

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

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
August 11, 2026
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 11, 2026 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 William Smith.

The Invocation was given by Board Member David Hawkins.

Roll Call was taken, and a quorum was established (18 Board Members present, 6 absent). The following Board Members were present at the meeting site: Tami Barnes, Colby Bryant, Brad Burgett, Kevin Cory, Brent Franks, Kristi Graham, David Hawkins, Andrea Henkel, Vickie Leathers, Sandra Meeks, Michelle Palmer, David Smith, William Smith, Consuelo Splawn, Leah Thomas, Vicky Wade, Debra Williams, and Craig Young. The following members were absent: Brad Gernand, Debbie Golden, Lori Greer, Jia Johnson, Sharon Johnson, and Jim Bob Sullivan. LIFT CAA employees and visitors present at the meeting site were: Kinsey Cox, Rhonda Teague, Macy Self, Darla Galyon, Sheree Ensley, Brittany Bailey, Christina Merritt, Amber Duncan, Corey Robinson, Rhonda Collins, Susie Mashburn, Brandon McDaniel, and Rebecca Porter. LIFT CAA employees and/or visitors present, appearing remotely via the Microsoft Teams communications platform included: Ashley Farrar, Jasmyn Strassmann, and Kathy James.

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.

William Smith, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration and possible action to accept Debbie Golden as appointed representative for Wright City Schools, a Public Entity on the LIFT CAA Board of Directors (entity to expire 12/31/2027). A motion was made by Tami Barnes and seconded by Brad Burgett to accept Debbie Golden as the appointed representative for Wright City Schools, a Public Entity on the LIFT CAA Board of Directors. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 17; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item C).

Board Member David Hawkins was appointed to serve as Board Mentor for new Board Member Debbie Golden (Organizational Standard 5.7).

Brad Burgett, Vice-Chairman, 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 (2026-2027) in accordance with the agency's By-Laws and requirements for the annual election of Officers. The Committee for Nominations recommended the existing 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 to serve for 2026-2027.

William Smith, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration and possible action to elect LIFT CAA Board of Directors Officers for 2026-2027, pursuant to LIFT CAA Amended and Restated By-Laws, Article VI, Section 2. Smith also opened the floor to other nominations. A motion was made by Andrea Henkel and seconded by Tami Barnes to retain the existing Board Officers as recommended by the Committee for Nominations, therefore electing the following to serve as LIFT CAA Board of Directors Officers for 2026-2027: Chairman – William Smith, Vice-Chairman – Brad Burgett, and Secretary/Treasurer – Sandra Meeks. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 17; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item F).

William Smith, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration and possible action to elect LIFT CAA Executive and Personnel Committee Members for 2026-2027, 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. Smith listed the current seven members of the Committee and then asked for any nominations. A motion was made by Colby Bryant and seconded by Brad Burgett to retain the current Committee members for the upcoming year as recommended by the Committee for Nominations; this action elects the following (in addition to the elected Officers) to the LIFT CAA Executive and Personnel Committee for 2026-2027: 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 17; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item G).

Ashley Farrar, of Landmark PLC, Certified Public Accountants, presented the 2025 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. The 2025 Audit was completed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards and the Uniform Guidance. Farrar reviewed the 2025 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. The audit reported total assets of approximately \$24 million, net assets of \$21.4 million, and a positive change in net assets of approximately \$304,000 for the year ended December 31, 2025. The auditors issued an unmodified opinion on the financial statements and an unmodified opinion on the Agency's major federal programs, indicating that the financial statements were fairly presented and that the Agency

complied with the requirements applicable to its major federal awards. One finding related to the Head Start non-federal share requirement was discussed. The issue resulted from inaccurate information reflected on a federal reporting form and was not identified during the grant period. Corrective measures have been implemented, including enhanced monitoring and reporting procedures, and a waiver request has been submitted to the Administration for Children and Families. There were no questioned costs and no federal program findings reported under Uniform Guidance.

William Smith, Chairman, requested the Board's consideration and possible action to approve the 2025 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 2025 LIFT CAA Audit. A motion was made by Brad Burgett and seconded by Tami Barnes to approve the 2025 LIFT CAA Audit. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 17; 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 11, 2026 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 May 2026 and June 2026. The Committee was presented with the July 2026 Financial Reports and received an update on the 2025 Agency-wide Audit. The Committee was also provided with an update on agency properties, including the possible expansion of WorkReady Idabel and RENEW Center offices into other counties within the service area. Following this Agenda item, Board Member David Smith left the meeting.

