

# Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

January 2013

## City Council

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

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

Ron Anders Jr., Ward 2  
703-9000  
ronanders2020@gmail.com

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  
319-2251  
bobnorman67@gmail.com

## Efficiency in Government



The Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA) issued its periodic report providing a financial comparison of 20 Alabama cities above 20,000 in population. Using 2010 numbers, PARCA reports that Auburn, the 9<sup>th</sup> largest city in the state, is 10<sup>th</sup> (of 20 cities reported) in revenues per capita and 11<sup>th</sup> in expenditures per capita. Of the 20 cities studied, Auburn had the 7<sup>th</sup> highest ending fund balance and was 14<sup>th</sup> in sales tax revenue per capita. For Alabama cities overall, sales tax remains the most important revenue source supporting the provision of government services.

PARCA's numbers are an informative snapshot of local government finances, but offer little in the way of analysis of how well governments are handling their finances. Other recent reports have spoken to the quality of long-term fiscal strategy and policy in the City of Auburn. The most recent Annual Citizen Survey results show that Auburn citizens rank the value received for taxes and fees 27 points above the national average. In August, both Standard & Poor's and Moody's affirmed the City of Auburn's excellent bond ratings of AA+ and Aa2, respectively. Rating agency reports have cited Auburn's stable economic environment, expenditure controls, strong reserve levels, and stable municipal workforce as important factors in Auburn's fiscal success.

The City of Auburn's approach is guided by several key characteristics, including:

**1. A lean workforce:** The City of Auburn has long held two values when it comes to the workforce dedicated to providing City services. The first is to hire, and retain, the best possible employees, focusing on excellence. The second is to do the people's work with as lean a workforce as possible, focusing on efficiency. To do both requires striking a balance between providing a positive workplace with competitive wages while limiting the percentage of the budget dedicated to employees. The City of Auburn has historically managed to find that balance, keeping personnel expenses around, or under, 50% of the budget while maintaining a quality, motivated workforce in which 20% of the workforce has 15 or more years of service. Many local governments spend 60% to 75% of their budgets on personnel.

**2. Professional Management:** The City of Auburn adopted the council-manager form of Government in the 1980s. This form of government combines the strong political leadership of elected officials, who make policy decisions, with the strong managerial experience of an appointed manager who in turn is responsible for the city's day-to-day operations. According to the International City County Management Association, council-manager government promotes transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement.

**3. Support for Schools:** Auburn is an education community, and not just because of Auburn University. The quality of Auburn City Schools is a key to the local quality of life for Auburn's families, and remains an important factor in Auburn's industrial development successes and recent national recognitions. The Auburn City Council has consistently placed Auburn City Schools at the top of its priority rankings during the budget process. The annual citizen survey mirrors that support: 94% of residents rate the quality of local schools as good or excellent, and residents indicate that the school system should continue to be a top priority for local leaders. In 2012, 62% of residents surveyed indicated support for increased taxes or fees to fund needed expansions in Auburn City Schools. It's clear that both City leaders and the Auburn community recognize that support for our school system is a priority at a time when state support for local schools is inadequate and when significant facility expansion needs have been identified to prepare Auburn City Schools for continued success.

With these values in place, the City of Auburn has been nationally recognized in recent years for quality of life, job and industry opportunities, the quality of local schools, and boasts an unemployment rate well below the national average. City leaders are dedicated to continuing to promote policies and practices that lead to fiscal responsibility and efficiency in the provision of city services.

## Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

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



## Library Director Retires

In October of 1971, 24-year-old Margie Huffman became the manager, librarian and only full-time employee of what was then known as the Hollifield Memorial Library. At that time, Auburn's library was a quaint, 1,500 square-foot facility on North Gay Street. Margie, who had received her Bachelor of Education from Jacksonville State University and Masters in Education from Auburn University, had her work cut out for her. But she was up to the challenge. Now, as she retires from a 41-year career dedicated to providing excellent library services to Auburn's residents, the results speak for themselves.

After taking over the Hollifield Memorial Library, Margie began working with library supporters who recognized the need for expanding the library. It wasn't long before there were calls for a new library. "Those were the golden years for citizen involvement in pushing for a better library. That was really a great time," she fondly recalled. In 1987, the library was moved to a 12,000 square-foot facility housed in the municipal complex on North Ross Street where a fully-functioning public library blossomed.

