

SC WORKS

UPPER SAVANNAH

Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, February 9, 2026

Time: 3:30 PM

Location: Virtual / Upper Savannah Council of Governments (Greenwood, SC)

Members Present:

- Billy Morgan
- Caleb Polatty (New Member)
- Chris Milstead (New Member)
- Dabs Davis
- Daniel Grove
- John Calhoun
- Raweewan Aiken-Ross
- Roy Lowe
- Sherri Gordon (New Member)
- Stacie Phylicia
- Theresa Stover

Members Absent (Excused):

- Darron Wilson

- Scott Coleman
- Keli Fewox
- Shelby Reed

Members Absent:

- Courtney Gunter
- Dale Cullum

Staff & Guests Present:

- Kalen Kunkel, Workforce Development Director
- Amber Bearden
- Kimberly Smith
- Deidre Smalls
- Ashley (Finance)
- Sam Leaman

1. Call to Order & Introductions

The meeting was called to order. Three new board members were introduced:

- **Sherri Gordon** (Self Regional Healthcare, Director of Human Resources)
- **Caleb Polatty** (Saluda Nursing and Rehab Center, Director of Human Resources)
- **Chris Milstead** (Komatsu, 24-year tenure in manufacturing/operations)

2. Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes from the November 11, 2025, meeting.

- **Motion:** Made by Dabs Davis to approve the minutes as presented.
- **Second:** Made by John Calhoun.
- **Action:** Passed unanimously.

3. Director's Report

Director Kalen Kunkel presented the PY24 Annual Report and PY25 Financials:

- **PY24 Performance:** The Board met or exceeded the 70% expenditure requirement (93% actual) and achieved a 100% obligation rate. The participant cost rate goal of 30% was

exceeded.

- **Metrics:** All primary WIOA metrics (Employment Q2/Q4, Median Earnings, Credential Rates, Measurable Skill Gains) were met (green status).
 - *Note:* TAA performance was impacted by one individual who did not co-enroll, resulting in a zero metric for that specific category.
- **PY25 Financials:**
 - **Allocations:** Total available funds (including carryover) are approximately \$1.47 million.
 - **Obligations:** The Board remains on track with obligation rates.
 - **Transfers:** A request is in process to transfer Dislocated Worker (DW) funds to the Adult program due to lower DW participation levels.
 - **Youth Work-Based Learning:** Currently at 25.64% YTD, tracking well against the 20% requirement.

4. Committee Reports

SC Works Operations & Priority Populations Committee

- **Chair:** Roy Lowe.
- **Report:** The committee did not meet; however, a call was made for a new Co-Chair to assist Roy Lowe. Members interested in volunteering should contact staff.

Youth Committee

- **Report:** No meeting was held in January.

Action Items: Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)

Director Kunkel presented staff recommendations for the ETPL:

1. **PSI Project Management (Laurens):** Approve (Local provider, previous success).
 2. **Trans Tech (CDL):** Deny (Provider is >60 miles away; existing local options available).
 3. **MedCerts (IT):** Deny (100% online/expensive; comparable training available via Piedmont Technical College).
- **Motion:** Made by Theresa Stover to approve the staff recommendations to include PSI Project Management and deny Trans Tech and MedCerts.
 - **Second:** Made by John Calhoun
 - **Action:** Passed unanimously.

5. Program Report

Career Services Report (Kimberly Smith)

- **Adult/DW:** 47 enrollments YTD (Goal: 132). Popular trainings include Dental Assistant, Phlebotomy, and Nursing.
 - *Success Story:* Christy T. (Adult/DW) obtained her CNA and is now employed at Newberry County Disability earning \$15.32/hr.
- **Youth:** 14 enrollments YTD (Goal: 57). Staff is actively conducting outreach at high schools and libraries.
 - *Metrics:* 15 Credentials attained; 73 Measurable Skill Gains (MSG).
 - *Work Experience (WEX):* Two active participants (Greenwood Adult Ed and Newberry

SC Works).

- *Success Story:* Kenley (Youth) obtained her GED and CMA certification and is employed at Self Regional Advanced Associates earning \$17.00/hr.

One Stop Center Operations Report (Deidre Smalls)

- **Traffic:** Over 7,000 participants served regionally YTD. Greenwood Center accounts for ~60% of traffic.
- **Engagement:** 1,300 resumes updated in SC Works Online; 300,000+ services tracked.
- **Unemployment:** Regional rate is 5.1% (up from 4.5% previous year), with Greenwood County highest at 5.8%. The Director noted that despite the statistical uptick, there have been no significant mass layoffs recently.

6. Other Business

- **Attendance Policy:** Sitting Chair, Billy Morgan emphasized the importance of Board Members attending meetings personally to ensure voting eligibility; proxies are not permitted to vote.
- **Security Grant:** The Board was awarded \$97,500 (Statewide Reserve Funds) to provide armed security at comprehensive centers.
- **Rapid Response/Incumbent Worker Training:** A \$52,500 grant was secured for **AluPress** to retrain 32 employees, preventing potential layoffs due to shifts in electric vehicle production demand.
- **MOU/IFA Negotiations:** Partner meeting scheduled for March 31, 2026. Discussions will include converting affiliate sites in Abbeville, Edgefield, McCormick, and Saluda to "Connection Points" to reduce facility costs while maintaining presence via mobile units.
- **SC Works Operator RFP:** The Request for Proposal for the new four-year cycle will be posted on February 10, 2026. The Executive Committee will oversee the review process.
- **New Member Orientation:** Staff will coordinate virtual orientation sessions (lunch hours) for new members.

7. Adjournment

- **Next Meeting:** Monday, June 1, 2026, at 3:30 PM.
- **Motion:** A motion to adjourn made by Tracy Freeman
- **Second:** Made by John Calhoun
- **Action:** Passed unanimously.