



EDACC Business Recruitment and Incentives Program Committee	
August 5, 2026	EDACC Conference Room
Meeting called by	Jim Cox called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM
Type of meeting	Business Recruitment and Incentives Program Committee
Facilitator	Chair - Jim Cox
Note taker	Linda Peplau
Attendees	Jim Cox, Ben Stapleton & Mark Wills
Staff/Guests	Rick Evans, Cheney Eldridge, Anita Patel, Stuart Hilsman & Linda Peplau
Meeting Agenda & Minutes	
Discussion	<p>Jim Cox called for a motion to jointly approve the agenda for the August 05, 2026, Business Recruitment and Incentives Program Committee meeting & the minutes for the June 03, 2026, Business Recruitment and Incentive Committee meeting.</p> <p>Motion: Ben Stapleton 2nd: Jim Cox Motion passed unanimously (3-0)</p>
Old Business	
Discussion	<p>Jim Cox opened the following discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Property Tax relief initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussed the status and requirements of the proposed tax relief legislation. ○ Clarified that both a local vote and a statewide constitutional amendment are needed to increase the homestead exemption for greater homestead tax relief. ○ There was conversation about legislative challenges and differing positions at the state level that are affecting progress. ○ Discussed impacts of exemption amounts on homeowners and tax calculations. ○ Discussed limitations on how newly created grant funds may be applied, noting uncertainty around whether they can be used for homestead exemption relief. ○ Discussion topics included potential marketing strategies to increase public awareness. • Operational updates / ORR information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cheney provided updates on some current open record requests. ○ The staff noted the regulations regarding estimating costs, hourly rates based on the lowest paid qualifying staff member, redaction requirements, and thresholds for advance payment pertaining to ORR. ○ Discussed the substantial time required to fulfill broad ORR document requests and emphasized the importance of ensuring cost estimates accurately reflect the associated work.

New Business			
Discussion	Cheney Eldridge shared the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development discussions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Reported that ground preparation is underway on the southern site, including timber clearing on the initial construction parcel, and noted that substantial dirt movement will be required for parcel leveling..○ Committee reviewed landowner activity, potential sales, and marketing efforts; pricing expectations remain above market levels.○ Members discussed future development needs, including additional retail and medical services, and noted plans for a recreation complex near the triangle parcel across from the White Oak/Data center site.○ It was noted that residential development is expected to accelerate, with projects adding hundreds of new homes and broader population growth driven by Fort Gordon, Wellstar, SRS, and overall market demand.○ Ben reported on traffic flow and access planning, noting potential commercial areas and covenant related limitations.○ The committee also discussed the need for additional pharmacy/drug store and grocery options given current service gaps and projected growth.○ Cheney agreed to contact the end user to assess workforce needs and coordinate next steps after members noted issues with RV worker camps tied to data center construction and the need to identify suitable locations.○ The Committee discussed interest in examining development needs in Harlem and learning from experienced developers.○ Suggestion to involve developers who can evaluate maps and identify realistic opportunities where specific retailers would consider locating.○ The Committee discussed unmaterialized projects to support ongoing learning and future reference & confirmed desire to establish an overall, structured development plan for the area.		
	Updates		
Discussion	Cheney Eldridge shared the following updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cheney shared that she believes our board is at a point where a multi day planning session is needed to realign priorities and replace outdated goals.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The committee discussed key considerations for the planning session, including location, dates, member availability, guest speakers, topics, and the overall goals and objectives.○ Goal: leave with 3–6 vetted initiatives for the next 3–5 years,○ Tentative dates held: October 27–30 (location TBD)○ Plan to invite presenters with data center experience as well as data center legal educators.○ Investment bank input and financial projections would be helpful for informed planning.○ Retreat should define long term strategy for investment pool, considering property acquisition, partnerships & grant programs/CSRA Business Lending community investment.		
	Adjournment		9:22 AM
Conclusions	Jim Cox called for a motion to adjourn. Motion: Ben Stapleton 2nd: Mark Wills Motion passed unanimously (3-0)		
Next meeting: October 07, 2026		Economic Development Authority Conference Room	