



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 agenda for the November 14, 2025 , Existing Business and Workforce Development Committee meeting & the minutes 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	<p>Jean Garniewicz shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Masters 2026 planning update:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ All the vendors are lined up and reserved.• Augusta Technical College:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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.<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 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.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Rick Evans shared a Smoke Show BBQ's construction plan update.<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 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).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Jean Garniewicz shared how impressed she was with the housing study results.<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 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
	<p>Stuart Hilsman shared the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Augusta Technical College new business updates:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Stuart reported that Julie Langham has asked him to serve on the interview panel for the next Augusta Tech Corporate and Community Education Director.<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 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
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing Industry visit updates:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Amazon AGS3/5 visit update:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 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)<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 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:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* 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.
Discussion	



New Business

13 minutes	Cheney Eldridge
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• White Oak signage:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The committee openly discussed signage guidelines, parameters and variances applications.○ Cheney shared that the county zoning department is where the parameters for signs are set.○ All sign variance requests must go through the county for approval.○ White Oak variance requests go through EDACC for review before requesting county approval.• White Oak parcels:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Beginning discussion for a strategy plan for filling the remaining front parcels of White Oak Park.○ The objective is to fill the community needs while creating a safe traffic pattern for the trucking industry that frequents White Oak.
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: January 09, 2026 @ 8:30	Economic Development Authority Conference Room