

ARWDB MEETING

August 12, 2026 - Meeting Summary

Mr. Leon Allen	Ms. Autumn Andrews
Ms. Tonya Byrd	Mr. Joel Domineck, Jr.
Mr. Greg Cantrell	Ms. Margie Ensley
Ms. Sonia Carruthers	Ms. Norma Marquez
Ms. Mandy Chapman via Teams	Ms. Bridgette McDonald
Ms. Deirdra Cox	Mr. Leonardo McClarty
Mr. Robert Duffield	Mr. Jonathan Turner
Mayor Marci Fluellyn	Mr. Aundra Walthall
Mr. James Jackson III	
Mr. Jamal Jessie	
Ms. Donna Mullins via Teams	
Dr. Vivian Pitter	
Mr. Trey Ragsdale	
Ms. Sara Ray	
Ms. Kristy Smith	

ARWDB Board Co-Chairman, Trey Ragsdale, called the Committee meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

1. Welcome

Trey Ragsdale, Co-Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting, and Board Members in the room introduced themselves.

Quorum was met.

2. Public Comment

There was none.

3. Presentation

Horizons Atlanta Program Overview and Impact: Ann Marie Bedtke presented an overview of Horizons Atlanta, detailing its tuition-free academic summer program for underserved children in Metro Atlanta, its mission pillars, eligibility criteria, retention and graduation rates, and its role in building Atlanta's future workforce, with input from board members on family impact and partnership opportunities.

4. Action Items

- **Approve the Summary from the May 13, 2026, Meeting** – James Jackson made a motion; Jamal Jessie seconded; the summary was accepted unanimously.

- **Approve Local Plan Modifications for Public Comment:** Brett Lacy, ARC, led the board through the approval process for modifications to the 2024-2027 local strategic plan, highlighting updates resulting from administrative changes, new labor market information, and a shift in focus toward employer involvement and apprenticeships. The board approved a two-week public comment period before final submission. Robert Duffield made a motion; Kristy Smith seconded; the summary was accepted unanimously.

5. Information Items:

- **Federal and State Legislative Updates:**

Brett Lacy, ARC, provided updates on federal and state workforce funding, including the Senate's continuing resolution to maintain funding, the House's proposed reductions, and an OMB rule affecting grant administration, as well as information about the upcoming Governor's Workforce Summit and its significance for workforce partners.

- **Special Project Updates:**

- **Building Pathways:**

- Lisa Davis, ARC, provided an update on the Building Pathways program. The project is halfway through its grant period, having served 165 participants, with 159 completing training and 104 entering employment, and is projected to be ahead of schedule, with a focus on closing remaining employment gaps. The program is still on target with the grant goals. All deadlines for quarterly reports were met.

- **Building Georgia**

- Lisa Davis, ARC, provided an update on Building Georgia.
 - Two cohorts have completed at Gwinnett Tech and Atlanta Tech, with the Georgia Department of Transportation facilitating information and interview sessions, resulting in job offers and ongoing employer engagement, including FedEx and CW Matthews.

- **Pathways to Digital Economy (PADE)**

- Marsharee O'Conner, ARC, provided an update on the Pathways to the Digital Economy (PADE) project
 - A Google-funded initiative to provide digital skills training and paid internships for young adults, detailing program structure, participant outcomes, employer engagement through lunch and learn sessions, and plans for continued expansion and reporting.
 - Five lunch and learn sessions were held across counties, attracting 166 employer attendees, with positive feedback and ongoing employer interest in hosting interns; Gwinnett's session was virtual due to high RSVPs.
 - Participant Outcomes and Reporting: The project has exceeded its initial goal, enrolling over 51 participants (170% of target), with reporting to Google continuing for six months after project completion.

- **State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) Grant**

- Brett Lacy, ARC, provided an update on the apprenticeship expansion grant from TCSG, noting partnerships with Atlanta, Fulton, and DeKalb counties, progress toward serving 100 apprentices by next June, and ongoing efforts to load apprentices into the system and engage additional employers.

6. ARWDB Reports & Discussion

One Stop Manager's Report (Carol Edwards)

Carol Edwards, One Stop Manager at Gwinnett Center, reported on customer numbers, partner additions, job fair outcomes, hiring events with MARTA, entrepreneurship workshops, and upcoming hiring events, highlighting ongoing efforts to improve customer experience and employment outcomes.

Executive Committee

Jamal Jessie gave the report. He briefly summarized the Executive Committee's discussion, mentioning the committee assignments and teasing the dashboard discussion.

Next Gen Committee

Marsharee O'Connor, ARC, indicated the committee did not meet and will meet in late August.

Nominations Committee

Did not meet

Business Service Advisory Group

Did not meet

Career Services Advisory Group

Did not meet

Directors Report

- Brett discussed recent unemployment rate and labor force participation rate trends.
- Brett announced the upcoming launch of a regional impact dashboard, developed by Olivia, to visualize participant outcomes, employment industries, earnings changes, and return on investment, with interactive features for county-level analysis and quarterly updates.
- Brett provided an update on his Priority Activities for 2026

Next full board meeting will be on October 28, 2026.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:54.