LIFT COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC.
209 NORTH 4TH STREET
HUGO, OKLAHOMA 74743

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
April 8, 2025
Head Start Administration Office - Hugo, Oklahoma

The Board of Directors of LIFT Community Action Agency, Inc. met in a regular meeting session on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at 10:11 a.m. The meeting was held at LIFT CAA's Head Start Administration Office, located at 1005 S. 5th Street in Hugo, Oklahoma. The notice of time, place, and an agenda for the meeting were posted 24 hours prior within prominent view at the main office (209 N. 4th St., Hugo, Oklahoma) and the meeting site (1005 S. 5th St., Hugo, Oklahoma) as well as online at https://liftca.org/board/.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Hawkins.

The Invocation was given by Board Member Andrea Henkel.

Roll Call was taken and a quorum was established (13 Board Members present, 11 absent). The following Board Members were present at the meeting site: Colby Bryant, Kevin Cory, David Hawkins, Andrea Henkel, Sharon Johnson, Vickie Leathers, Sandra Meeks, David Smith, William Smith, Consuelo Splawn, Jim Bob Sullivan, Debra Williams, and Craig Young. The following members were absent: Tami Barnes, Brad Burgett, Brent Franks, Kristi Graham, Patsy Guess, Jordan Hill, Jia Johnson, Kara Maness, Carolyn Pool, Leah Thomas, and Vicky Wade. LIFT CAA employees and visitors present at the meeting site were: Kinsey Cox, Macy Self, Sheree Ensley, Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Tatianna Davis, Brittany Bailey, Amy Craven, Darla Galyon, Mattie McKee, Susie Mashburn, Kelli White, Jeannie McMillin, Ashley Staggs, Jennifer Otey, Bryce Nash, Kathy James, Amber Garman, and Ronda Spear.

In order to be in compliance with the Open Meeting Act (Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes §§ 301-314), the vote of each member was publicly cast and recorded. The agenda contained Consent Docket items of business and the rules that pertain to voting on the items.

Sheree Ensley, Fiscal Officer, provided the Board with the Finance/Audit/Loan Committee Report. The Committee met on April 8, 2025 at 9:18 a.m. The Committee received a status report on all active loans; there were no new loan applications to present. The Committee voted to recommend full Board approval of the agency's Financial Reports for January and February 2025. The Committee was presented with the March 2025 Financial Reports. The Committee was notified that personnel are currently on-site conducting the 2024 Agency Audit. The Committee also received a properties update.

CONSENT DOCKET ITEMS

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES/FINANCIAL REPORTS

David Hawkins, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration of the February 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes and the January 2025 and February 2025 Financial Reports; the March 2025 Financials were distributed for consideration and vote at the May 2025 Board Meeting (Organizational Standards 5.5 and 8.7). A motion was made by Andrea Henkel and seconded by Debra Williams to approve the February 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes and the January 2025 and February 2025 Financial Reports. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 13; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Items D & E).