Margie describes this transition period as challenging, and yet rewarding. "That accomplishment was made possible by the support of dedicated citizens serving with the Library Board of Trustees and with the Friends of the Library. They are greatly responsible for the library becoming what it is today," Huffman said.

As the community grew, the demand for Library services increased. Eventually, another expansion was needed, leading to the 2001 construction of the current library on Thach Avenue. The library doubled in size after being moved from North Ross Street to a new 24,000 square-foot Thach Avenue location. In 2008, a new wing for Youth Services added 8,000 square-feet to that number. It was an addition that Margie believes was vital, saying "One of the most important things we can do for toddlers through young adults is to develop in them a love of reading. It is crucial to their educational success."



The changes to the library which have occurred over the years stem from Margie's unwavering conviction that libraries are indispensable to enriching the lives of all citizens. "Public libraries help level the playing field - they're absolutely essential. They provide services to every socio-economic and age group, and are a source of recreational reading, research, and professional assistance." This principle has led to providing diversity in materials and programming to engage the full diversity of Auburn's citizenry. "I truly believe the library has something for everyone," Huffman asserted.

During Margie's tenure, in addition to expanding the library's book inventory, the library has added programs, public computer access, research resources, digital offerings, and more.

Margie credits her staff for the library's success. "I have to give credit to having a wonderful staff. The fact that I had a superb, keenly dedicated group of individuals working with me made it a delightful job."

## City of Auburn Remembers Former City Planning Director

The Auburn community recently honored the life and memory of a man who literally helped shape the Auburn and Lee County communities over the past two decades. Dr. Robert John Juster passed away on October 24, 2012. Dr. Juster was a highly-respected Planning Director for the City of Auburn, having twice served in that role from 1990 to 1996, and again from 2002 until 2005. He also served as a member of the Auburn Planning Commission and the Lee County Planning Commission.

Dr. Juster was a native of London, England, where he earned degrees in architecture and regional planning prior to becoming an American citizen in 1959. Dr. Juster's education continued in the United States with masters' degrees from Harvard University and Samford University and a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University. In a career that spanned the private sector, local government, and education, he served in professional positions in Essex and London in England, and in several communities, including Auburn, in the southeastern United States, as well as at the University of Mississippi and the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Juster was honored both nationally and in Alabama as a leading expert in city planning based on his teaching, writing, and practice. As the long-time principal instructor in the Alabama Planning Institute's certification programs, he taught most of Alabama's city planners and planning commission members over a 25-year period.

Dr. Juster was characterized by a quick wit and gentle demeanor, and by the respect of his professional peers and personal friends. His impact on our community will continue to be felt through the foundation of good planning practices that he created, and he is deeply missed by his friends and colleagues.

## Anders Appointed to City Council

At the November 6, 2012 meeting, the Auburn City Council appointed Ron Anders as Ward 2 Councilperson, replacing retiring Ward 2 Councilperson Sheila Eckman, who resigned her Council seat at the October 16 Council meeting to begin service as the newly elected Commissioner for Lee County District 1.

Councilperson Eckman served on the Auburn City Council from October 7, 2002 until October 16, 2012. Eckman was recognized for her decade of service at the November 6 meeting.

Anders was one of five citizens who asked to be considered as a replacement councilperson for Ward 2. State law provides for Anders to serve as Ward 2 councilperson until the 2014 election, when the Council seat will be filled by popular vote.

Ron Anders has been a citizen of Auburn since 1965, living in Ward 2 since 1994. Anders is a 1982 graduate of Auburn High School and a 1986 graduate of Auburn University. Anders and his wife Becky have three children. He helped run a family-owned business located in downtown Auburn for more than 20 years, and is currently the Director of Business Development for Rabren General Contractors. Anders served on the City of Auburn Planning Commission before his appointment to serve on the city council.

Anders was sworn in as the Ward 2 Councilperson on Friday, November 16, 2012.

## 2013 Holiday Garbage, Trash, and Recycling Schedule

Citizens are encouraged to keep this schedule to use as a reference. Visit [www.auburnalabama.org](http://www.auburnalabama.org) for updates throughout the year as this schedule is subject to change.

