

MINUTES
HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
December 12, 2023

The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Development Board of Service Delivery Region 9 met Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at The Economic Development Center, Vidalia, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dan Bennett	Carolyn Blackshear
Rochelle Culver	Sharon Flanagan
Randall Holcomb	Tim Herrington
Dr. Margaret Hightower	Michelle Johnson
Ted Buford	Bobby Cox
Lisa Livingston	Doug Rooks
Roy Selph	Raymond McCullough
Billy Trapnell	John Shaw
Hugh Darnley	Ryan Waldrep
Mac Jordan	Keith Miles
Martha McBride	Mel Powell
Clay Reid	Marshall Smith
Dr. Barry Dotson	Lee Radney

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kim Edge	Kristen Garland
Ashley Googe	Dr. Hank Hobbs
Gabriela Munoz	John R. Turner
Jason Whitlow	Guy Singletary
Alfred Wheeler	Joe Sikes

GUEST

Pete Snell, Coastal Pines Technical College

STAFF

Keith Dixon	Brett Manning
Sandy Bunton	Alex Clements
Allie Williams	
Alexis Eason	
Heather Ernst	

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order. A quorum was present. Chair Bennett introduced three new members: John Shaw, Randall Holcomb, and Keith Miles.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mac Jordan made a motion seconded by Billy Trapnell to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2023, Workforce Development Board meeting. Billy Trapnell made a motion seconded by Dr. Margaret Hightower to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2023, Workforce Development Board meeting with the amendment of Bobby Cox being present. Mac Jordan made a motion seconded by Rochelle Culver to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2023, Workforce Development Board Executive Committee meeting.

GUEST SPEAKER

Chair Bennett introduced Ryan Waldrep, President of the Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority. Ryan stated that automotive is a considerable trade in the workforce. Georgia has seen an increase in automotive and related jobs in the last two years. Since 2020, 25 billion dollars have been committed to be invested, and more than 29,000 new jobs have been created. Two suppliers for Hyundai are located in Laurens County. Woory Industrial Co. is a company that manufactures heating elements. Woory also bought an existing building in Laurens County. They will invest about 18 million dollars and create 130 new assembly jobs. The second project that came into Laurens County was Hwashin. They committed to taking 60 acres of Georgia Highway 257 railroad site and will invest 176 million dollars over the next few years to create 460 new manufacturing jobs. Over this past year, 750 new jobs have been created in Dublin/Laurens County, for approximately 200 million dollars in new investment with companies in Laurens County. The unemployment rate for Laurens County was 4.4% in October. He stated that there are 169 available jobs and encouraged everyone to review their Labor Force Participation Rate. Laurens County's participation rate is 49.9%, which means half the people in the labor force age are not working. He stated that they are working with their school system to teach students the skills needed for this rapidly growing workforce.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Keith stated that TCSG Office of Workforce Development conducted the yearly on-site monitoring visit in October, and the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region had no findings or observations. He stated that an additional \$500,000 of the QUEST Grant was requested from the State. A plant in Swainsboro laid off a few employees due to a change in the business operation. The company was making shirts but has switched to an embroidery company. Keith stated that Rapid Response money has been requested for this project to train the employees in the new facility. He encouraged the WDB members to inform him of any companies needing assistance within their counties.

ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE

Ted Buford thanked the WDB members for their attendance and welcomed the new WDB members.

BUDGET AND EVALUATION

Mac Jordan referred the WDB to the Heart of Georgia WIOA Expenditure Report. He stated that this report shows how the grants received are allocated for the seventeen county region.

Mac Jordan stated that the Budget and Evaluation Committee would like to make a motion to add Environmental Science at the College of Coastal Georgia to the Eligible Training Provider List. Seconded by Billy Trapnell. Motion Carried.

Mac Jordan also stated that the Budget and Evaluation Committee would like to make a motion to increase the daily rate for ITA Childcare from \$8 to \$12 per day. Seconded by Dr. Barry Dotson. Motion Carried.

ONE-STOP COMMITTEE

Billy Trapnell referred the WDB members to the One-Stop report. He stated that One-Stops are available in each of our 17 counties, allowing customers to search for jobs, create resumes, and complete schoolwork. He also stated that the number of visits to the One-Stops fluctuates but has increased since last year.

PLAN AND PROGRAM REVIEW

Tim Herrington referred the WDB members to the Customer Count Report. The report has two columns representing Training Services and Business Services, for a total of 12,845 customers being served, which is an increase of 7,816 customers. Training Services has 628 customers being served, which is an increase of 31 customers. Business Services has a total of 12,217 customers being served, with an increase of 7,785 customers. The increase in Business Services customers includes Wagner-Peyser customers. Tim commended the staff for their hard work. Keith stated that customer eligibility is determined by each customer case, which also determines the funding stream used to serve the customer.

PUBLIC AWARENESS/ EMPLOYER

Rochelle Culver stated that the Job Training Unlimited staff participated in the following events:
October 10th- Staff participated in the Emanuel County Job Fair held at Southeastern Technical College in Swainsboro.

October 31st- Staff visited Coastal Plains Charter School in Evans County to promote WIOA services.

November 6th-8th- Staff attended the 2023 WorkSource Georgia Academy Conference at Jekyll Island.

November 6th- Parker's held a meeting at the Evans County One-Stop.

November 7th- Staff attended the Wilcox Family Connections Meeting on Zoom.

November 8th- Staff visited Wayne County High School to promote WIOA Services.

November 21st- Staff also attended the Tri-County Family Connection Meeting held on Zoom.

November 29th- December 1st- Staff attended the Virtual Cross Regional Youth Round Table meeting.

December 4th- Staff visited Tattnall County High School to speak to the Nurses' Aide class to promote WIOA Services.

December 6th- Staff Visited Southeastern Technical College Swainsboro Nurses' Aide Class to promote WIOA services.

Staff met with potential employers across the Region.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Dr. Margaret Hightower stated that the Youth Committee would like to make a motion for the total amount that a youth can receive per year is up to \$3,000. Seconded by Sharon Flanagan. Motion Carried.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Keith stated that the state's unemployment rate is 3.5%, and the Heart of Georgia Altamaha region is the third highest at 3.9%.

RC REPORT

Brett Manning stated that all the county Comprehensive Plans were approved and will be eligible to receive state funding for the next five years. This coming year, they will be working on Comprehensive Plans for Laurens County, Evans County, Toombs and Wheeler County. Vidalia's Master Plan for rural zone was submitted and approved.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Allie Williams

Allie Williams