CONSIDER SUBMISSION OF RESOLUTIONS/GRANT APPLICATIONS

1. Oklahoma Early Childhood Program Grant Application (Year 20) to Community Action Project of Tulsa County in the amount of $181,239.68 (with $90,812.94 Match) and Signing of Provider Agreement; if awarded, a total of $272,052.62 in funding (grant award plus match) would be used to support personnel costs within Early Head Start and the Early Learning Centers, as well as other associated operating costs. The Oklahoma Early Childhood Program grant is a supplemental funding source used to enhance the quality of LIFT CAA's Early Head Start and Early Head Start-Child Care Programs. This grant provides the agency's birth to age three programs the ability to raise the quality of existing classrooms in various aspects. The funding provides the resources needed to supplement staff salaries, heighten training opportunities that would otherwise be unobtainable, and raise classroom monitoring standards.
2. SFY 2026 Older Americans Act Title III KEDDO Area Agency on Aging Grant Application to Kiamichi Economic Development District of Oklahoma in the amount of $40,351.17; if awarded, these funds will be used to administer and operate a Title III program to provide public transportation for eligible participants (age 60 years or older) residing in Choctaw, McCurtain, and Pushmataha Counties within the KEDDO district, during the project year of July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026.
3. Signature Cause Grant Application to International Paper Foundation in the amount of $7,500; if awarded, these funds will be used purchase materials, supplies, and furnishings to transform the space within the RENEW Center into a bright and welcoming atmosphere for clients being served. With support from the IP Foundation, LIFT CAA will create the "Connection Café", a safe place where youth and their families who have been impacted by substance use and/or mental health disorders can connect, receive mentorship, counseling, and other services designed to foster recovery and resilience.
4. FY 2026 Section 5311 – Formula Grants for Rural Areas Program Application to Oklahoma Department of Transportation in the amount of $427,061 and signing of the Authorizing Resolution; if awarded, these funds will be applied to the expenses of operating the Transit Program in Choctaw, McCurtain, and Pushmataha Counties, with a program year of October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026.
5. Spark Good Local Grant Application to Walmart (Facility 49, Hugo) in the amount of $5,000; if awarded, these funds will be used by the Family Resource Center to help stock and restock the Resource Closet. Through the Resource Closet, families in need can get immediate access to nonperishable food, hygiene products, and more.
6. Spark Good Local Grant Application to Walmart (Facility 38, Idabel) in the amount of $5,000; if awarded, these funds will be used for operational expenses of the AmeriCorps Seniors Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.

7. Community Investment Grant Application to ONEOK in the amount of $10,000; if awarded, funding will be used to purchase construction materials to be used by participants of the YouthBuild Program, who will gain construction skills while renovating an existing single-family home.
8. FY 2025 Community Services Block Grant Application (2nd Allocation) to Oklahoma Department of Commerce/Community Development in the amount of $56,746; if awarded, this funding will be used for operational support of agency programs.
9. PY 2025 Department of Human Services Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program Grant Application to ODOC in the amount of $86,168.11; if awarded, these funds will be used to support Weatherization Program activities within Region 5 (Atoka, Bryan, Carter, Choctaw, Coal, Johnston, Love, Marshall, McCurtain, Murray, Pontotoc, and Pushmataha Counties).
10. Justice Assistance Grant Application to Oklahoma District Attorneys Council in the amount of $75,000; if awarded, the RENEW Justice Assistance Initiative will enhance drug enforcement, reduce recidivism, and improve behavioral health outcomes across Choctaw, McCurtain, and Pushmataha Counties. Key components include advanced narcotics detection technology, corrections-based case management and treatment, development of a tri-county Overdose Fatality Review Board, and mental health supports for law enforcement officers. A total of 1,100 individuals would be served during the proposed two-year project.

After discussion and Board Member input with regards to the applications presented, a motion was made by Jim Bob Sullivan and seconded by William Smith to approve the submission of resolutions and/or grant applications in the amount of $894,065.96 presented as listed on the Consent Docket. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 13; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item F).

CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS/CONTRACTS/AWARDS

1. 2025 Oklahoma Asset Development Project Award from Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies in the amount of $6,265; these funds (based on the number of returns completed during last year's tax season) will be used to provide free tax preparation assistance for residents of Choctaw, McCurtain, and Pushmataha Counties.
2. FY 2025 Improvement Grant Awards from Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Child Care Assistance Program in the amount of $4,060; these funds will be used to purchase playground and classroom equipment as well as other supplies for the Early Learning Centers in Broken Bow ($2,160) and Idabel ($1,900). The Improvement Grants are intended to improve the health, safety, or quality of the child care facility.
3. PY 2024 Department of Energy Weatherization Assistance Program Award from Oklahoma Department of Commerce in the amount of $164,000; these funds will be used to support LIFT's Weatherization Program and provision of services within Region 5 (Atoka, Bryan, Carter, Choctaw, Coal, Johnston, Love, Marshall, McCurtain, Murray, Pontotoc, and Pushmataha Counties). The total amount awarded for PY 2024 is $457,075.
4. FY 2025 Healthy Start Initiative: Eliminating Disparities in Perinatal Health Grant Award (Year 12) from Health Resources and Services Administration in the amount of $ 497,200; this partial allocation of funding will be utilized during the second year of the five-year grant cycle to improve access to quality health care and services for women, infants,

children, and families through outreach, care coordination, health education and linkage to health insurance; building healthy communities and ensuring ongoing, coordinated, comprehensive services are provided in the most efficient manner through effective service delivery; strengthening the health workforce, specifically those individuals responsible for providing direct services; and promoting and improving health equity by connecting with appropriate organizations.

