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

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
August 12, 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, August 12, 2025 at 10:07 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 William Smith.

Roll Call was taken, and a quorum was established (16 Board Members present, 9 absent). The following Board Members were present at the meeting site: Colby Bryant, Brad Burgett, Kevin Cory, Brent Franks, Brad Gernand, Kristi Graham, Lori Greer, Patsy Guess, David Hawkins, Jia Johnson, Sharon Johnson, Sandra Meeks, William Smith, Jim Bob Sullivan, Debra Williams, and Craig Young. The following members were absent: Tami Barnes, Andrea Henkel, Jordan Hill, Vickie Leathers, Kara Maness, Carolyn Pool, David Smith, Consuelo Splawn, and Vicky Wade. LIFT CAA employees and visitors present at the meeting site were: Kinsey Cox, Rhonda Teague, Macy Self, Sheree Ensley, Kathy James, Darla Galyon, Christina Merritt, Amber Garman, Jordan Mack, Mattie McKee, Brandon McDaniel, Susie Mashburn, Emma Bishop, Nikole Martin, Dawn McDaniel, and Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter. LIFT CAA employees and/or visitors present, appearing remotely via the Microsoft Teams communications platform included: Sue Talkington.

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.

David Hawkins, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration, discussion, and possible action to accept Brad Gernand as appointed representative for the Pushmataha County Chamber of Commerce, a Private Entity on the LIFT CAA Board of Directors (entity to expire 12/31/2026). A motion was made by Brent Franks and seconded by Debra Williams to accept Brad Gernand as the appointed representative for the Pushmataha County Chamber of Commerce, a Private Entity on the LIFT CAA Board of Directors. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 14; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item C).

Board Member Debra Williams was appointed to serve as Board Mentor for new Board Member Brad Gernand (Organizational Standard 5.7).

Brad Burgett, Secretary/Treasurer, provided the Board with a report from the Committee for Nominations, who met prior to the meeting to determine the slate of LIFT CAA Officer Candidates for the upcoming year (2025-2026) in accordance with the agency's By-Laws and requirements for the annual election of Officers. The Committee for Nominations recommended the following slate of Board Officers to serve over the next year: Chairman – William Smith (representing Choctaw County); Vice-Chairman – Brad Burgett (representing Pushmataha County); and Secretary/Treasurer – Sandra Meeks (representing McCurtain County). The Committee for Nominations also recommended the existing members of the Executive and Personnel Committee (with the change in Officers as proposed) to serve for 2025-2026.

David Hawkins, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration, discussion, and possible action to elect LIFT CAA Board of Directors Officers for 2025-2026, pursuant to LIFT CAA Amended and Restated By-Laws, Article VI, Section 2. Hawkins also opened the floor to other nominations. A motion was made by Colby Bryant and seconded by Lori Greer to elect the slate of Board Officers as recommended by the Committee for Nominations, therefore electing the following to serve as LIFT CAA Board of Directors Officers for 2025-2026: Chairman – William Smith, Vice-Chairman – Brad Burgett, and Secretary/Treasurer – Sandra Meeks. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 14; No 0; Abstain 1. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item F).

David Hawkins, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration, discussion, and possible action to elect LIFT CAA Executive and Personnel Committee Members for 2025-2026, pursuant to LIFT CAA Amended and Restated By-Laws, Article VI, Section 2 and Article X, Section 1. As stipulated in the By-Laws, the composition of the Committee (which includes the elected Officers of the Board) shall consist of seven members total, comprised of at least one Public sector, one Low-Income sector, and one Private sector member, to be elected by majority vote of the Board. Hawkins explained that, with Sandra Meeks' election to the position of Secretary/Treasurer of the Board, this created a vacant position on the Committee. Additionally, the vacancy should be filled by a member representing the Low-Income sector to stay in compliance with composition requirements set forth in the By-Laws. Hawkins then asked for any nominations. Kevin Cory was nominated to fill the vacant position on the Committee. A motion was made by Brad Burgett and seconded by Jim Bob Sullivan to retain the current Committee members for the upcoming year as recommended by the Committee for Nominations as well as elect Kevin Cory to fill the open position; this action elects the following (in addition to the elected Officers) to the LIFT CAA Executive and Personnel Committee for 2025-2026: Kevin Cory (Low-Income Sector, Choctaw County), Brent Franks (Private Sector, Pushmataha County), Vickie Leathers (Private Sector, Pushmataha County), and Craig Young (Public Sector, McCurtain County). The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item G).

