

Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

January 2012

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On the Ballot: Special Five-Mill Tax Referendum

The Auburn City Council has approved a "Special Five-Mill Tax Referendum," to be held on January 24, 2012.

The referendum is not a call for a new tax or a tax increase. Instead, it asks for voter approval on how to use revenue from the Special Five-Mill Property Tax, authorized in 1920 by the eighth amendment to the Alabama constitution. The Special Five-Mill Tax Fund has been in place in Auburn since at least 1948 with revenue from this property tax accumulating in a dedicated fund until it is used. The five-mill fund contains revenue that can only be used to pay for projects as explicitly approved by Auburn's citizens. This revenue cannot be used for general government operations, and is specifically set aside to repay money that is borrowed to finance projects that meet legal criteria.

Past 5-Mill projects have included the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center, construction and expansion of the Auburn Public Library, Town Creek Park and Cemetery, the Yarbrough Tennis Center and transportation infrastructure projects. In January, voters will choose whether or not to approve use of these existing funds for a new Senior Center, an addition to the Frank Brown Recreation Center, and downtown parking improvements. The proposed improvements were developed in response to citizen input including the Annual Citizen Survey, a scientific poll focusing on the priorities and approval levels of Auburn residents. In the most recent poll, downtown parking was tied with road resurfacing as a top transportation infrastructure priority for Auburn citizens, and recreation centers ranked in the top five citizen priorities for Parks and Recreation. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board has identified the Senior Center and Frank Brown Recreation Center Addition as its highest priority.

If citizens vote yes on January 24th, the City will move forward with funding these projects through the five-mill fund. If citizens vote no, the projects would be canceled or put on hold due to lack of funding, and funds would continue to accumulate in the five-mill fund until citizens approve their use for future projects. Citizens will vote yes or no on the entire package of projects, rather than voting on each individual project.

(continued)



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Open Line is produced by
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City of Auburn



The Breakdown:



Senior Center and FBRC Addition

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Frank Brown Recreation Center Addition | \$1,300,000 |
| New Senior Center | \$1,950,000 |
| Total Estimate | \$3,250,000 |

Senior Center and Frank Brown Addition (\$3,250,000): A yes vote will authorize:

- Use of the five-mill fund to construct a new 8,454 square-foot senior center, to be located on Opelika Road across from the post office, and adjacent to the Frank Brown Recreation Center and Jan Dempsey Community Art Center.
- Construction of a 7,912 square-foot addition to the existing Frank Brown Recreation Center, including a new reception area, new indoor racquetball courts, fitness facilities and activity rooms.
 - This addition would be a second phase of improvements to the Frank Brown Recreation Center, with the first phase of renovations approved in the last five-mill referendum.
- Enhanced parking, traffic flow and landscaping benefiting all three facilities at this revitalized Parks and Recreation complex.



Downtown Parking Improvements

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Design and Construction of New Parking Lot | \$300,000 |
| Repave West Parking Lot | \$50,000 |
| Enhance Landscaping/Lighting in West Parking Lot | \$100,000 |
| Enhance Pedestrian Access | \$100,000 |
| Implement New Parking Meter System | \$200,000 |
| Total Estimate | \$750,000 |

Downtown Parking Improvements (\$750,000): In 2009, a long-term plan for downtown parking improvements was presented to the City Council. Among the improvements completed so far are renovation of the downtown parking deck including improved lighting and security cameras, and improvements to the City Hall parking lot. A yes vote in January will authorize:

- Funding for further planned improvements, increasing the number of parking spaces downtown by over ten percent and improving metered parking surrounding the downtown parking deck.
- Demolition of the AuburnBank drive-thru and consolidation of all surface parking on Gay Street along with new landscaping.
 - In 2008, AuburnBank sold their Gay Street drive-thru property to the City Auburn and has plans to relocate the drive-thru in the near future.
- Repaving and landscaping the west parking lot located behind Toomer's Drugs and all of its access drives.
- Enhancing pedestrian access to and from the downtown parking deck and surface lots, including enhanced lighting, signage and security features.
- Implementing a modern parking meter system in the downtown area.