5. Technical and Management Assistance Contract Award – Region 2 (Option Year 2) from U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development in the amount of $392,151.02; these funds will be used to provide technical and management assistance services to Self-Help Housing Grantees within Region 2 (South Central), comprised of the following 11 states: Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming. With this funding, LIFT CAA will furnish all labor, management, supervision, quality control, facilities, equipment, materials, and services needed to perform the requirements of the contract during Option Year 2.

A motion was made by William Smith and seconded by Craig Young to approve acceptance of grants, contracts, and awards in the amount of $1,063,676.02 as presented and listed on the Consent Docket. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 13; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item G).

Kathy James, Senior Program Planner, presented for the Board's consideration the FY 2025 Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grant Application (Continuation) and Non-Federal Share Waiver Request to the Office of Head Start. James explained that, if awarded, funding would provide support for program operations in the amount of $2,224,968 as well as $42,863 for the provision of training/technical assistance for the EHS-CC Program for a period of one year, serving 104 infants and toddlers in partnership with six area child care centers. The child care centers include the Early Learning Centers located in Antlers, Broken Bow, Hugo, and Idabel, Cabbage Patch Daycare and The Learning Tree. The total amount requested would be $2,267,831, for the funding period of 8/1/2025 – 7/31/2026. Included with the application will be a request for a Waiver of the Non-Federal Share associated with the Federal Request in the amount of $566,957.75. The Board of Directors discussed the request, reviewed the budget, and provided input regarding the application. A motion was made by Colby Bryant and seconded by Debra Williams to approve submission of the FY 2025 Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grant Application (Continuation) and Non-Federal Share Waiver Request to the Office of Head Start. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 13; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item H).

Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Executive Director, provided the Board with the Executive Director's Report (Organizational Standard 5.9). Porter discussed recent federal Executive Orders and evolving Administration priorities that may influence agency operations and program delivery. She noted that the agency is monitoring these developments to remain aligned with national guidance and community needs.

Darla Galyon, Head Start/Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Director, presented for the Board's consideration the FY 2024 Disability Waiver Request for the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program to the Office of Head Start. The agency is seeking approval from the Office of Head Start to waive the 10% requirement for enrollment of children with disabilities in the EHS-Child Care Program. The Waiver would only pertain to the EHS-CC Program, which currently serves three children with special needs who have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), but this is only 3% of the current enrollment of 104 children. Additionally, the program has one other child in the referral process, and one child who qualifies for services, but an IFSP has not been written yet. Program enrollment has suffered tremendously, which has in turn affected how many children in the community are able to go through the program's screening processes. Therefore, it is necessary to submit the Waiver in order to ensure compliance if the goal is not reached by the end of the program year. Following discussion, a motion was made by Debra Williams and seconded by David Smith to approve the submission of an FY 2024 Disability Waiver Request for the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program to the Office of Head Start. The roll call vote was: Yes 13; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item J).

Brittany Bailey, ERSEA Specialist, presented for the Board's consideration the 2025-2026 Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance Integrated Services Policies and Procedures with Prioritization Schedule/Point System. During the ERSEA Training provided at the Board Meeting in February 2025, copies of the Integrated Services Policies and Procedures with the Prioritization Schedule/Point System were distributed to Board Members, who were asked to review and then submit any needed changes. With no further changes proposed by the Board, a motion was made by Andrea Henkel and seconded by Jim Bob Sullivan to approve the 2025-2026 Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance Integrated Services Policies and Procedures with Prioritization Schedule/Point System. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 13; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item K).

Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Executive Director, presented for the Board's consideration a Proclamation recognizing April as Fair Housing Month. National Fair Housing Month commemorates the passage of the Fair Housing Act in April 1968, a Federal law that prohibits housing discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, and sex. The Act was later amended to include protections for individuals with disabilities and families with children. The observance promotes awareness of fair housing rights and supports efforts to eliminate housing discrimination. A motion was made by Jim Bob Sullivan and seconded by Colby Bryant to approve the signing of the Proclamation recognizing Fair Housing Month. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 13; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item L).

Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Executive Director, provided a Board Training over the Agency-Wide Risk Assessment and Board Self-Assessment (Organizational Standard 5.7). To comply with Organizational Standard 4.6, each Community Action Agency must complete an in-depth Risk Assessment to help identify any potential for fraud, legal issues, safety concerns, and other things that could cause harm to the agency as a whole. LIFT CAA utilized an online risk assessment tool developed through a collaboration between the National Community Action Partnership and Nonprofit Risk Management Center. The Risk Assessment was completed on December 7, 2023 and generated a 70-page report containing feedback and recommendations based on the responses to each section of the assessment tool. The Risk Assessment covered general and specific topics, including governance, financial management, property, and human resources. Porter reviewed the report with the Board, outlining recommendations to minimize risk. Based on the report, the agency's practices, policies, and procedures appear to be sufficient to minimize and manage risk; no areas of the report showed any significant weakness or concerns. In addition, the agency is required to conduct a Board Member Self-Assessment every two years. Board Members essentially "rate" themselves in a series of questions related to the Board and its functioning. The Self-Assessment was distributed to the Board for completion in September and October of 2023, with a 73% participation rate. Porter reviewed the results of the Self-Assessment with the Board. The top five highest scored areas of performance (in order) focused on Board Meetings, Impact, Financial Oversight, Chief Executive Partnership & Oversight, and Program Oversight. In relation to other Boards assessed and benchmarking performance, LIFT CAA's Board of Directors rated higher than the national average on all scores, which shows a positive correlation with existing orientation and training efforts.

Kathy James, Senior Program Planner, provided a Board Training (Organizational Standard 5.7) over Board Recruitment and Retention as well as Low-Income Participation (in Board activities and Members), with regards to Organizational Standard 1.1.

Susie Mashburn, Head Start/Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Early Childhood Development and Curriculum Coach, provided a Board Training/Programmatic Report over the Fall/Winter 2024-2025 Child Outcomes/Assessment results for the Head Start, Early Head Start, and EHS-Child Care Programs (Organizational Standards 5.7 and 5.9). Growth was shown across all domains for the 3- and 4-year old children served. EHS and EHS-Child Care Program children are divided into three age groups which represent 2-3 years of age, 1-2 years of age, and birth to 1 year of age. No comparison data is collected on these children due to their age. The Board was provided a copy of the outcomes report in the meeting packet.

Darla Galyon, Head Start/Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Director, provided the Board with a Programmatic Report over the FY 2025 Office of Head Start Focus Area 1 Monitoring Review (Organizational Standard 5.9). From January 13–15, 2025, the Office of Head Start conducted a Focus Area 1 Monitoring Review of LIFT CAA's Head Start Programs. The review assessed compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards and federal regulations; a summary report of the Monitoring Review was issued in February 2025. Galyon reviewed the Program Performance Summary Report in detail with the Board. The agency was found to be compliant in most areas, including program governance, fiscal infrastructure, family and community engagement, and eligibility and enrollment. However, one Area of Noncompliance and one Area of Concern were identified. The noncompliance was found under Education and Child Development Services, specifically regarding staff qualifications. The review revealed that four out of 48 (or 8%) of Early Head Start center-based teachers did not meet the minimum qualification requirement of holding a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or equivalent, with training focused on infant and toddler development. These staff members, hired between March 2019 and August 2022, had professional development plans in place and were being monitored for progress. A corrective action plan is started and on track for completion within the 120-day timeframe. Additionally, an Area of Concern was noted in Health Services. The agency faced challenges in obtaining medical and oral health determinations for children within 90 days of enrollment, primarily due to parent work schedules and limited appointment availability. The Office of Head Start recommended exploring strategies to expedite this process. LIFT CAA will work with the Head Start Regional Office for the provision of technical assistance and support in addressing these findings.