CONSENT DOCKET ITEMS

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES/FINANCIAL REPORTS

William Smith, Chairman, requested the Board's vote to approve the June 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes and the May 2026 and June 2026 Financial Reports; the July 2026 Financials were distributed for consideration and vote at the September 2026 Board Meeting (Organizational Standards 5.5 and 8.7). A motion was made by Tami Barnes and seconded by Debra Williams to approve the June 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes and the May 2026 and June 2026 Financial Reports. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 16; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Items K. & L).

CONSIDER SUBMISSION OF RESOLUTIONS/GRANT APPLICATIONS

William Smith, Chairman, requested the Board's vote to approve agency submission of Resolutions and Grant Applications, as follows:

1. SFY 2027 Community Action Agencies State Appropriated Funds (Head Start) Application to Oklahoma Department of Commerce in the amount of \$97,618; 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.
2. SFY 2027 CAA State Appropriated Funds Application to Oklahoma Department of Commerce 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.

3. HOME Investment Partnerships Program Grant Applications to Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency in the amount of \$670,000 (Rental New Construction: \$620,000, Community Housing Development Organization Operating: \$50,000); if awarded, these funds would be used to construct two duplex apartment buildings in Hugo, Oklahoma (total cost of \$620,000), as well as provide CHDO operating support in the amount of \$50,000 for staff salaries, travel and administrative costs associated with the construction of the rental new construction units.
4. FY 2026 Community Services Block Grant Application (3rd Allocation) to Oklahoma Department of Commerce in the amount of \$61,243; if awarded, this third allocation of funding will be used for operational support of agency programs.
5. Rural Communities Opioid Response Program – Impact Grant Application to Health Resources Services Administration in the amount of \$3,000,000; if awarded, these funds would be used over the four-year project period to expand LIFT CAA's RENEW Center model into all three service counties. These community-based hubs will provide direct substance use disorder services, including screening, assessment, care coordination, referral to treatment, peer recovery support, recovery coaching, overdose prevention education, naloxone distribution, relapse prevention, family support services, and medication-based treatment through partnerships with Pushmataha Family Medical Center Clinics and other regional healthcare providers.
6. Community Donation Request Program Application to Casey's General Stores in the amount of \$20,000; if awarded, these funds would be used for operational support of the LIFT Transit Program.
7. Public Transit Revolving Fund Application to Oklahoma Department of Transportation in the amount of \$146,516; if awarded, this operational subsidy will be used to offset the costs of program operations, such as vehicle insurance and fuel for LIFT Transit.
8. Spark Good Local Grant Application to Walmart (Facility 38, Idabel) in the amount of \$4,000; if awarded, these funds will be used to support LIFT CAA's emergency assistance services/fund for families in crisis.

After discussion and Board Member input with regards to the application presented, a motion was made by Tami Barnes and seconded by Colby Bryant to approve the submission of resolutions and/or grant applications in the amount of \$4,011,537 presented as listed on the Consent Docket. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 16; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item M).

CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS/CONTRACTS/AWARDS

William Smith, Chairman, requested the Board's vote to approve agency acceptance of Grants, Contracts, and Awards, as follows:

1. Rural Mobility Access Program Award from South Western Oklahoma Development Authority via Oklahoma Rural Health Transformation Program in the amount of \$210,726; these funds will be used to procure new vehicles for LIFT Transit to be used for transporting residents in Choctaw, McCurtain, and Pushmataha Counties.
2. Blue Impact Grant Program Award from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma in the