Sue Talkington, of Landmark PLC, Certified Public Accountants, presented the 2024 LIFT CAA Audit and provided a Board Training on How to Interpret an Audit Report (Organizational Standards 5.7, 5.9, and 8.3). The Audit, along with the agency's Tax Returns and current Budget, is posted on LIFT CAA's website to allow access by Board Members, funders, and the general public. Talkington stated that the 2024 Audit was completed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards and the Uniform Guidance; there were no problems with internal control or instances of noncompliance. There were also no weaknesses, findings, or questioned costs, so from an audit perspective, it is considered a clean report and clean opinion. Talkington reviewed the 2024 Audit in its entirety with the Board, explaining the financial statements, accompanying notes, methodology, and the overall audit process to ensure a clear understanding of the report's scope and outcomes.

David Hawkins, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration, discussion, and possible action to approve the 2024 LIFT CAA Audit (Organizational Standards 8.1, 8.2, and 8.4). Through this action, if approved, the Governing Board would formally receive and accept the 2024 LIFT CAA Audit. A motion was made by Colby Bryant and seconded by Brad Burgett to approve the 2024 LIFT CAA Audit. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item I).

Sheree Ensley, Fiscal Officer, provided the Board with the Finance/Audit/Loan Committee Report. The Committee met on August 12, 2025 prior to the Board Meeting. 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 June 2025. The Committee was presented with the July 2025 Financial Reports, 2024 Agency-wide Audit, and Employee Benefit Plan Form 5500 submission. The Committee was also provided with an update on agency properties, including notification of a rent increase at the Chappell complex and closure of Head Start centers in line with the program's Change in Scope – Enrollment Reduction approval.

CONSENT DOCKET ITEMS

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES/FINANCIAL REPORTS

David Hawkins, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration and vote to approve the July 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes and the June 2025 Financial Reports; the July 2025 Financials were distributed for consideration and vote at the September 2025 Board Meeting (Organizational Standards 5.5 and 8.7). A motion was made by Brad Burgett and seconded by Lori Greer to approve the July 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes and the June 2025 Financial Reports. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Items K & L).

CONSIDER SUBMISSION OF RESOLUTIONS/GRANT APPLICATIONS

1. FY 2025 Section 5339(b) – Bus and Bus Facilities Program Subgrant via Oklahoma Department of Transportation Application to Federal Transit Administration in the amount of $219,561 (with $38,746 match); if awarded, a total of $258,307 in funding (subgrant award plus match) would be used to purchase rear-lift buses to replace two older minivans within the fleet that have high mileage or require a replacement engine.
2. FY 2025 NeighborWorks Financial Capability Capacity Building Cohort Application to NeighborWorks® America in the amount of $20,000; if awarded, this funding will be used for staff training and coaching technical assistance to facilitate the implementation and operation of Financial Capability programming.

3. SFY 2026 Community Action Agencies State Appropriated Funds (Head Start) Application to Oklahoma Department of Commerce in the amount of $101,158; if awarded, these funds will be used to offset Head Start/Early Head Start Teacher salaries and fringe benefits, and support a portion of the salaries/fringe benefits for Family Advocates who work with the programs.
4. SFY 2026 CAA State Appropriated Funds Application to ODOC in the amount of $12,160; if awarded, this allocation of funding will be used to provide partial operational support for the LIFT CAA Housing Director (salary, fringe benefits, indirect costs). The Housing Director oversees numerous programs under the agency's housing umbrella that provides services and supports to low-income individuals and families.
5. Helping Every Area of Relationships Thrive Grant Application to Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance in the amount of $3,527,831; if awarded, funding will be used to establish and implement Project COMMIT (Couples in Oklahoma Making Marriage Important Together) 2.0. Under the proposed program, staff will provide evidence-based healthy marriage and relationship education to 65 couples each year, for a total of 325 couples served over the five-year project period. Eligible participants will be couples ages 18 or older who reside within LIFT CAA's service area of Choctaw, McCurtain and Pushmataha Counties. Participants will also receive ongoing intensive case management and wraparound services, to include job readiness, financial management, career advancement, and supportive services (i.e. housing, transportation, childcare, etc.).

After discussion and Board Member input with regards to the applications presented, a motion was made by Jim Bob Sullivan and seconded by Debra Williams to approve the submission of resolutions and/or grant applications in the amount of $3,880,710 presented as listed on the Consent Docket. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item M).

CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS/CONTRACTS/AWARDS

1. FY 2025 Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program Grant Award (Continuation) from Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start in the amount of $2,267,831; this funding will provide support for program operations in the amount of $2,224,968 and $42,863 for the provision of training/technical assistance for the EHS-CC Program for a period of one year. During the funding period of 8/1/2025 – 7/31/2026, the program will serve 104 infants and toddlers in partnership with six area child care centers, which include the Early Learning Centers located in Antlers, Broken Bow, Hugo, and Idabel, Cabbage Patch Daycare and The Learning Tree. Included with the grant award is approval of a Waiver of the Non-Federal Share associated with the Federal Request in the amount of $566,958.
2. Oklahoma Early Childhood Program Grant Award (Year 20) from Community Action Project of Tulsa County in the amount of $181,239.68 (with $90,812.94 Match); 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.

