

Technology & Entrepreneurship Advisory Board
Minutes – October 16, 2025

1. Call to Order: Chairman Richardson called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.
2. Roll Call: Chairman Richardson; Directors Rhoades, Pearson, Ritchie, and Rodriguez were present.

Directors Boman and Kennedy were absent.

Staff: Holly Wharton – Economic Development Director, *Alicia Hartley – Downtown Manager, and Joni Ary – Recording Clerk.

*Alicia Hartley left at 6:16 pm.

3. Citizens with Input – None.
4. Guests and Speakers.- None.

5. New Business

a. Approve August 28, 2025, Minutes

Director Ritchie motioned to approve as submitted; Director Rhoades seconded; all in favor, and it was unanimously approved.

b. Approve August 2025 and September 2025 Financials

Director Rhoades motioned to approve as submitted; Director Pearson seconded; all in favor, and it was unanimously approved.

c. Perry Startup Summit Discussion

Ms. Wharton recommended changing the Perry Startup event from a week-long event to a day-and-a-half summit. Ms. Alicia stated that we would maintain the quality content but consolidate sessions to save money, have the ESOs set up all day, and make them available during lunch to answer any questions. Ms. Wharton recommended that the next Perry Startup Summit be held on February 19th and 20th, and all members concurred with this recommendation.

d. November Speaker Series Event – Grub & Grow

Ms. Wharton advised that the November Speaker Series will be held on November 19th. The event will be for Veterans' support in starting a business. To help Veterans and their families with available resources.

e. Youth Entrepreneurship Event Discussion

Ms. Wharton suggested a project to get kids in 5th to 8th grade working in teams to compete, similar to the Spark Macon "Lemonade Stand" project. To mentor kids working in teams to create pitches for their stands and work within their budget to outsell the other teams. Ms. Wharton stated that if everyone were

in concurrence, she would work with Spark Macon to move forward with the project. All members concurred.

f. Technology-Based Incentive Policy

Ms. Wharton distributed a preliminary policy that the City Manager is reviewing to ensure that the policy aligns with the City's incentive policy and what can actually be done by the City. Ms. Wharton asked the Board to review the preliminary policy and provide her with any feedback.

6. Staff Items

- a. Monthly Updates- Ms. Wharton stated that the Perry Mixer Celebrating UGA Grand Farm event on October 6th at Ghost Runner Pizza was well attended and received good feedback, showcasing what Perry is doing.

7. Member Items –

Director Pearson offered to speak at the next meeting more about Venture Capital and different types of investments. Following up on the discussion of the Gurb and Grow Speaker Series.

Director Rodriguez stated that Grand Farm's goals for next year will be building new buildings and having more projects at the Farm. Harvest begins in two weeks for soybeans and cotton, if anyone is interested in coming out to see.

8. Adjournment – there being no further business to come before the Board, Director Rhoades motioned to adjourn the meeting; Director Rodriguez seconded; all in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.