



EDACC Board Meeting Minutes						
October 22, 2025					7:30 AM	EDACC Conference Room
Meeting called by	Chairman, Rick Evans - called the meeting to order @ 7:30 and welcomed Cheney Eldridge back from having her daughter.					
Type of meeting	Board Meeting					
Facilitator	Chairman, Rick Evans					
Note taker	Linda Peplau					
Adjourned	8:12 AM					
Board Attendance	Rick Evans	Y	Mark Wills	Y	Stan Shepherd	Y
	Jim Cox	Y	Jean Garniewicz	Y	Kerry Bridges	Y
	Mark Herbert	Y	Ben Stapleton	Y	Rick Toole	ABSENT
Staff/Guests	Cheney Eldridge, Anita Patel, Stuart Hilsman, Linda Peplau, Chris Driver (Hull Barrett, PC), Dr. Tom Clark (CSRA Alliance for Fort Gordon), Commissioner, Connie Melear (CCBOC), Julie Langham (Augusta Technical College), Skyler Andrews (The Augusta Press) & Anastasia Black (Corporate Environments of Georgia)					
Meeting Agenda						
1 minute	Chairman, Rick Evans					
Discussion	Chairman, Rick Evans calls for a motion to jointly approve the agenda for the October 22, 2025, EDACC Board Meeting & the minutes for the September 24, 2025, EDACC Board Meeting.					
Conclusions	Motion: Mark Herbert 2nd: Kerry Bridges Motion carries unanimously (8-0).					
Minutes of Previous Meeting						
0 minutes	Chairman, Rick Evans					
Discussion	See above.					
Conclusions	Motion: Mark Herbert 2nd: Kerry Bridges Motion carries unanimously (8-0).					

DACC Financial Report	
7 minutes	Treasurer, Mark Wills
Discussion	<p><b>Treasurer, Mark Wills</b> reported on the following items in the September 2025 financial report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reported that <b>FY25 audits</b> are currently in process.</li> <li>• Noted that the September 2025 financial reports are currently for review/discussion only (awaiting audit completion).</li> <li>• Page 1 (<b>balance sheet</b>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shared a brief Total Assets report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Noted the W.Oak Phase III balance increase due to the non-refundable escrow deposit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Escrow funds are a result of the 2-month closing extension allowance (Ph3/16,000 acres).</li> <li>- Escrow funds will not be refunded if the closing does not take place.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Noted county audit entries/changes - for the accrual of office lease costs (amortization). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* County audit entry included the line addition of "Right of Use Lease Asset"</li> <li>* County audit entry included the line addition of "Accumulated Amortization Lease"</li> <li>* County audit entry included the line addition of "Due to Primary Government"</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Page 2 &amp; 3 (<b>monthly expenses-September</b>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Highlighted the below expenditure for the month. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 2026 April Showcase expenditure (2nd 1/2 for MASTERS house rental).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Page 6 (<b>2026 FY budget vs Actual</b>). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Treasurer Wills again, highlighted the reflection of the escrow deposit on page 6. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Presented as an overage due to the funds not being in the initial budget.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Chairman, Rick Evan</b> reported on the following items in the September 2025 financial report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rick Evans recapped the balance sheet. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Reiterated Mark Wills' comments regarding the non-refundable escrow deposit.</li> <li>* Further explained the county audit entry of the line addition of "Right of Use Lease Asset"</li> <li>* Further explained the county audit entry of the line addition of "Accumulated Amortization Lease"</li> <li>* Shared that the EDACC lease agreement is through 2028.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Conclusions	<p><b>Stan Shepherd</b> made a motion to <b>accept the September 2025 financial reports for information only.</b></p> <p><b>Mark Herbert 2nd</b> the motion to accept the September 2025 financial reports for <b>information only.</b></p> <p>No need for final approval until the FY2025 audit is complete and finalized.</p>

## Chairman's Report

18 minutes

Chairman, Rick Evans

Discussion

Chairman, **Rick Evans** shared the following:

- **Regional Housing Study** report:

- Housing Study release dates was on October 08, 2025.
- A Regional Housing Study packet was provided to each board member (detailed pamphlets of each county).

- Chairman Rick Evans **introduced Julie Langham** (VP Economic Development at **Augusta Technical College**) to the board.

**Julie Langham (VP Economic Development - ATC)** shared the following:

- Julie thanked the board for inviting her to report on the resources ATC offers its students.
- Announced that Dr. Kendrick Hooker was named ATC's new president.
- She reported that this fall (2025), Augusta Technical College (ATC) reported its highest enrollment in history.

- Topics shared in a slide presentation:

- ATC 6 locations & divisions at the college
- Adult learning opportunities
- Cyber Security training and certifications
- Continuing education boot camps
- Nursing pathways
- Banking and Finance Certificates of credit
- Transfer program between Augusta Technical College and Augusta University
- Economic Development
  - \* Greater Augusta Banking & Finance Institute
  - \* Customized training for corporations (Manufacturing bootcamps)
  - \* Apprenticeship (Nuclear Operator, etc.)
- Accelerate Augusta (Grand Opening October 10, 2025)
  - \* Destination resource and training center for the region.
  - \* Targeting small micro-entrepreneurs & startup businesses.
- Cougar camp (Immersion Virtual & Augmented Reality (Variety) Summer Camp)
- AUTT 1010 (introduction to Automotive technology)

- ATC Economic Development as your Partner:

- Hosting site visits on campus
- Host employer job fairs
- Provide graduation data for future project inquiries
- Office space availability

- Capital Projects

- CDL Range/classes
- The Patch Project (Augusta Municipal Golf Course)
- Jim Hudson Automotive Institute
- T.R. Reddy Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Technology
  - \* To house Engineering Technology Programs
  - \* Nuclear, Mechanical, Electrical, Chemical Technology, Mechatronics, Robotics, etc.