- amount of \$40,000; these funds will be used for operational support of the LIFT Transit Program to help sustain medically necessary transportation services for area residents.
3. FY 2026 YouthBuild Program Grant Award from U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration in the amount of \$1,518,000; these funds will be used to continue the YouthBuild Program within Choctaw County, as well as serve the communities of Antlers and Rattan in Pushmataha County and Valliant in McCurtain County. The program provides community-based alternative education and occupational skills programming for youth ages 16-24 who are high school dropouts or other disadvantaged populations, with a goal to serve 66 youth each year of the program.
 4. Oklahoma Early Childhood Program Grant Award (Year 21) from Community Action Project of Tulsa County in the amount of \$181,239.68 (Match: \$90,812.94); a total of \$272,052.62 in funding (grant award plus match) will 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.
 5. FY 2027 Kiamichi Economic Development District of Oklahoma (KEDDO) Area Agency on Aging Older Americans Act Title III-B Transportation Services Award from KEDDO in the amount of \$40,351.17; these funds will be used to administer and operate a Title III-B 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, 2026 – June 30, 2027.
 6. WorkReady Oklahoma Employment Center Contract Award (Year 4) from Oklahoma Department of Human Services in the amount of \$1,402,144; these funds will be used to continue operations of the WRO (WorkReady Oklahoma) Employment Training Center in Idabel, Oklahoma during Year 4 of the contract. The program supports five positions that will serve more than 700 individuals over the course of five years. Services involve training, coaching, and supports aimed at preparing individuals for employment.
 7. FY 2026 Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program Grant Award (Continuation and Cost-of-Living Adjustment) from Office of Head Start in the amount of \$2,281,960; Continuation funding (\$2,267,831) will provide support for program operations and training/technical assistance for the EHS-CC Program for a period of one year (third of five-year grant cycle), serving 104 infants and toddlers in partnership with six area child care centers. Additionally, COLA funding (\$14,129) will be used to provide LIFT CAA's Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership staff with a 0.635% COLA increase (Budget Period: 8/1/2026–7/31/2027). The COLA will serve to increase salaries and fringe benefits in an effort to ensure retention of experienced, qualified staff and maintain overall program quality. The COLA funds will be divided between Personnel Salaries, Fringe Benefits and Indirect Costs associated with staff salaries, with any remainder applied to other allowable program operating costs. The 0.635% COLA will reflect an increase in the hourly rate of pay for each employee and a permanent increase of 0.635% in the Head Start/EHS/EHS-Child Care pay scale.
 8. SFY 2027 CAA State Appropriated Funds (Head Start) Award from Oklahoma Department

of Commerce in the amount of \$97,618; 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.

9. SFY 2027 CAA State Appropriated Funds Award from Oklahoma Department of Commerce 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 LIFT's housing umbrella that provides services and supports to low-income individuals and families.
10. Child Care Stabilization Grant Program Awards (Year 5/Quarter 4, Early Learning Centers) from Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in the amount of \$25,000; this funding will provide key operating support to maintain child care services within the Early Learning Centers.
11. Rural Health Transformation Program Microgrant Award from Oklahoma State Department of Health in the amount of \$51,640; these funds will support the creation of a Wellness Resource Center in McCurtain County. The resource center will offer program participants and employees access to physical health resources (i.e. gym equipment, health education and promotional materials, etc.). The grant program is intended to help fill the demand for community health enablers to improve wellness.
12. PY 2026 Department of Human Services Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program Grant Award from Oklahoma Department of Commerce in the amount of \$106,913.86; 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).
13. FY 2026 CSBG Award (3rd Allocation) from Oklahoma Department of Commerce in the amount of \$61,243; this third allocation of funding will be used for operational support of agency programs. The total amount awarded for FY 2026 is \$236,687.

A motion was made by Andrea Henkel and seconded by Tami Barnes to approve acceptance of grants, contracts, and awards in the amount of \$6,028,995.71 as presented and listed on the Consent Docket. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 16; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item N).

Kathy James, Senior Program Planner, requested the Board's consideration and possible action on submission of the FY 2027 Head Start/Early Head Start Program Grant Continuation Application to the Office of Head Start. James explained that the agency was currently working on the FY 2027 Head Start/Early Head Start Program Grant Continuation Application for Program Operations and Training and Technical Assistance. Total requested funding in the amount of \$4,643,457 would be comprised of \$3,357,035 for Head Start and \$1,286,422 for Early Head Start (Funding Period: 12/1/2026–11/30/2027), 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 Brad Burgett and seconded by Tami Barnes to approve submission of the FY 2027 Head Start/Early Head Start Program Grant Continuation Application to the Office of Head Start. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 16; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item O).

Darla Galyon, Head Start/Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Program Director, requested the Board's consideration and possible action on the Head Start and Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Program Menus for the 2026-2027 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 Brent Franks and seconded by Debra Williams to approve the Head Start and Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Program Menus for the 2026-2027 School Year. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 16; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item P).

Christina Merritt, Family and Community Engagement Specialist, requested the Board's consideration and possible action on the 2026 Head Start Programs Community Assessment Update. The programs conducted a comprehensive Community Assessment in 2021; the Assessment compiles data on the strengths, needs, and resources of the programs' service area. In accordance with Office of Head Start requirements, the 2026 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. Merritt reviewed the major updates and data of interest with the Board. A motion was made by Tami Barnes and seconded by Michelle Palmer to approve the 2026 Head Start Programs Community Assessment Update. The roll call vote was: Yes 16; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. The Voting Record is attached (Item Q).

