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, September 22, 2025, at the Fayette County Courthouse. The Finance Committee met at 5:45 pm. The Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 6:20 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	Steve Doeppke
Jasmin Morrison	Joseph Pisney
Shirley Vermace	Cindy Yslas
Jeff Bunn	Steve Breitbach (virtual)
Les Askelson	Suellen Kolbet
Linda Voshell (virtual)	
Trisha Wilkins, Staff	Scott Fischer, Staff
Karli Schmelzer, Staff	Sharon Burke, Staff
Chrishelle Stravers, Staff	Ken Wohlford, Staff
Nichole Griese, Staff	Theresa Hogenson, Staff
Martin Ahrndt, Staff	

Board members unable to attend are as follows:

Stacie Cooper (2)	Corey Cerwinske (2)
Jessica Goltz	Melissa Timmermans
Nick Winter	Melissa Nation
Marcia Hesse	Wendy Shea

The first agenda item was review of the 9/22/25 meeting agenda. Move to approve the 9/22/25 meeting agenda by Joseph Pisney, seconded by Cindy Yslas. Motion carried all voting aye.

The next item was the consent agenda which included the minutes for the 7/28/25 Board Meeting; September Program and Agency Dashboard Report; Head Start, Early Head Start, CACFP Reports and Policy Council Minutes; Crisis Reports; Board Committees Update; Board Conflict of Interest Paperwork Update; NCAP Conference Update; and set next meeting date of October 27, 2025 (Virtual). Move to approve the consent agenda by Shirley Vermace, seconded by Steve Doeppke. Motion carried all voting aye.

Trisha Wilkins then reviewed with the Board the July and August Financial Reports. Move to approve the July and August Financial Reports as presented by Suellen Kolbet, seconded by Dan Byrnes. Motion carried all voting aye. The balance sheet was included with the Board packet and was for the Board's information.

Joseph Pisney 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.

Program presenters this month were Martin Ahrndt, Outreach Director and Theresa Hogenson, LIHEAP Coordinator. Martin Ahrndt provided a handout regarding Outreach Department updates. Some of the updates discussed included the new house database system, staffing, and the new outreach office location for Waverly Family Services and the need for Crisis Assistance funding. In addition, Theresa Hogenson discussed changes to LIHEAP for the new program year. The Board thanked Martin Ahrndt and Theresa Hogenson for their information.

Next on the agenda was the program customer satisfaction reports. Trisha Wilkins shared the reports for Head Start/EHS, Family Services, FaDSS, Weatherization, and Transit with the Board. Trisha Wilkins stated that overall, as an agency, customer satisfaction is very good. There is a need for Transit to create a more comprehensive collection system that can gather information from a larger number of riders, which would provide a clearer understanding of current trends. Move to accept the customer satisfaction reports as presented by Joseph Pisney, seconded by Jasmine Morrison. Motion carried all voting aye.

Next, Trisha Wilkins presented the bid award for Woolen Mill and Washington Court Mini-Splits/ NEICAC HVAC Upgrades. Over a year ago, NEICAC received a federal grant through the City of Decorah, and sealed bids were opened on September 15 for this project. The lowest bidder, Matt Construction, is recommended for the award of this project contract with a total cost of $218,000. Move to approve the award of this project to Matt Construction as presented by Dan Byrnes, seconded by Cindy Yslas. Motion carried all voting aye.

Chrishelle Stravers then presented the Accounting & Financial Policies and Procedures Manual updates. Chrishelle shared the summary of changes with the Board with the full manual posted to the Board Portal. Changes included general formatting and spelling corrections, updates to the Competition, Procurement Thresholds, Methods of Procurement and Contract Provisions sections. Move to approve the Accounting & Financial Policies and Procedures Manual updates by Suellen Kolbet, seconded by Steve Doeppke. Motion carried all voting aye.

The next item on the agenda was the request for approval on Operational and Human Resources job descriptions and wage scales. Move to approve the job descriptions and wage scales for the Chief Operations Officer and the Human Resources Coordinator as presented by Nina Brickman, seconded by Shirley Vermace. Motion carried all voting aye.

The Woolen Mill renovation was next on the agenda. Trisha Wilkins shared since the last Board meeting, NEICAC staff met with Decorah's community members, the Iowa Finance Authority, in addition to consultation with NEICAC attorneys and contacts recommended by IFA. Trisha stated that Woolen Mill has met its initial HOME funding compliance requirements; it was a Low-Income Housing Tax Credits Program (LIHTC) that received credits towards the original building renovation. The current Land Use Restrictive Agreement on the property requires maintaining low-income housing for Woolen Mill for a 50-year total timeline, with the current agreement ending in 2052. The property could be sold with IFA's approval, but the new owners would be subject to the same requirements for that same timeline. There are no market rate units in this, so a housing investor could not keep some low income and raise others to market rate. Other conversations with IFA have been about funding options for the renovation project. Applying for another LIHTC project is possible, but they consider 15 units a small project and so the likelihood of getting funded is low. The maximum amount of funds available for HOME fund awards doesn't even come close to the cost for this project. Due to the difficulties of selling Woolen Mill with the cost of renovations and current restrictions in place, it is likely other properties will need to be bundled into a portfolio to be sold together. Move to begin the process of eliminating the Housing Program as discussed by Suellen Kolbet, seconded by Cindy Yslas. Motion carried all voting aye.

Trisha Wilkins then shared the training specific to Head Start and EHS eligibility which is required for staff, policy council, and Board Members. The handout provided for the training was also posted to the Board Portal. This was for the Board's information.

Next on the agenda was an update on the Board Fundraising Committee and a request for annual campaign contacts. Trisha Wilkins shared that we have updated our Public Relations and Media Committee to include Fundraising responsibilities. Trisha mentioned that one of the first items the committee will discuss is to develop a fundraising policy that outlines the expectations of the Board. It is also our annual campaign time, and Trisha Wilkins asked the Board to provide any business or individual contacts they think could be beneficial to fundraising efforts. This was for the Board's information.

Next on the agenda were Federal and State legislative updates. Trisha Wilkins shared that things continue to look mostly optimistic at the federal level with funding for our programs. The most recent news was that the House appropriations committee had passed the FY26 LHHSE Appropriations bill. Both CSBG and LIHEAP received a slight increase while Head Start stayed flat. Weatherization is the most concerning with the House making a steep cut in their appropriations, while we still wait to hear from the Senate. Trisha Wilkins enclosed a chart provided by NCAF, detailing Administration, House and Senate funding numbers for FY26 budgets. This was for the Board's information.

Trisha Wilkins then reviewed the Grants, Contracts, and Funding Report. This included contract amendments from the Iowa Department of Health & Human Services for LIHEAP, FaDSS, and CSBG, and the Iowa Department of Transportation for Transit (Public Transit Bus & Bus Facilities Grant). Grants were submitted to the Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation for the Clayton County crisis program and the National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) for Transit Community Rides Grant/Program. 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 7:43 pm by Cindy Yslas, seconded by Janel Langreck. Motion carried all voting aye.

Reporting Secretary

Chrishelle Stravers

Chrishelle Stravers, CFO