Andrea Henkel, Board Member, provided the Board Giving Report (Organizational Standard 5.7). Henkel reviewed the Board Giving Policy and Procedure with the Board. Achieving 100% of giving by the Board is the goal as it is an eligibility requirement by many private funders and foundations. Any amount is appreciated and ensures the agency's ability to apply for funds where Board giving is a threshold requirement. Board Members can designate what program or activity the donation is to be used for, and employees of the agency can also make donations on behalf of Board Members. Since the funding entity typically looks at the year prior, by achieving 100% Board giving in 2025, the agency is eligible to apply for funding in 2026.

Jeannie McMillin, Transit Director, provided the Board with the Transportation Advisory Council Report (Organizational Standard 5.9). The Transportation Advisory Council was established during the April 2021 Board Meeting for the Transit Program with regards to funding received from the Kiamichi Economic Development District of Oklahoma's Area Agency on Aging Division. These KEDDO funds help to fill a gap in transportation services for older Americans (60 years of age or older) who do not qualify for Medicaid, Tribal, or other free transportation services. The Transportation Advisory Council regularly convenes each quarter, with a primary purpose to inform agency leadership of the transportation needs of older Americans within their communities, and serves an essential function in helping to identify and address transportation barriers, challenges, and resources. During the 15th meeting, held on April 8, 2025 (prior to the Board Meeting), Advisory Council members were briefed on the service results so far, as well as the new KEDDO funding application submission. Advisory Council members were also asked to report on any new or additional identified gaps in transportation needs in their communities; no such gaps were reported.

Mattie McKee, Head Start/Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Assistant Director, provided the Board with the Policy Council Report for the February 18, 2025 and March 25, 2025 meetings (Organizational Standards 2.1 and 5.9).

Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Executive Director, recognized Tatianna Davis (Caregiver 2, Early Learning Centers) as the March 2025 Employee of the Month.

Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Executive Director, recognized Kelli White (Health Navigator, Choosing Childbirth Program) as the April 2025 Employee of the Month.

Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Executive Director, recognized the following Service Award recipients for March and April 2025:

- *March 2025*
  Five Years – Brittany Bailey (ERSEA Specialist, Head Start/EHS/EHS-Child Care Programs), Kinsey Cox (Administrative Assistant/CSBG Administrator/Public Relations Specialist, Administration), Jennifer Otey (Care Coordinator Manager, Healthy Start Program); Ten Years – Mattie McKee (Assistant Director, Early Head Start-Child Care Program), Bryce Nash (Self-Help Specialist, Technical & Management Assistance Program), Ronda Spear (Assistant Health Specialist, HS/EHS/EHS-Child Care Programs); Twenty-Five Years – Jutta Gee (Family Advocate, Head Start Program).
- *April 2025*
  Twenty-Five Years – Gary Teague, Sr. (Maintenance Technician, Housing Programs).

Other Reports/Announcements/Correspondence were presented as follows: Head Start/EHS/EHS-CC Monthly Reports (Program Summary, Communication and Guidance, Meals/Snack, Enrollment/Attendance, Data Analysis); Head Start Transportation Waiver Approval; Head Start/EHS-CC Full Enrollment Notifications; Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Program; Hooked on Hugo Crappie Fishing Tournament Results; Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month; Child Abuse Prevention Month; and NeighborWorks® America Compliance and Health Assessment Report (Organizational Standard 5.9).

There being no other business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Jim Bob Sullivan and seconded by Andrea Henkel to adjourn the regular meeting. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 13; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. Voting record is attached (Item Y).

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

Brad Burgett

Brad Burgett, Secretary/Treasurer