### Normal Collection Day      Holiday Pickup Schedule

#### New Year's Day Holiday

Monday, December 31	Monday's route
Tuesday, January 1	Holiday
Wednesday, January 2	Tuesday's route
Thursday, January 3	Wednesday's route
Friday, January 4	Thursday's route

#### Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

Monday, January 21	Holiday
Tuesday, January 22	Monday's route
Wednesday, January 23	Tuesday's route
Thursday, January 24	Wednesday's route
Friday, January 25	Thursday's route

#### Memorial Day Holiday

Monday, May 27	Holiday
Tuesday, May 28	Monday's route
Wednesday, May 29	Tuesday's route
Thursday, May 30	Wednesday's route
Friday, May 31	Thursday's route

#### Independence Day Holiday

Monday, July 1	Monday's route
Tuesday, July 2	Tuesday's route
Wednesday, July 3	Wednesday's route
Thursday, July 4	Holiday
Friday, July 5	Thursday's route

#### Labor Day Holiday

Monday, September 2	Holiday
Tuesday, September 3	Monday's route
Wednesday, September 4	Tuesday's route
Thursday, September 5	Wednesday's route
Friday, September 6	Thursday's route

#### Veterans Day Holiday

Monday, November 11	Holiday
Tuesday, November 12	Monday's route
Wednesday, November 13	Tuesday's route
Thursday, November 14	Wednesday's route
Friday, November 15	Thursday's route

#### Thanksgiving Holiday

Monday, November 25	Monday's route
Tuesday, November 26	Tuesday's route
Wednesday, November 27	Wednesday/Thursday's route
Thursday, November 28	Holiday
Friday, November 29	Holiday

#### Christmas Holiday

Monday, December 23	Monday's route
Tuesday, December 24	Tuesday's route
Wednesday, December 25	Holiday
Thursday, December 26	Wednesday's route
Friday, December 27	Thursday's route

Carts and recycled materials must be placed at the curb for collection by 6 a.m. on your scheduled collection day. All carts and recycling bins must be removed from the curb by 6 a.m. the following day. The holiday collection schedule is available online at [www.auburnalabama.org/es/holiday.asp](http://www.auburnalabama.org/es/holiday.asp). For more information contact 501-3080.

## MEETING SCHEDULE JANUARY

- 2 Board of Zoning Adjustment**, 4:30 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 7 Cemeteries Advisory Board**, 4:00 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road
- 8 Greenspace Advisory Board**, Noon, Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road
- Historic Preservation Commission**, 4 p.m., Development Services Building, 171 North Ross Street
- Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**, 5:15 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road
- Board of Education**, 6 p.m., AHS Multi-Media Room, 405 South Dean Road
- City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 10 Planning Commission**, 5 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 22 Library Board**, 2:00 p.m., Library Board Room, 749 East Thach Avenue
- City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 24 Water Works Board**, 4 p.m., Water Board Conference Room, 1501 West Samford Avenue
- 29 Bicycle Committee**, 7 p.m., Development Services Building, 171 North Ross Street

**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).**

*Happy New Year!*

### License Renewal Reminders

The 2013 City of Auburn business licenses must be renewed by Friday, February 15, 2013 to avoid assessment of penalties and interest. The business license renewal forms will be mailed the last week of December 2012. For additional information on renewing the business license contact the Revenue Office at 501-7239 or visit the City's web page at [www.auburnalabama.org/fi](http://www.auburnalabama.org/fi).

### Board Vacancies

Two vacancies on the **Board of Zoning Adjustment** were announced at the December 4, 2012 City Council meeting and will be filled at the January 8, 2013 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  
Penny Smith, Director  
501-7220  
webfinance@auburnalabama.org

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

Library  
Chris Warren, Director  
501-3190  
cwarren@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.  
Eric A. Carson, Acting Director  
501-3060  
ecarson@auburnalabama.org

Auburn City Schools  
Karen DeLano, Superintendent  
887-2100  
ktdelano@auburnschools.org

### 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

For more information, contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.

Note: There are no regular programs the weeks of December 22 through January 4.



