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, July 28, 2025, at the Fayette County Courthouse. The Finance Committee met at 5:48 pm. The Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 6:00 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 (virtual)
Janel Langreck	Marcia Hesse
Jasmin Morrison	Joseph Pisney
Shirley Vermace	Melissa Nation (virtual)
Les Askelson	Wendy Shea
Nick Winter	Cindy Yslas (virtual)
Jeff Bunn	Jessica Goltz (virtual)
Linda Voshell (virtual)	Melissa Timmermans (virtual)
Steve Breitbach (virtual)	Steve Doeppke
Trisha Wilkins, Staff	Chrishelle Stravers, Staff
Karli Schmelzer, Staff	

Board members unable to attend are as follows:

Corey Cerwinske	Suellen Kolbet (2)
Stacie Cooper	

The first agenda item was review of the 7/28/25 meeting agenda. Move to approve the 7/28/25 meeting agenda by Nick Winter, seconded by Joe Pisney. Motion carried all voting aye.

Shirley Vermace then presented on behalf of the nominating committee regarding Election of Board Officers. The slate of officers presented to the Board were as follows: Les Askelson, Board Chair; Janel Langreck, Vice Chair; Joe Pisney, Secretary/Treasurer. Moved to approve the presented slate of officers effective 7/28/25 by Shirley Vermace, seconded by Dan Byrnes. Motion carried all voting aye.

The next item was the consent agenda which included the minutes for the 6/23/25 Board Meeting; July Program and Agency Dashboard Report; Early Head Start, CACFP Reports and Policy Council Minutes; Crisis Report; and set next meeting date of September 22, 2025 (In Person, Dinner and Hybrid). Move to approve the consent agenda by Linda Voshell, seconded by Nick Winter. Motion carried all voting aye.

Trisha Wilkins then reviewed with the Board the June Financial Reports. Move to approve the June Financial Reports as presented by Joe Pisney, seconded by Steve Doeppke. Motion carried all voting aye. The balance sheet was included with the Board packet and was for the Board's information.

Janel Langreck 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 Janel Langreck, seconded by Dan Byrnes. Motion carried all voting aye.

Program presenters this month were Karli Schmelzer, Human Resources and Development Director and Chrishelle Stravers, Chief Financial Officer. Karli Schmelzer provided agency employee data including Headcount, Recruitment and Retention, Employee Engagement, top three termination reasons, and HR's Forward Focus. Karli noted that Transit has a Mechanic opening and there has been little interest. Shirley Vermace asked about subcontracting a mechanic in West Union. Karli noted they are looking at all options including meeting with NICC Mechanic's program. Chrishelle Stravers discussed AI and its application in nonprofit accounting. The Board thanked Karli Schmelzer and Chrishelle Stravers for their information.

Trisha Wilkins reviewed with the Board the annual Board Conflict of Interest Policy and Training. She also further discussed the Duty to Disclose in relation to the vendor list that was emailed earlier to the Board. At this time, Trisha Wilkins discussed the Board Assessment that was provided in the Board packet, Trisha asked that it be completed and scanned, emailed or mailed back to her. She will also be sending the survey electronically as well. Trisha Wilkins reminded Board members that the last six pages of the Conflict-of-Interest Policy and Board Assessment need to be completed.

The next item on the agenda was the Head Start/EHS Self-Assessment. The self-assessment covers all components within the program and has strengths, concerns, and plans moving forward with a matrix to ensure they stay compliant, up to date and responsive to family needs. Move to approve the Head Start/EHS Self-Assessment as presented by Wendy Shea, seconded by Jasmin Morrison. Motion carried all voting aye.

Fall 2025 Head Start Application Status was next on the agenda. Trisha Wilkins shared that 155 students have been accepted, which is the new slot capacity for the next school year. The Change of Scope application to reduce enrollment to 155 was approved. There is continued work on building the waitlist for classrooms. This was for the Board's information.