For more information on these projects please visit the Five-Mill website at <http://www.auburnalabama.org/5mill>, or call City Hall at 501-7260. Don't forget to mark January 24, 2012 on your calendar to vote in the Five-Mill Referendum.

Board Vacancies

- Two vacancies on the **Board of Zoning Adjustment** will be filled at the January 17, 2012 City Council meeting.
- Two vacancies on the **Auburn Cemeteries Advisory Board** will be filled at the January 17, 2012 City Council meeting.



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

Reporting Street Light Outages

Citizens experiencing problems with street lights should report those issues to Alabama Power's customer service number at 1-800-245-2244. Reporting maintenance issues to this number will ensure that an Alabama Power work order is generated and repairs are scheduled.





GE Aviation Breaks Ground in Auburn

A world-leading provider of commercial and military jet engines and components, GE Aviation, broke ground in Auburn on October 31 laying the foundation for promising innovation that will have a global impact on the aviation industry.

The manufacturer announced in November 2010 that it would break ground in Auburn after being successfully recruited to Alabama. Governor Robert Bentley, U.S. Representative Mike Rogers, House Speaker Mike Hubbard, Auburn Mayor Bill Ham, Jr., Auburn University President Jay Gogue were among the state and local leaders who helped bring GE Aviation to its new home in Auburn. Those same leaders saw the highly sought-after project come to fruition as GE Aviation Vice President and General Manager Colleen Athans joined them, shovel in hand, to break ground on the new facility.

"GE Aviation has enjoyed significant success establishing 'Centers of Excellence' that focus on specific aviation components and processes within our supply chain," Athans said. "We are very excited to add Auburn to our network of manufacturing operations."

The facility is on track to open its doors in late 2012 with limited hiring beginning early next year. Additional hiring is slated for 2013 as production begins to ramp up. GE Aviation's goal is to employ 300 to 400 people when the plant is at full production later this decade, adding a major boost to Auburn's economy.

"We're proud to officially add one of America's and the world's best known and respected companies to our list of impressive manufacturers, General Electric. It's a name that we've all known because our lives have been positively affected by the products it produces," said Auburn Mayor Bill Ham. "We are especially appreciative of GE Aviation for showing its confidence in Auburn and in Alabama by making this very large, long-term investment here," Ham added.

GE Aviation says they selected Auburn in large part because of the availability of a skilled workforce and proximity to Auburn University where the company has already begun recruiting students. GE Aviation is expected to develop collaborative relationships with the university to spur research and development (R&D). The company invests \$1 billion annually in jet propulsion R&D programs, demonstrating a long standing commitment to new technology dating back to 1942 when the company produced America's first jet engine.

GE and its partner companies currently have more than 18,000 commercial jet engines in airline service, expected to grow to 24,000 engines by 2015. In addition to producing new engines, the new GE Aviation facility in Auburn will manufacture advanced components that will support the base of GE engines already in operational service.

For more information, visit www.ge.com/aviation.

MEETING SCHEDULE JANUARY

- 3 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, 5:15 p.m.,** Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road
- City Council, 7 p.m.,** Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 4 Board of Zoning Adjustment, 4:30 p.m.,** Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 6 Tree Commission, 11:30 a.m.,** Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 714 East Glenn Avenue
- 9 Cemeteries Advisory Board, 4:00 p.m.,** Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road
- 10 Greenspace Advisory Board, Noon,** Dean Road Recreation Center, 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
- 12 Planning Commission, 5 p.m.,** Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 17 City Council, 7 p.m.,** Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 19 Water Works Board, 4 p.m.,** Water Board Conference Room, 1501 West Samford Avenue
- 24 Library Board, 2 p.m.,** Library Board Room, 172 East Thach Avenue
- 31 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.

