

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, March 23, 2026, at the Fayette County Courthouse. The Finance Committee met at 5:46 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:

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| Corey Cerwinske | Melissa Timmermans (Virtual) |
| Steve Breitbach (Virtual) | Shirley Vermace |
| Jasmin Morrison | Steve Doeppke |
| Les Askelson | Dan Byrnes |
| Joseph Pisney | Jeff Bunn |
| Wendy Shea | Nina Brickman |
| Janel Langreck | |

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| Trisha Wilkins, Staff | Julie Buddenberg, Staff |
| Karli Schmelzer, Staff | |
| Chrishelle Stravers, Staff | |

Board members unable to attend are as follows:

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| Stacie Cooper (7) | Melissa Nation |
| Linda Voshell | Nick Winter |
| Marcia Hesse | Jessica Goltz (3) |

The first agenda item was a review of the 3/23/26 meeting agenda. Move to approve the 3/23/26 meeting agenda by Joseph Pisney, seconded by Corey Cerwinske. Motion carried all voting aye.

The next item was the consent agenda which included the minutes for the 2/23/26 Board Meeting; March Program and Agency Dashboard Report; Head Start, Early Head Start, CACFP Reports and Policy Council Minutes; LIHEAP and Crisis Reports; NCAP and ICAA Conference dates; and set next meeting date of April 27, 2026 (In-Person and Hybrid). Move to approve the consent agenda by Corey Cerwinske, seconded by Janel Langreck. Motion carried all voting aye.

Julie Buddenberg was March's program presenter. Julie has been with NEICAC for many years managing the Housing Department and was recently promoted to the Weatherization & Housing Director position. Julie shared some updates in the Housing department: closed on the Sumner property in February; Washington Court and Woolen Mills are getting mini splits installed starting this month; prepping for the sale of Woolen Mills and Calmar Apartments; and Kayla Miller has joined as the new Housing Coordinator. Julie then shared some updates in the Weatherization

department: Jack Davis has been promoted to an evaluator; looking to hire a crew member; the State Quarterly Meeting went well; LEWIS system will be coming sometime before fall, it's currently being tested in other agencies; they will finish eight houses this month; they implemented a new job tracking system; and Julie wanted to mention that Josh VanSkyhawk has been very helpful during this transition. The Board thanked Julie for the information.

The Board Member roster was the next item on the agenda. Trisha Wilkins shared that unfortunately there have been some recent resignations from Jessica Goltz from Clayton, Cindy Yslas from Howard, and Suellen Kolbet from Chickasaw, all due to other obligations. Trisha has had contact with a few prospects in Clayton and Chickasaw counties. Trisha asked if anyone knew of someone that may be interested in joining the Board to please send their contact information to Trisha.

A planning committee meeting update was next on the agenda. The board is required to review the mission and vision statements within the past five years; this review is within that period. The mission and vision statements were last approved by the board on 4/26/2021. Trisha Wilkins shared that she had facilitated an exercise with the leadership team dissecting NEICAC's mission and vision statements. Using the information she had gathered, they met with Planning Committee Members Nina Brickman and Jasmin Morrison on 2/23/26 to further discuss the agency's mission and vision statements. Based on the agency leadership and planning committee's conclusions and continued alignment with the goals and programming, Trisha Wilkins recommended the Board keep the current Mission and Vision statements unchanged. The current mission statement addresses poverty, and the agency's programs and services are aligned with the mission statement. Move to approve the unchanged Mission and Vision statements as presented by Wendy Shea, seconded by Nina Brickman. Motion carried all voting aye.

Trisha Wilkins then reviewed with the Board the February Financial Reports. Move to approve the February Financial Reports as presented by Joseph Pisney, 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.

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 on the bill and credit card statements as presented by Janel Langreck, seconded by Dan Byrnes. Motion carried all voting aye.

Next on the agenda was the Waukon USDA 2025 Annual Report. Trisha Wilkins shared this is the annual financial information for the Waukon Head Start classroom and Family Services office building that NEICAC owns. Move to approve the Waukon USDA 2025 Annual Report as presented by Nina Brickman, seconded by Corey Cerwinske. Motion carried all voting aye.

Head Start preschool program applications for the 2026-2027 school year was next on the agenda. Trisha Wilkins shared that we have currently received 103 total applications and several with follow-up for additional information. This was for the Board's information.

Trisha Wilkins then shared that on March 10th, Head Start program review monitors conducted an "unannounced" program review. Focus Area 1 review includes a review of the entire program from classroom site visits, program governance, health and safety, recruitment and eligibility, financial systems and integrity, Human Resources and qualifications compliance, family, and community

engagement, and any of Head Start's program performance standards. There was also a significant time spent in interviews answering process and policy questions, Trisha also thanked Board members Les Askelson and Marcia Hesse for joining the team to answer their questions about the program's governing board requirements. They did not share the review results at the time, but we will receive a report from the Office of Head Start. This was for the Board's information.

An update on NEICAC's Housing Property sales was the next item on the agenda. Trisha Wilkins shared we have received the filed and recorded Release of Land Use Restrictive Covenants (LURA) on Woolen Mill from Iowa Finance Authority. The abstracts for Woolen Mill and Calmar Apartments have been sent in for review and updates. This was for the Board's information.

Trisha Wilkins discussed Moratorium Protections. Under Iowa law, customers who qualify for LIHEAP or the Weatherization program cannot be disconnected from natural gas or electric service from November 1 through April. Customers are encouraged to visit with a Family Services Specialist before committing to a Deferred Payment Agreement on past due utility debt, so that an affordable agreement can be negotiated. Moratorium ends April 1, 2026. This was for the Board's information.

Next, Trisha Wilkins shared that the Fundraising Committee meeting was held March 19, an update will be provided at the April Board Meeting. This was for the Board's information.

Trisha Wilkins then reviewed the Grants, Contracts & Funding Report. These included grants awarded by both Winneshiek and Chickasaw County Community Foundations for the Crisis Program. This was for the Board's information.

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

Legislative updates were next on the agenda. Trisha Wilkins shared that things continue to move quickly at both the state and federal legislative levels. After reaching out to our elected officials, she has been told that last month's concern of the state bill that capped state-funded grants at 5% for indirect costs has been tabled with many legislators voicing strong opposition. Trisha Wilkins also shared a House subcommittee advanced a Senate proposal to change public assistance programs. The main areas we are paying attention to are changes to eligibility and residency criteria for programs like Medicaid, SNAP, FIP, and WIC. On the federal level, NCAF continues to discuss FY27 funding for CSBG and Weatherization with our elected officials and has begun circulating letters of support at the federal level.

Lastly, Trisha Wilkins discussed the May Board Meeting date. The fourth Monday falls on Memorial Day, Trisha recommended moving the meeting date to Monday, May 18th. Move to approve the meeting date as recommended by Joseph Pisney, seconded by Jeff Bunn. Motion carried all voting aye.

Moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 by Corey Cerwinski, seconded by Jasmin Morrison. Motion carried all voting aye.

Reporting Secretary



Chrishelle Stravers, CFO