Next, Trisha Wilkins presented the CSBG budget amendment request. The state has received its final allocations, and according to the formula calculated from the census data, our CSBG amount has decreased. The reduction is decreased from the personnel and indirect budget line items. Move to approve the CSBG budget amendment request as presented by Nick Winter, seconded by Joe Pisney. Motion carried all voting aye.

Trisha Wilkins then discussed the Waverly Building (1805 Horton Rd). The Administration for Children & Families has completed the process for releasing federal interest and approved the disposal of the Waverly Head Start Center. We plan to relocate the Bremer County Food Bank and Family Services Office to this location. NEICAC already owns this location, but HHS requires us to pay 100% of its appraised value as it will no longer be used for Head Start. This requires paying $89,000 to HHS from the unrestricted Contributions funds. Move to approve the retaining of NEICAC's ownership of this building and site for the continued operation of NEICAC's programs as presented by Janel Langreck, seconded by Shirley Vermace. Motion carried all voting aye.

An update on Woolen Mill was next on the agenda. Trisha Wilkins shared that Tometich Engineering sent the preliminary budget estimate for a portion of the Woolen Mill renovation/restoration project, which did not include any HVAC or electrical work. We are planning to look into an appraisal for Woolen Mill, contact Iowa Finance Authority with the estimates to determine if there is funding to assist, research Historical grant application options that could apply to this type of project, and schedule meetings with reps from UERPC, the City of Decorah, and Winneshiek County Development & Tourism/Decorah Housing Task Force Members. This was for the Board's information.

Trisha Wilkins then shared an update on the state Disaster Program. The Iowa Community Action Agencies have administered the IIAGP and DCA disaster programs for years. ICAA had submitted an RFP for a contract renewal several months ago. On 7/16, ICAA was notified that they would not be awarded a contract and informed that the state would be performing this work in-house. NEICAC will no longer be providing Disaster Services after August 31. This was for the Board's information.

The next agenda item was a review of the completed CEO Performance Evaluation presented by Les Askelson. Les stated that it was an outstanding evaluation, and positive feedback was shared by the Board Members. He also thanked Trisha for her hard work and leadership on behalf of the board. Move to approve the completed CEO Performance Evaluation as presented by Joe Pisney, seconded by Nick Winter. Motion carried all voting aye.

Next was the review of the CEO compensation. The information included the CEO position salary and fringe benefits. Move to approve the CEO compensation as presented by Nick Winter, seconded by Jeff Bunn. Motion carried all voting aye.

Karli Schmelzer then led the discussion regarding the Board Fundraising Committee. Both Corey Cerwinske and Shirley Vermace have volunteered for this committee. It was determined the Media and Public Relations committee will take on fundraising.

Next on the agenda were Federal and State legislative updates. Both the House and Senate passed the large reconciliation bill, which has implications for SNAP and Medicaid. The House also approved a plan to rescind millions that will cut all federal support for public broadcasting stations and foreign aid. This rescission package also does not include any of the NEICAC programs. On July 10th, HHS published a policy shift that narrows the eligibility criteria related to immigration status for numerous HHS programs, including Community Service Block Grant and Head Start. While this may be a major policy change for CSBG and Head Start, the new rules already apply to LIHEAP. HHS has not yet published specific policy guidance or instruction on how to implement or enforce this new policy under the newly covered programs. The House Appropriations Committee updated their hearing schedule, Energy and Water Development were scheduled, but we have not heard if a full markup was completed, this would be Weatherization funding. Transportation and HUD unveiled the FY26 appropriations bill with good news for Transit. Labor, HHS, and Education were removed from the schedule. This means we likely won't hear and on our programs such as CSBG, Head Start, and LIHEAP until early September.

Trisha Wilkins then reviewed the Grants, Contracts & Funding Report. This included contracts and amendments for Weatherization; CSBG; State Transit Assistance; Disaster Services contract extended through August 31st; MTM; Building Directions for Families for an Oelwein classroom; and Waverly Rotary Club, to help cover the costs of getting the new Waverly Family Services space up and running. 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 7:29 pm by Nick Winter, seconded by Jeff Bunn. Motion carried all voting aye.

Reporting Secretary

Chrishelle Stravers

Chrishelle Stravers, CFO