3. SFY 2026 CAA State Appropriated Funds (Head Start) Award from ODOC in the amount of $101,158; these funds will be used to offset Head Start/Early Head Start Teacher salaries and fringe benefits, and support a portion of the salaries/fringe benefits for Family Advocates who work with the programs.
4. SFY 2026 CAA State Appropriated Funds Award from ODOC in the amount of $12,160; this allocation of funding will be used to provide partial operational support for the LIFT CAA Housing Director (salary, fringe benefits, indirect costs). The Housing Director oversees numerous programs under the agency's housing umbrella that provides services and supports to low-income individuals and families.
5. AmeriCorps Seniors Retired and Senior Volunteer Program Donation from Huber Engineered Woods in the amount of $250; these funds will be used to support operations of LIFT CAA's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program related to volunteer recognition.
6. Signature Cause Grant Award from International Paper Foundation in the amount of $4,000; 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 "Connections 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.
7. FY 2025 NeighborWorks Financial Capability Capacity Building Cohort Award (1st Allocation) from NeighborWorks® America in the amount of $7,000; this funding will be used for staff training and coaching technical assistance to facilitate the implementation and operation of Financial Capability programming.
8. Rx for Oklahoma Award (2nd Allocation) from KI BOIS Community Action Foundation, Inc. in the amount of $2,463; these funds will be used to assist eligible individuals in accessing medication cost assistance programs provided by pharmaceutical companies. The total amount awarded for FY 2025 is $13,560.32.
9. FY 2025 Healthy Start Initiative: Eliminating Disparities in Perinatal Health Grant Award (Year 12, 2nd Allocation) from Health Resources and Services Administration in the amount of $290,476; this 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. The total amount awarded for Year 12 is $787,676.
10. Child Care Stabilization Grant Program Awards (Year 4/Quarter 4, Early Learning Centers) from Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in the amount of $18,000; this funding will provide key operating support to maintain childcare services within the ELCs.

A motion was made by William Smith and seconded by Brent Franks to approve acceptance of grants, contracts, and awards in the amount of $2,884,577.68 as presented and listed on the Consent Docket. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item N).

Kathy James, Senior Program Planner, requested the Board's consideration to approve submission of the FY 2026 Head Start/Early Head Start Program Grant Continuation Application to the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. James explained that the agency was currently working on the FY 2026 Head Start/Early Head Start Program Grant Continuation Application for Program Operations and Training and Technical Assistance. Total requested funding in the amount of $4,614,531 would be comprised of $3,336,104 for Head Start and $1,278,427 for Early Head Start (Funding Period: 12/1/2025–11/30/2026), with a Federal Funded Enrollment of 282 children (234 Head Start, 48 EHS). James detailed at length the program plan and budgets for Head Start and Early Head Start being proposed. The Board of Directors discussed the request and provided input regarding the application. A motion was made by Debra Williams and seconded by Lori Greer to approve submission of the FY 2026 Head Start/Early Head Start Program Grant Continuation Application to the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item O).

Sheree Ensley, Fiscal Officer, requested the Board's consideration, discussion, and possible action on submission of Employee Benefit Plan Form 5500 (Plan Year 2024, Period: 4/1/2024–3/31/2025). Ensley explained that the Form 5500 is a required annual filing by the Internal Revenue Service and the Department of Labor to determine whether employee benefit plans are operated and managed according to government standards. A motion was made by Craig Young and seconded by William Smith to approve submission of the Employee Benefit Plan Form 5500 for Plan Year 2024. The roll call vote was: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item P).

Jordan Mack, Head Start Programs Assistant Director, requested the Board's consideration, discussion, and possible action on the 2024-2025 Head Start Programs Self-Assessment Plan. The annual Self-Assessment is geared toward reviewing and understanding program data. During the Self-Assessment, staff work to identify areas of need within the Head Start, Early Head Start, and EHS-Child Care Programs on which to focus and improve. As shown on the Self-Assessment 2024-2025 documentation included in the Board Meeting packet, all recommendations to help address the discoveries have been completed. Mack facilitated discussion about the Self-Assessment; Board Members were asked to provide input and suggestions on the plan. While there was nothing further provided by the Board during the meeting, members are always encouraged to contact the Head Start/EHS/EHS-CC Administration Office with any additional input or suggestions. A motion was made by Debra Williams and seconded by William Smith to approve the 2024-2025 Head Start Programs Self-Assessment Plan. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item Q).