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.

Brittany Bailey, ERSEA Specialist, provided a Board Training/Programmatic Report (Organizational Standards 5.7 and 5.9). This annual program update and training over Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) works to inform the Board of processes, strategies, and policies/procedures used to ensure that Head Start/EHS/EHS-Child Care only enrolls eligible children within the programs. Bailey explained each component of ERSEA. The training then focused on Head Start/EHS/EHS-Child Care Program eligibility, and explained the following: (a) selection criteria/eligibility determination and processes for collecting complete, accurate information from families and third-party sources; (b) strategies for treating families with dignity and respect, as well as in dealing with possible issues of domestic violence, stigma, and privacy; and (c) policies and procedures regarding action taken against staff, families, or participants who attempt to provide or intentionally provide false information.

Brandon McDaniel, Housing Director, provided a Board Training/Programmatic Report over Quarterly (April-June 2026) 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 2025-2026 Child Outcomes and Assessment Results for the Head Start Programs (Organizational Standards 5.7 and 5.9).

Darla Galyon, Head Start/Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Program Director, provided the Board with a programmatic report regarding the Office of Head Start Focus Area 2 Comprehensive Services Monitoring Review (Organizational Standard 5.9). The review, conducted January 27-30, 2026, assessed program operations across multiple service areas, including program management, education, health, family engagement, fiscal oversight, and ERSEA systems. The program was found to be compliant in the vast majority of areas reviewed, including Program Design and Strategic Planning, Staffing and Staff Supports, Education and Child Development Services, Health Services, Family and Community Engagement Services, Budget Development and Oversight, Facilities and Equipment Management, Selection, and Enrollment. Reviewers noted strengths in continuous improvement efforts, staff support systems, quality teaching practices, child health and safety services, family engagement, and overall program operations. The review identified two areas of noncompliance related to financial reporting and eligibility. Program leadership reported that corrective action plans have been developed and implemented and that the program is working closely with its Training and Technical Assistance provider and Regional Office staff to address the findings and support ongoing continuous quality improvement.

Darla Galyon, Head Start/Early Head Start/EHS-Child Care Program Director, provided the Board with the Policy Council Report for the June 23, 2026 meeting (Organizational Standards 2.1 and 5.9).

Rebecca Porter, Executive Director, recognized Corey Robinson (Manager, Clayton Lake State Park) as the July 2026 Employee of the Month.

Rebecca Porter, Executive Director, recognized Rhonda Collins (Transit Clerk, Transit Program) as the August 2026 Employee of the Month.

Rebecca Porter, Executive Director, recognized Service Award recipients for the following months:

- July 2026
Five Years – Ceara Sales (Caregiver, Early Head Start Program)
- August 2026
Five Years – Rakelle Bond (Teacher, Head Start Program), Gino Gargano (Manager, Raymond Gary State Park), Jonna Reynolds (Teacher, Head Start Program), Tamara Rice (Teacher Assistant, Head Start Program), Linda Simpson (Transit Driver/Dispatcher, Transit Program); Fifteen Years – Susie Mashburn (Early Childhood Development and Curriculum Coach, Head Start/EHS Programs), Sommer Springfield (Assistant Early Childhood Development and Curriculum Coach, EHS-Child Care Programs); Thirty Years – Lori Henry (Program Secretary, Head Start/EHS/EHS-Child Care Programs).

William Smith, Chairman, presented the Other Reports/Announcements/Correspondence as follows: Head Start Programs Monthly Reports (Program Summary, Communication and

Guidance, Enrollment/Attendance, Meals/Snack, Data Analysis); Agency Recertification as a Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Victim Services Program; Family Positive Workplace Award Recognition; 2025 Victims of Crime Act Grant Site Visit Monitoring Report; Child and Adult Care Food Program Administrative Review Report; and Southeast Oklahoma Community Development Corporation Community Needs Assessment Survey (Organizational Standard 5.9).

There was no New Business brought before the Board.

William Smith, Chairman, requested the Board's vote to adjourn. A motion was made by Brad Burgett and seconded by Brent Franks to adjourn the regular meeting. The roll call vote was as follows: Yes 17; No 0; Abstain 0. The motion carried. Voting record is attached (Item CC).

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m.



Sandra Meeks, Secretary/Treasurer