**Baby Time** - Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. for ages birth – 18 months and their caregivers.

**First Steps Storytime** – Beginning January, First Steps and Baby Lapsit will be discontinued. Please join us for baby Time or Toddler time.

**Toddler Time** - Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. for ages 18 months - 3 years and their caregivers.



**Preschool Time** - Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. for preschoolers ages 3 - 5 years and their caregivers.

**Puppet Show** - Tuesday, January 8 at 3:30 p.m. for children ages 3-11.

**Magic Tree House Club** – Wednesday, January 9 at 3:30 p.m. for students in grades K-5.

**American Girl's Club** - Thursday, January 17 at 3:30 p.m. for students in grades K-5.

**Legomania** – Every Saturday in January from 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. for students ages 4-12. Join us every Saturday of the month all day for "free play" with Legos®.



### Special Programs:

**Poetry Workshop** – Wednesday, January 16 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. for ages 8-14 years. Join the library and the Live Poets Society as we learn about and create concrete poetry.

## Parks and Recreation

For more information on any of the events listed, or to pre-register for a program, contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930 or visit [www.auburnalabama.org/parks](http://www.auburnalabama.org/parks).

**Coming Soon...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 [www.auburnalabama.org/arts](http://www.auburnalabama.org/arts) or contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.



• **Winter Invitational 2013, Jan. 7 - Feb. 15.** Invitational exhibition featuring two and three-dimensional works based on a common theme.

**Tickets on Sale Dec. 10...Daddy-Daughter Date Night 2013 "Rock 'N' Roll Hearts"** - Dads and daughters, don't miss Daddy-Daughter Date Night 2013 at the Lexington Hotel and University Convention Center Thursday, Feb. 7 from 5:30 - 8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, Feb. 8 and 9, from 6:30 - 9 p.m. Join us for music from DJ Ozz, a dance contest, refreshments, and much more! This event is open to girls 12 and under. Tickets are \$30/couple and \$5/additional child. Tickets are on sale at the Dean Road Recreation Center Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., while supplies last.

**Due Jan. 2...Spring Baseball Coaching Applications** – The Auburn Baseball/Softball Association is recruiting coaches for spring baseball. Applications are available online at [www.auburnalabama.org/baseball](http://www.auburnalabama.org/baseball). All applications must be postmarked by Wednesday, Jan. 2.



**Jan. 4...First Friday Night Tennis Mixer** – Join the Auburn Community Tennis Association (ACTA) for the First Friday Night Tennis Mixer on Friday, Jan. 4 at 6:30 p.m. at the City of Auburn/Auburn University Yarborough 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. Yarborough Tennis Center non-member court fees apply.

**Beginning Jan. 14...Online Baseball, Softball, and T-Ball Registration** – Online registration for spring baseball, softball, and t-ball begins Monday, Jan. 14. Log on to [www.auburnalabama.org/baseball](http://www.auburnalabama.org/baseball) to register. Registration ends Saturday, Feb. 2. Walk-in registration will be held Saturday, Feb. 2 from 10 a.m. - noon at the Dean Road Recreation Center.

**Beginning Jan. 14...Online Soccer Registration** – Online registration for youth soccer begins Monday, Jan. 14 and continues through Wednesday, Jan. 30. Log on to [www.auburnalabama.org/soccer](http://www.auburnalabama.org/soccer) to register. Walk-in registration will be held Wednesday, Jan. 30 from 6 – 7 p.m. at the Auburn Soccer Complex.



## City Accepting Applications for Community Development Programs

The City of Auburn is accepting applications for the Micro-Loan Program, Commercial and Industrial Loan Program, and the Individual Development Account Program. All projects must comply with the requirements of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program as regulated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The micro-loan and commercial and industrial loan programs are funded under the Section 108 Loan Guarantee provisions of HUD enabling legislation. The Individual Development Account Program is offered through a joint collaboration between the City of Auburn's CDBG program and the Alabama Asset Building Coalition.

Applications for the Micro-Loan Program, Commercial and Industrial Loan Program, and the Individual Development Account Program are available through the City's Community Development Division by contacting Sharon Tolbert, Director of Community Development at (334) 501-7280 or by email at [stolbert@auburnalabama.org](mailto:stolbert@auburnalabama.org).