

MINUTES
HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
February 10, 2026

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Board of Service Delivery Region 9 met Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at The Economic Development Center, Vidalia, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dan Bennett	Carolyn Blackshear
Tim Herrington	Dr. Margaret Hightower
Michelle Johnson	Mac Jordan
Dr. Barry Dotson	Lee Radney
Ted Buford	Lisa Livingston
Doug Rooks	Roy Selph
Raymond McCullough	Mitch Griggs
Lakeisha O'Neal	

MEMBERS ABSENT

Rochelle Culver	Matt Donaldson
Sharon Flanagan	Randall Holcomb
Dr. Hank Hobbs	Keith Miles
Martha McBride	Mel Powell
Clay Reid	Marshall Smith
Jason Whitlow	John Shaw

GUEST

Susan Woodard, Technical College System of Georgia
Jan Hall, Technical College System of Georgia

STAFF

Keith Dixon	Brett Manning
Heather Ernst	Alex Clements
Allie Williams	Delores Kesler
Sandy Bunton	Carla Mills
Angellena Griffin	

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bennett called the meeting to order and introduced new member Mitch Griggs, President of Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority. A quorum was present.

GUEST SPEAKER

Chair Bennett introduced Angellena Griffin, WIOA Program Manager. Angellena shared participant success stories, each highlighting the impact that the WIOA program has had in helping individuals succeed in their chosen career paths. The WIOA program supports adults, dislocated workers, and both in-school and out-of-school youth across our 17-county region.

These individuals represent the outcomes behind the numbers shown in the reports presented to the Workforce Development Board (WDB). Their stories demonstrate why this funding is so important. It makes a meaningful difference in people's lives and careers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lee Radney made a motion, seconded by Dr. Margaret Hightower, to approve the November 11, 2025, meeting minutes. Motion Carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Keith reported that legislation related to WIOA reauthorization is currently moving forward under a continuing resolution. He noted that challenges may arise in the coming year if either the House or Senate takes up full reauthorization, as both parties hold significantly different positions with little common ground. As a result, the outcome remains uncertain. WIOA was originally due for reauthorization in 2018, however, continuing resolutions have been passed to maintain the program. Keith expressed his belief that funding streams will likely remain stable if WIOA continues under these resolutions. He also shared that additional NEG funding was received from unspent funds from other areas, allowing more participants to be enrolled in training programs. These grants come with different eligibility requirements.

Keith emphasized that the numbers on the reports represent an individual. These programs are changing their lives. Chair Bennett added that GWLA has issued a letter to senators and members of Congress advocating for revisions to the formula used to allocate WIOA funds across the state. Keith noted that there is hope the revised formula will place greater emphasis on poverty levels rather than solely on unemployment rates.

ATTENDANCE

Ted Buford stated that the Attendance Committee would like to thank the WDB members for their attendance and participation in today's meeting.

BUDGET AND EVALUATION

Mac Jordan referred the Workforce Development Board to the expenditure report, noting that it reflects financial activity through the end of December, representing the midpoint of the fiscal year. He stated that the Helene grant accounts for the majority of the funding within that grant category. Overall, expenditures are at approximately 40%-50% of the total budget, which he indicated is on track. He further noted that the One-Stop has expended 100% of its budget at the halfway point in the year.

Keith explained that budgets are initially submitted based on projected funding, including anticipated carryover funds. Once actual funding amounts are confirmed, a revised budget will be presented. He also mentioned that a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued for the One-Stop operator, which will result in adjustments to the budget. Additionally, the current figures do not include funds that will be collected from required partner agencies under the Cost Sharing Agreement.

ONE-STOP

Doug Rooks referred the Workforce Development Board to the One-Stop Report, and everything appeared to be in order.

Dr. Margaret Hightower stated that the One-Stop committee would like to make a motion to allow Job Training Unlimited to release a Request for Proposal for the Comprehensive One-Stop operator for the Heart of Georgia Altamaha area. Ted Buford seconded. Motion carried.

PLAN AND PROGRAM REVIEW

Tim Herrington referred the WDB members to the Customer Counts Report. He stated that the report is divided into two sections, training services and business services. He stated that the training services category has a total of 696, which is an increase of 14 customers from the last meeting. Dodge, Emanuel, Johnson, Laurens, Montgomery, Tattnall, Telfair, and Wilcox each received new customers in those counties. The business services category has a total of 6,588 customers, which is the total number of customers needing services from the start of July. Customers in the follow-up program also received services, allowing them to receive guidance once they completed their program. He commended the staff for their hard work.

PUBLIC AWARENESS/EMPLOYER

Lisa Livingston stated that the Job Training Unlimited staff participated in the following events:
November 12th- Parker's hosted a meeting at the Evans County One-Stop. Staff attended the Winning at Case Management and Monitoring virtual webinar. Staff visited Southeastern Technical College in Swainsboro to promote WIOA services.

November 13th- Staff attended the Youth Roundtable Discussion in Americus. Parker's hosted a meeting at the Evans County One-Stop. Staff attended the Labor and Workforce Development Agency virtual meeting.

November 27th- Staff attended the Labor and Workforce Development Agency virtual meeting.

December 2nd-3rd- Staff attended the Worksource Georgia Academy Conference at the Conference Center on Jekyll Island.

December 12th- Parker's hosted a meeting at the Evans County One-Stop.

December 16th- Staff attended the Unlocking Workforce Success with Mobile Tech virtual webinar.

December 18th- Parker's hosted a meeting at the Evans County One-Stop. Staff visited Treutlen High School to promote WIOA services.

December 25th- Staff attended the Labor and Workforce Development Agency virtual meeting.

January 8th-9th- Staff hosted the Regional Commission Program Auditors at the Evans County One-Stop.

January 14th, 21st, and 22nd- Parker's hosted a meeting at the Evans County One-Stop.

January 22nd- Staff attended the Labor and Workforce Development Agency virtual meeting. Staff attended the Regional Commission meeting held in Mount Vernon. Staff attended the Local Director's virtual meeting.

January 28th-29th- Staff hosted the Regional Commission Financial Auditors at the Evans County One-Stop.

February 5th- Staff attended the Labor and Workforce Development Agency Virtual Meeting.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Keith stated that the state's unemployment rate is 3.4%, and the Heart of Georgia Altamaha region is at 3.7%.

RC UPDATE

Brett stated that the Regional Commission received notification that Mr. Billy Trapnell resigned from the Workforce Development Board. Billy will be greatly missed. Brett thanked Billy for his many years of service.

Respectfully submitted,

Allie Williams

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