to thank the community for providing a thriving environment to live and learn. With support from the *All Auburn All Orange* Initiative this one-day service project has expanded to become an Auburn tradition of giving back to the surrounding community and thanking them for making Auburn such an incredible place. Last year's Big Event included over 1,700 students and faculty members completing over seventy-five service projects. If your business, church, household, or organization would like to request student volunteers for The Big Event, please fill out the application included in the February Open Line.

## MEETING SCHEDULE MARCH

- 1 **Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**, 5:15 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road
- 1 **City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 2 **Board of Zoning Adjustment**, 4:30 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 4 **Tree Commission**, 11:30 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 714 East Glenn Avenue
- 7 **Cemeteries Advisory Board**, 4:00 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road
- 8 **Greenspace Advisory Board**, 11:30 a.m., City Meeting Room, 122 Tichenor Avenue
- Historic Preservation Commission**, 4 p.m., Development Services Building, 171 North Ross Street
- Board of Education**, 6 p.m., AHS Multi-Media Room, 405 South Dean Road
- 10 **Planning Commission**, 5 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 15 **City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 22 **Bicycle Committee**, 7 p.m., Development Services Building, 171 North Ross Street
- 24 **Water Works Board**, 4 p.m., Water Board Conference Room, 1501 West Samford Avenue

### 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).

## ShopAuburn This Spring

The City of Auburn would like to remind citizens to shop Auburn this spring and keep your sales tax dollars local. Meter-free parking will be available downtown March 14 - 18. Citizens are invited to shop downtown and take advantage of public parking spaces, including those available on the first floor of the Auburn Municipal Parking Deck, located off Tichenor Avenue between College Street and Gay Street.

Auburn's sales tax revenue supports Auburn City Schools; provides for infrastructure improvements; supports public services such as police and fire protection; provides for the maintenance and paving of roads; and helps sponsor community events such as the Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Auburn CityFest, and Bike Bash.

For more information, please contact the City of Auburn Finance Department at 501-7220 or visit [www.auburnalabama.org/fi](http://www.auburnalabama.org/fi).

## Board Vacancies

- Three vacancies on the **Commercial Development Authority** will be filled at the March 1, 2011 City Council meeting.
- Two vacancies on the **East Alabama Mental Health-Mental Retardation Board** will be filled at the March 15, 2011 City Council meeting.
- Two vacancies on the **Library Board** will be announced at the March 1, 2011 meeting and will be filled at the April 5, 2011 City Council meeting.
- Three vacancies on the **Historic Preservation Commission** will be announced at the March 1, 2011 meeting and will be filled at the April 5, 2011 City Council meeting.



Citizens interested in serving are encouraged to contact their City Council member or notify the City Manager's Office.



# 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 Dept.  
Phillip Dunlap, Director  
501-7270  
pdunlap@auburnalabama.org

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

Finance Department  
Director  
501-7220  
webfinance@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 Court  
Jim McLaughlin, Judge  
501-3180  
jmclaughlin@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

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

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## 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.

# up COMING EVENTS

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

## Auburn Public Library



**Tuesdays in March...Baby Time** – Mothers of babies ages 6-18 months are invited on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. for Baby Time. The program features music, fingerplays, and books. For more information, contact Auburn Public Library Youth Services at 501-3196.



**Preschool Story Time...Every Thursday** – Preschoolers ages 3-5 years-old are invited every Thursday in March at 10:00 a.m. for Story Time. For more information, contact Auburn Public Library Youth Services at 501-3196.



**Every Week in March...Toddler Time** – Toddlers ages 18 months – 3 years-old are invited every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. for Toddler Time. The program features music, visual aids and simple crafts. For more information, contact Auburn Public Library Youth Services at 501-3196.

**Every Thursday in March...Home School Chess Club** – Open to children ages 5-13 years old each Thursday at 2:00 p.m. Bring your chess board and play a round of chess. A limited number of chess boards are provided by the library. For more information, contact Auburn Public Library Youth Services at 501-3196.

**March 3...Magic Tree House - Children Kindergarten** – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade are invited on Wednesday, March 3 at 3:30 to participate in the Magic Tree House. The program features reading and a craft. For more information, contact Auburn Public Library Youth Services at 501-3196.



