

NORTHEAST IOWA COMMUNITY ACTION CORPORATION  
305 MONTGOMERY STREET, P.O. BOX 487  
DECORAH, IA 52101

Approved

The Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation Board of Directors meeting was held on Monday, June 23, 2025, via Microsoft TEAMS. The Finance Committee met at 5:47 pm. The Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm. Board Chair, Les Askelson, called the meeting to order followed by reciting the NEICAC mission statement. Roll call was taken.

Present were:

Dan Byrnes	Nina Brickman
Janel Langreck	Marcia Hesse
Jasmin Morrison	Joseph Pisney
Shirley Vermace	Corey Cerwinske
Stacie Cooper	Melissa Nation
Les Askelson	Wendy Shea
Nick Winter	

Trisha Wilkins, Staff	Chrishelle Stravers, Staff
Karli Schmelzer, Staff	

Board members unable to attend are as follows:

Jeff Bunn	Cindy Yslas
Jessica Goltz	Melissa Timmermans
Linda Voshell	Steve Breitbach
Steve Doeppke	Suellen Kolbet

The first agenda item was review of the 6/23/25 meeting agenda. Move to approve the 6/23/25 meeting agenda by Nick Winter, seconded by Corey Cerwinske. Motion carried all voting aye.

The next item was the consent agenda which included the minutes for the 5/19/25 Board Meeting; 6/2/25 Executive Committee meeting minutes; June Program and Agency Dashboard Report; Head Start, Early Head Start, CACFP Reports and Policy Council Minutes; LIHEAP & Crisis Reports; and set next meeting date of July 28, 2025 (In Person & Hybrid). Move to approve the consent agenda by Corey Cerwinske, seconded by Nina Brickman. Motion carried all voting aye.

Trisha Wilkins then reviewed with the Board the May Financial Reports. Move to approve the May Financial Reports as presented by Janel Langreck, seconded by Stacie Cooper. Motion carried all voting aye. The balance sheet was included with the Board packet and was for the Board's information.

Dan Byrnes presented on behalf of the Finance Committee, stating that everything looked to be in order with no discrepancies noted. Move to approve the Finance Committee report of the bill and credit card statements as presented by Dan Byrnes, seconded by Janel Langreck. Motion carried all voting aye.

Trisha Wilkins then shared an update from Ken Wohlford, Transportation Director, regarding the successful launch and initial phase of the Lansing Bridge Shuttle project. The service officially began on June 4, 2025, and operated through June 13, 2025, transporting about 147 riders. The Bridge reopened to traffic on June 9, 2025, but at the request of the Iowa Department of Transportation, Transit extended service through end of business June 13. Service is scheduled to resume around July 7 and continue through the end of July. The Iowa DOT has expressed repeated appreciation for NEICAC's swift and effective response in mobilizing vehicles, drivers, and other resources to support this critical community project. We look forward to continuing service in July.

Fall 2025 Head Start Application Status was next on the agenda. Trisha Wilkins shared that Open Houses and Registration has begun for the Head Start classrooms. So far, 205 applications have been received. Our new slot capacity for the next school year will be 155. Currently there are 154 accepted students, just one short of meeting capacity requirements. This was for the Board's information.

The next item on the agenda is the approval of The Emergency Wage Enhancement Policy to be added to the Employee Handbook. This policy will allow the agency, without seeking Board approval first, to provide a temporary pay increase for identified emergencies. The policy includes several examples, such as natural disasters and public health crises, among others. One recent example was the Transit Lansing Bridge Project, which necessitated an increase in driver pay to meet the community's needs, and this adjustment needed to be implemented promptly. Any emergency where this is implemented must be approved by the CEO. Move to approve The Emergency Wage Enhancement Policy as presented by Nina Brickman, seconded by Jasmin Morris. Motion carried all voting aye.

Next, Trisha Wilkins presented the CSBG Amendment request. There are no additional requested funds, but changes in specific line items in the requested amount column. Move to approve the CSBG Amendment request as presented by Nick Winter, seconded by Stacie Cooper. Motion carried all voting aye.

Karli Schmelzer's presentation of the Board's Role in Fundraising was next on the agenda. Karli provided information to the Board specifically on the agency's unrestricted funding needs and its agency impact and further discussed the Board's role. This was part of the planned semi-annual training to refresh existing Board members and educate new members. The board discussed the idea of forming a fundraising committee, and Corey Cerwinske volunteered to serve on the committee if others were interested. This was for the Board's information.

The Woolen Mill proposed renovation project was next on the agenda. Chrishelle Stravers and Julie Buddenberg, Housing Programs Coordinator, met with the engineering, architectural, and contractor teams to discuss the project further. Cost estimates are expected to be received and provided at the next Board Meeting. This was for the Board's information.

Trisha Wilkins then shared an update on the Bremer County Family Services and Food Pantry site plans. The existing downtown building in Waverly has been sold, and the plan is to move to the former Waverly Head Start location. While we wait for approval from the Office of Head Start, plans and quotes are being gathered to update the building to meet the needs of the Bremer County Outreach office and Food Pantry. The Rotary Club in Waverly is partnering with NEICAC to help assist with needed updates and repairs. This was for the Board's information.



Head Start's Transportation Waiver was next on the agenda. Trisha Wilkins shared the approval letter from the Administration of Children and Families that will approve our annual transportation waiver for the Head Start preschool program. Many Head Start students use the school bus for Head Start transportation, and the Office of Head Start allows waivers for both child restraint systems and bus monitors. This was for the Board's information.

Next on the agenda were Federal and State legislative updates. There have been no dramatic developments at the federal level (as far as our programs are concerned) in the last month. David Bradley provided insight on his personal meetings with both Representatives Feenstra and Hinson. As a state network, community action agencies have launched an advocacy campaign, starting with weekly storytelling from our customers and families. There was considerable discussion about the Reconciliation Bill, due to the proposed cuts to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). There is concern about funding after October 1 for NEICAC programs. This was for the Board's information.

Trisha Wilkins then reviewed the Grants, Contracts & Funding Report. This included contract amendments for Weatherization, CSBG, FaDSS, and LIHEAP, and a new contract for Emergency Project for Shuttle service in Lansing due to bridge closure. Awarded Grants included Bremer County Community Foundation (Crisis Assistance), Waverly/Shell Rock United Way (Bremer Food Pantry), Northeast Iowa Food Bank (Bremer and Howard Counties' Food Pantry) and MercyOne Elkader Medical Clinic (Clayton Crisis Assistance). This was for the Board's information.

Next, Trisha Wilkins shared her CEO Report. This was for the Board's information.

Move to adjourn the meeting at 6:56 pm by Nick Winter, seconded by Dan Byrnes. Motion carried all voting aye.

Reporting Secretary



Chrishelle Stravers, CFO