Jordan Mack, Head Start Programs Assistant Director, requested the Board's consideration, discussion, and possible action on updates to the 2023-2028 Head Start Programs Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan was developed to help guide the three programs during their five-year grant cycles. Each year, the plan is reviewed and updates are made as needed and to track progress made. The Strategic Plan has an outcomes-based focus to facilitate continuous improvement and monitoring of progress within the programs. Mack explained that the Plan was updated in August 2025 to track progress towards meeting the Objectives and Outcomes. Mack then described the Goals set for the programs and reasoning behind each, along with the associated Objectives, anticipated Outcomes, and progress made with both during Year 3. A motion was made by Colby Bryant and seconded by Debra Williams to approve the updates to the 2023-2028 Head Start Programs Strategic Plan. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item R).

Jordan Mack, Head Start Programs Assistant Director, requested the Board's consideration, discussion, and possible action on the Head Start and Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Program Menus for the 2025-2026 School Year. The menus, which are on a six-week rotation, were reviewed and approved by a Registered Dietician, to ensure proper nutritional content and consistency with Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines. A motion was made by Lori Greer and seconded by Patsy Guess to approve the Head Start and Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Program Menus for the 2025-2026 School Year. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item S).

Jordan Mack, Head Start Programs Assistant Director, requested the Board's consideration, discussion, and possible action on the 2025 Head Start Programs Community Assessment Update. The programs conducted a comprehensive Community Assessment in 2021. The Community Assessment compiles data on the strengths, needs, and resources of the programs' service area. In accordance with Office of Head Start requirements, the 2025 Annual Update is an addendum to the 2021 Community Assessment (and subsequent updates) used to identify significant changes to the service area (such as shifts in population, new community resources, or changing family needs). The Community Assessment is used to ensure services provided are best meeting the needs of children and families served by the programs. Mack reviewed the major updates and data of interest with the Board. A motion was made by William Smith and seconded by Brad Burgett to approve the 2025 Head Start Programs Community Assessment Update. The roll call vote was: Yes 15; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item T).

Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Executive Director, provided a Board Self-Assessment Report. The agency is required to conduct the Board Member Self-Assessment every two years. Board Members essentially "rate" themselves in a series of questions related to the Board and its functioning. As the Self-Assessment was last conducted in 2023, it is time again to begin the process. The Self-Assessment will be distributed to the Board (via email) within the coming weeks for completion; there will be a 30-day window to complete the assessment. The findings of the Self-Assessment will then be reported to the Board. Based on the responses, the Board Training Committee will develop a plan to raise capacity in areas identified as needs by Board Members.

Kathy James, Senior Program Planner, provided Board Training over the following: Open Meeting Act, Open Records Act, and Role/Recording of the Board Meeting Minutes (Organizational Standard 5.7). The training was facilitated using material provided by the Oklahoma Office of the Attorney General and excerpts from "Tools for Top-Notch CAAs: A Practical Approach to Governance and Financial Excellence" by CAPLAW.

Brandon McDaniel, Housing Director, provided a Board Training/Programmatic Report over Quarterly (April–June 2025) Housing Production, as reported to NeighborWorks® America (Organizational Standards 5.7 and 5.9). McDaniel provided a review of the submitted report and facilitated discussion regarding Housing production and activities over the last quarter.

Susie Mashburn, Early Childhood Development and Curriculum Coach, provided a Board Training/Programmatic Report over the Spring 2024-2025 Child Outcomes and Assessment Results for the Head Start Programs (Organizational Standards 5.7 and 5.9).

Mattie McKee, Head Start Programs Assistant Director, provided the Board with the Policy Council Report for the July 15, 2025 meeting (Organizational Standards 2.1 and 5.9).

Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Executive Director, recognized Emma Bishop (Family Advocate, Choosing Childbirth Program) as the August 2025 Employee of the Month.

Rebecca (Reynolds) Porter, Executive Director, recognized the following Service Award recipients: Five Years – Shaina Billy (Caregiver, Early Head Start Program), Lori Stiles (Teacher, Head Start Program); Thirty-Five Years – Dawn McDaniel (Human Resources Director, Administration).

Other Reports/Announcements/Correspondence were presented as follows: Head Start Programs Monthly Reports (Program Summary, Communication and Guidance, Enrollment/Attendance, Meals/Snack, Data Analysis); Notification of FY 2026 Office of Head Start Monitoring Reviews; Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Recertification; and Mobile Food Market Impact Report (Organizational Standard 5.9).

There being no other business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Brad Burgett and seconded by Colby Bryant to adjourn the regular meeting. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 14; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. Voting record is attached (Item DD).

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Brad Burgett

Brad Burgett, Secretary/Treasurer