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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 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.

There are no programs the week of December 19 – January 1



Baby Lapsit - Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. for ages birth – 12 months and their caregivers.

Baby First Steps Storytime - Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. for ages 12 - 24 months and their caregivers.



Toddler Time - Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. for ages 18 months – 3 years.

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

Tween Read - Friday, January 6 at 3:30 p.m. for students in grades 4 – 7.

Lego Play All Day - Saturday, January 7 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. for students ages 4 - 12.

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

Puppet Show - Tuesday, January 17 at 3:30 p.m. for ages 3-11.

Wii Play All Day - Saturday, January 21, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 a.m. for students in grades 6 – 8.

American Girls Club - Thursday, January 26 at 3:30 p.m. for students in grades K - 5.

Muggle Book Club - Tuesday, January 31 at 4:00 p.m. for grades 6 – 12.



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Parks and Recreation

For more information, contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

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 or contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.

• **From One to Infinity**, Jan. 9 - Feb. 23. An exhibition featuring works inspired by, related to, or utilizing numbers.



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*, a 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 anything and everything related to Parks and Recreation. Sign up today at www.auburnalabama.org/leisure. For more information, visit www.auburnalabama.org/leisure or contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

Tickets on Sale Dec. 12...Daddy-Daughter Date Night 2012 - Dads and daughters, don't miss the 23rd Annual Daddy-Daughter Date Night at the Lexington Hotel and University Convention Center Thursday, Feb. 9 from 5:30 - 8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, Feb. 10 and 11, from 6:30 - 9 p.m. Join us for music from DJ Ozzy, 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. For more information, visit www.auburnalabama.org/parks or contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

Due Jan. 4...Spring Baseball Coaching Applications - The Auburn Baseball/Softball Association is recruiting coaches for spring baseball. Applications are available online at www.auburnalabama.org/baseball. All applications must be postmarked by Jan. 4. For more information, contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

Jan. 6...First Friday Night Tennis Mixer - Join the Auburn Community Tennis Association (ACTA) for the First Friday Night Tennis Mixer on Jan. 6 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, visit www.auburnalabama.org/tennis or contact the Yarbrough Tennis Center at 501-2920.

Beginning Jan. 16...Online Baseball, Softball, and T-Ball Registration - Online registration for spring baseball, softball, and t-ball begins Jan. 16. Log on to www.auburnalabama.org/baseball to register. Registration ends Feb. 4. Walk-in registration will be held Saturday, Feb. 4 from 10 a.m. - noon at the Dean Road Recreation Center. For more information, visit www.auburnalabama.org/parks or contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

Beginning Jan. 16...Online Soccer Registration - Online registration for youth soccer begins Jan. 16 and continues through Feb. 1. Log on to www.auburnalabama.org/soccer to register. Walk-in registration will be held Wednesday, Feb. 1 from 6 - 7 p.m. at the Auburn Soccer Complex. For more information, visit www.auburnalabama.org/parks or contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.



Feb. 18...23rd Annual Love Your Heart Run and 5th Annual Crank Your Heart Ride - Mark your calendars for Saturday, Feb. 18 and join the Exceptional Outreach Organization and Auburn Parks and Recreation for the 23rd Annual Love Your Heart Run, benefiting individuals with special needs and supporting Auburn Parks and Recreation's Therapeutic Summer Camp, Special Olympics of Lee County, Best Buddies of Auburn University, and other therapeutic programs. Participants may choose to run or walk either a one-mile course or the Love Your Heart 10K (6.2 mile) course. Back for the fifth year is the Crank Your Heart Ride, which will consist of a 3.5, 11, and 22 mile bike ride. All routes begin and end at Chewada State Park. Register online at www.loveyourheartrun.com. Participants registered by Feb. 3 are guaranteed a t-shirt. Race day registration begins at 6:15 a.m. For more information, visit www.loveyourheartrun.com or contact Alison Hall at 501-2940.