



EDACC Existing Business and Workforce Development Committee		
November 14, 2025		EDACC Conference Room
Called by	Jean Garniewicz - called the meeting to order at 9:45	
Meeting	Existing Business and Workforce Development Committee	
Facilitator	Jean Garniewicz	
Note taker	Linda Peplau	
Adjourned	10:25 AM	
Attendees	Jean Garniewicz, Rick Evans & Kerry Bridges	
Staff/Guests	Cheney Eldridge, Stuart Hilsman & Linda Peplau	
Meeting Agenda		
1 minute	Jean Garniewicz	
Discussion	Jean Garniewicz called for a motion to jointly approve the <b>agenda</b> for the November <b>14, 2025</b> , Existing Business and Workforce Development Committee meeting & the <b>minutes</b> for the September 12, 2025, Existing Business and Workforce Development Committee meeting.	
Conclusions	Motion: Rick Evans 2nd: Kerry Bridges The motion passed unanimously (3-0).	
Minutes of Previous Meeting		
0 minutes	Jean Garniewicz	
Discussion	See above.	
Conclusions	Motion: Rick Evans 2nd: Kerry Bridges The motion passed unanimously (3-0).	

## Old Business

11 minutes

Jean Garniewicz

Discussion

Jean Garniewicz shared the following:

- **Masters 2026** planning update:
  - All the vendors are lined up and reserved.
- **Augusta Technical College:**
  - Jean Garniewicz expressed how pleased she was with Julie Langham's **presentation** at October EDACC board meeting.
  - Kerry Bridges shared on the importance of **nurturing a strong partnership with ATC** to become a reliable liaison for our existing industries and the college's trained workforce.
    - \* The goal is to **gap the workforce** with the help of Augusta Technical College.
- Jean Garniewicz provided an update on the **election results** from **November 04, 2025**.
- **Annual Wage/Compensation Survey** update.
  - Stuart Hilsman reiterated from the last meeting, the **incentives plan** to increase next year's wage survey participants.
- Cheney shared an update on the **Horizon South industrial park signage:**
  - Action plan to coordinate with all interested tenants for a **cohesive signage plan**.
  - Plans to include John Deere & GIW if the inquiry yields interest.
  - **Strategy plan** to meet with county reps to ensure our sign plan **aligns with the county**.
  - Rick Evans shared Rick Tools' suggestion from the Property Dev. Committee meeting, to consult with a **sign consultant firm** for a deep dive into our needs.
- **Destination Retail Incentive update:**
  - Rick Evans shared a **Smoke Show BBQ's** construction plan update.
    - \* Smoke Show has scaled down their construction plans and will be moving forward on their construction build.
- **SRSCRO housing study** (release on 10.08.2025).
  - Jean Garniewicz shared how impressed she was with the housing study results.
    - \* She stated that the pamphlets were put together very well and very informative.
- Kerry Bridges graciously agrees to provide the EDACC board members with a **GA Power Hurricane Helene information book** at the next board meeting, after being asked to by Jean Garniewicz.

Discussion

## Updates

13 minutes

Stuart Hilsman

Discussion

Discussion

**Stuart Hilsman** shared the following:

- **Augusta Technical College new business updates:**

- Stuart reported that Julie Langham has asked him to serve on the interview panel for the next Augusta Tech **Corporate and Community Education Director**.
  - \* Stuart served on the interview panel for the first and second round of interviews
  - \* Started with 8 candidates which were narrowed down to 3
  - \* Final 2 will interview with interim president before final decision is made
  - \* Looking to make the hire sometime before the end of 2025

- **Existing Industry visit updates:**

- **Amazon AGS3/5 visit update:**

- \* Stuart met with Amazon rep. Sean Ruth (site Lead) on Friday, November 7, 2025
- \* Amazon AGS 5, just celebrated their 4th year anniversary at White Oak Business Park
- \* Amazon AGS 5 = 250,000 SF facility
- \* AGS 5 is an Amazon sortation center
- \* AGS 3 is located on the back portion of the building and serves as the customer returns center
- \* Estimated part-time employees of 500 (700 part-timers during "PRIME" seasons)
- \* Majority of employees reside in Richmond County (majority age ranges from 18-20 yrs of age)
- \* Associates working at the sortation centers will not be impacted by the recent nationwide layoffs of 30,000 Amazon employees.
- \* AGS 1 employees are full-time
- \* Hover right around 2,500 employees (3,100 employees during "PRIME" seasons)
- \* People use experience at AGS 5 (part-time) and then go to work at AGS 1 (full-time)
- \* 1,000,000 SF facility

- **KSB-GIW visit update (Grovetown- Horizon South Area)**

- \* Slurry pump producers
- \* Production sight sits on about 88 acres (campus = around 158 acres)
- \* Production/operating space = 500k SF
- \* Largest white-iron foundry in North America
- \* Stuart mentioned he would like to establish a workforce pipeline for GIW with CC schools.
- \* Plans to connect with Dr. Brooks Smith w/ CCBOE to talk about WBL
- \* Stuart expressed that he thinks GIW would benefit by bonding future equipment purchases.
- \* He plans to inquire and educate KSB-GIW on their options for future bond potential/opportunities.

- **Kerry Bridges** shared the following:

- \* Kerry suggested that Stuart coordinate **quarterly committee member tours at the industry sites**.
- \* Tours/meetings would help **keep the EDACC connected** with the current industries while **exploring needs to support** and **building stronger business relationships/partnerships**.



New Business		
13 minutes	Cheney Eldridge	
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>White Oak signage:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The committee openly discussed signage guidelines, parameters and variances applications.</li><li>○ Cheney shared that the county zoning department is where the parameters for signs are set.</li><li>○ All sign variance requests must go through the county for approval.</li><li>○ White Oak variance requests go through EDACC for review before requesting county approval.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>White Oak parcels:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Beginning discussion for a strategy plan for filling the remaining front parcels of White Oak Park.</li><li>○ The objective is to fill the community needs while creating a safe traffic pattern for the trucking industry that frequents White Oak.</li></ul></li></ul>	
Adjournment		10:25 AM
Conclusions	Jean Garniewicz called for a motion to adjourn: Motion: Kerry Bridges 2nd: Rick Evans The motion passed unanimously (3-0)	
Next meeting: <b>January 09, 2026 @ 8:30</b>		Economic Development Authority Conference Room