- Shared some community partnerships.

- Julie shared that 500 students participate in the high school dual enrollment program.
  - The program offers 30 core class credits at zero dollars to the student.

## EDACC Committee Reports

2 minutes	Jim Cox - Business Recruitment and Incentives Program Committee (10.01.2025)
Discussion	<p><b>Jim Cox</b> for the <b>Business Recruitment and Incentives Program Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics covered at the committee meeting on 10.01.2025. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Targets for future projects</li> <li>○ SRS-CRO match funding potential.</li> <li>○ CTAE projects</li> <li>○ Discussed White Oak construction impacts</li> <li>○ Future vision for White Oak</li> <li>○ Suggestions for a Comp Plan review</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Project Updates

4 minutes	Project Manager, Stuart Hilsman & Project Manager, Anita Patel
Discussion	<p>Project Manager, <b>Stuart Hilsman</b> shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grants:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stuart reported on the regional collaboration in process for applying for the Brownfield Grant.</li> <li>○ Counties involved (JDA members collaboration): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* EDACC - Economic Development Authority of Columbia County</li> <li>* AEDA - Augusta Economic Development Authority</li> <li>* Development Authority of Burke County</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Grant amount = \$1.4 million</li> <li>○ No costs are associated with applying for the grant.</li> <li>○ 100% Federal cost</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Stan Shepherd made a motion to partner with the Augusta Economic Development Authority and Burke Economic Development Authority to solicit project funding in the upcoming Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) from the EPA Brownfield Coalition Assessment Grant with support from PPM Consultants. <u>Mark Herbert 2nd the motion.</u></b></p> <p><b>Motioned: Stan Shepherd 2nd: Mark Herbert Motion carries unanimously (8-0)</b></p> <p>Project Manager, <b>Anita Patel</b> shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New establishments in the community.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Winstons Tavern ( The Plaza at Evans Towne Center/The Premier apartments)</li> <li>○ Cava Grill (Mediterranean restaurant)</li> <li>○ Natty BBQ by Westlake (same owner as Ironwood Tavern)</li> <li>○ Nordhavn-Rustik (2 concept location) (ribbon cutting 10.20.2025)</li> <li>○ Pinnacle Bank (Evans Towne Center)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Economic Development Update

5 minutes	Executive Director, Cheney Eldridge
Discussion	<p>Executive Director, Cheney Eldridge shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masters planning updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Vendors are lined up</li> <li>◦ The guest list is being compiled and finalized</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cheney thanked her staff for their support with the workload while recovering from the birth of her daughter.</li> <li>• Provided a Columbia County Chamber retreat update (10.17.2025 - 8:30-1 PM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Cheney was an attendee and a speaker at the event.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• SRS-CRO Regional Housing Study. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Shared marketing material for the study.</li> <li>◦ Cheney thanked Robby for commissioning and organizing the study.</li> <li>◦ Stan Shepherd thanked Kerry Bridges and GA Power for helping with the data collected for the Housing Study.</li> <li>◦ Kerry Bridges shared insight on some data in the Housing Study pamphlets that GA Power helped obtain for the study.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• SRS-CRO Qualifying Expenses update. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ The final reimbursement submission is in process.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Early Exit = Mark Herbert exited the meeting at 8:05</p>

## Public Comments

6 minutes	Commissioner, Connie Melear (CCBOC) & Dr. Tom Clark (CSRA Alliance for Fort Gordon)
Discussion	<p><b>Commissioner, Connie Melear</b> (CCBOC) shared the following county updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided a government annex/new building construction update.</li> <li>• Shared an update on the County Commissioner's proactive efforts to educate the public on the data center topic.</li> <li>• Encouraged attendees to vote and announced that voting day is November 4, 2025. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Shared that the homestead exemption increase is on the current ballot.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Dr. Tom Clark</b> (CSRA Alliance for Fort Gordon) shared the following fort updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriations for the Department of War expired Sept. 30, 2025.</li> <li>• Government shutdown updates &amp; challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ President Trump signed an executive order to continue to pay our troops during the current government shutdown.</li> <li>◦ Health and safety services will continue to be provided at Fort Gordon during the shutdown.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Skyler Andrews</b> (The Augusta Press) shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Skyler shared that he likes all that Augusta Technical College is doing for their students.</li> </ul>

## Calendar of Events

0 minutes	Chairman, Rick Evans
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 14, 2025, Property Development Committee – 7:30 a.m.</li> <li>• November 14, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting – 8:30 a.m.</li> <li>• November 14, 2025, Existing Business &amp; Workforce Committee - 9:30 a.m.</li> <li>• November 19, 2025, EDACC Board Meeting - 7:30 a.m.</li> </ul>
Adjournment	8:12 AM
Conclusions	<p>Chairman, Rick Evans calls for a motion to adjourn the October 22, 2025, board meeting at 8:12 a.m.</p> <p>Motioned: Jim Cox 2nd: Stan Shepherd Motion carries unanimously (7-0)</p>
Next meeting: November 19, 2025	
	EDACC
	All