**March 3...Teen Cafe** – Teens in grades 8-12 are invited to Teen Cafe' on Thursday, March 3 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. For more information, contact Auburn Public Library Youth Services at 501-3196.

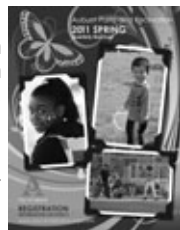
**March 8...Puppet Show** – Children ages 3-11 are invited to a puppet show on Tuesday, March 8 at 3:30 p.m. For more information, contact Auburn Public Library Youth Services at 501-3196.

**March 24...American Girl's Club** – Children in grades Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade are invited on Thursday, March 24 at 3:30 to learn about girls who grew up in various times in history. For more information, contact Auburn Public Library Youth Services at 501-3196.

## Parks and Recreation

**Sign Up Today...Auburn Parks and Recreation's Weekly Online Newsletter** – Looking for a way to stay up-to-date on Auburn Parks and Recreation news, announcements, programs and events? Sign up for *LeisureLink*, your weekly online newsletter from the City of Auburn Parks and Recreation Department. This FREE publication comes directly to your inbox each week with news and information on any and everything related to Parks and Recreation. Sign up today at [auburnalabama.org/leisure](http://auburnalabama.org/leisure). For more information, visit [auburnalabama.org/leisure](http://auburnalabama.org/leisure) or contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

**Now Available...Auburn Parks and Recreation Spring Brochure** – Be sure to download your copy of Auburn Parks and Recreation's spring brochure beginning February 7. Visit [auburnalabama.org/parks](http://auburnalabama.org/parks) to find out the latest on special events, programs, and happenings in Auburn this spring, including the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Bike Bash, and Auburn CityFest 2011, presented by the Opelika Auburn News! For more information, contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.



**February 22 – March 31...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, visit [auburnalabama.org/arts](http://auburnalabama.org/arts) or contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.

**"Collaboration,"** February 22 – March 31. New fabric works by members of Studio 222.

**March 2 – 5 and 7...AAAT Children's Theatre Presents "Alice in Wonderland"** – Coming to a rabbit hole near you! Join the Auburn Area Community Theatre for their Children's Theatre production of "Alice in Wonderland" March 2 – 4 at 6:30 p.m. and March 5 at 2 & 6:30 p.m. at the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center. Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$6 for students and seniors. Don't miss a special family night performance March 7 at 6:30 p.m.; all tickets will be \$6. For more information, visit [auburnalabama.org/arts](http://auburnalabama.org/arts) or contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.

**March 4...First Friday Night Tennis Mixer** – Join the Auburn Community Tennis Association (ACTA) for the First Friday Night Tennis Mixer on March 4 at 6:30 p.m. at the City of Auburn/Auburn University Yarbrough Tennis Center. Citizens ages 19 and up are encouraged to play. All levels of play are welcome. No partner is necessary. The event will be held rain or shine. Yarbrough Tennis Center non-member court fees apply. For more information, contact the Yarbrough Tennis Center at 501-2920.



**March 4...Auburn Community Orchestra Concert Performance** – Join the Auburn Community Orchestra for a FREE performance at Auburn University's Telfair Peet Theatre on March 4 at 7:30 p.m. For more information, visit [auburnalabama.org/arts](http://auburnalabama.org/arts) or contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.



**April 30, 2011...Auburn CityFest 2011** – Auburn CityFest 2011, presented by the Opelika-Auburn News, is set for Saturday, April 30 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Kiesel Park. Applications for fine arts and crafts are available online at [auburncityfest.com](http://auburncityfest.com). Log on today to get your application in early. Spaces fill quickly! Contact the Auburn CityFest Headquarters at 501-2930 for more information. Mark your calendars...we'll see you at Auburn CityFest 2011 on Saturday, April 30!

**Now Available...SummerNight 2011 Applications** – Join the City of Auburn, Auburn Arts Association, and Downtown Auburn Merchants for SummerNight 2011 on June 17 from 6 – 9:30 p.m. in downtown Auburn. This FREE community event features artwork and music from area artists on display throughout downtown. Area artists, downtown businesses, and restaurants are encouraged to participate. Applications are available online at [auburnalabama.org/arts](http://auburnalabama.org/arts). For more information, contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.