



**Board Meeting Agenda**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
 1:30 pm February 25, 2021  
 700 16<sup>th</sup> Street NE, Suite 301  
 Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402

Based on COVID-19 directives from Linn County Public Health and the State of Iowa to limit the size of group gatherings, the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) September Board Meeting will be held online as authorized under Iowa Code Section 21.8. **You can join the meeting by calling +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) and use the Meeting ID: 965 3400 4616. Board members will receive a Zoom meeting invitation with a web link to join the meeting using their computer’s video and audio.**

Members of the public can participate during the meeting, but only during the public comment portions of the agenda.

**Board members are asked to follow the meeting etiquette guidelines below:**

- **Mute your computer audio or phone when not speaking**
- **Identify yourself by name when speaking**

### Meeting Agenda

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|       |  |  |
|-------|--|--|
|       | 1. Call to Order   |  |
|       | a. Recognition of Alternates   |  |
|       | b. Public Comments   |  |
|       | o General Public   |  |
|       | o Legislators or Legislative Staff   |  |
|       | o Presentation ( <i>Tentative</i> ) -Nick McGrath, Community Disaster Recovery Coordinator-<br>Trees Forever |  |
| 1-2   | c. Approve Agenda  |  |
|       | 2. Approve Minutes   |  |
| 3     | a. Minutes of January 27, 2021 Personnel Committee Meeting   |  |
| 4-6   | b. Minutes of January 28, 2021 Board Meeting   |  |
|       | 3. Financial Report  |  |
| 7     | a. Receive and File January Financial Statements for Audit   |  |
| 8-17  | b. Approve Expenditures for February   |  |
|       | 4. Action Items  |  |
| 18    | a. Approve RLF Funding for Aura Event Center   |  |
| 19    | b. Approve RLF Funding for Melting Bite LLC-amended  |  |
| 20    | c. Approve RLF Funding for Bowers Chiropractic PLLC  |  |
| 21    | d. Consider Executive Director Salary Increase   |  |
|       | 5. Reports   |  |
| 22    | a. Director’s Report   |  |
| 23-24 | b. Economic and Strategic Services Report  |  |
| 25-29 |  |  |

30-34 c. Community Development and Housing Report  
35-37 d. Transportation and Transit Report  
38-40 e. Environmental Services Report

41 6. Discussions/Presentations  
a. Standing Committee Assignments  
42-48 b. Annual Report  
c. Board Member Updates

7. Adjourn – Next Meeting: March 25, 2021

A new board member orientation will be held on February 25, 2021 at 3 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95913173762>

Meeting ID: 959 1317 3762

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**MINUTES**

East Central Iowa Council of Governments  
Board Meeting Video/Conference Call 1:30 p.m., February 25, 2021  
700 16<sup>th</sup> Street NE, Suite 301, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

*Dave Fish-City of Belle Plaine*  
*Kathleen Van Steenhuyse-Benton County Citizen*  
*Kevin Heitshusen-Iowa County Supervisor*  
*Tony Hocamp-Iowa County Citizen*  
*Vicki Pope-Iowa County Supervisor*  
*Louise From-Mayor of University Heights*  
*Rod Sullivan-Johnson County Supervisor*  
*Lauren Whitehead-City of Solon Mayor ProTem*  
*Donna Brooks-Johnson County Citizen*  
*Derek Lumsden-Jones County Citizen*  
*Rod Smith-City of Anamosa*  
*Jon Zirkelbach-Jones County Supervisor*  
*David Connolly-Linn County Citizen*  
*Darrin Gage-Linn County Policy & Administration*  
*Brent Hinson-City of Washington*  
*Bob Yoder-Washington County Supervisor*  
*Mary Audia-Washington County Citizen*

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

*Tracy Seeman-Benton County Supervisor*  
*Ben Rogers-Linn County Supervisor*  
*Vacancy-Linn County*  
*Vacancy-Linn County*

**ALTERNATES PRESENT**-none

**OTHERS PRESENT**

*Libby Larsen-Senator Ernst's Office*  
*Rochelle Fuller-Senator Grassley's Office*  
*Cami Rasmussen-City of Solon Administrator*  
*Nick McGrath-Trees Forever*

**STAFF PRESENT**

*Karen Kurt-Executive Director*  
*Gina Peters-Executive Assistant*  
*Brittany Rempe- Communications Specialist*  
*Mary Rump-Transportation Director*  
*Nicole Wise-Housing Recovery Specialist*  
*Robyn Jacobson-Contract Manager*  
*Paula Mitchell-Planner/Grant Specialist*  
*Jennifer Fencl-Environmental Services Director*  
*Brock Grenis-Transit Administrator*  
*Mark Culver-Housing Specialist*  
*John Bruce-Planner*  
*Tom Gruis-Planner*  
*Tracey Achenbach-Community Development & Housing Director*  
*Adam Bentley-Senior Planner/Economic Development Specialist*  
*Harrison Freund-Planning Fellow*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Hinson at 1:32 p.m.

**a. Recognition of Alternates**

Cami Rasmussen attended for Lauren Whitehead until she was able join the meeting

**b. Public Comments**

Nick McGrath, Trees Forever Community Disaster Recovery Coordinator, said he is working on behalf of the IDNR and Trees Forever to help Iowa communities affected by the Derecho with tree recovery. He will forward a survey to be sent to board members to complete for their communities.

**c. Approve Agenda**

M/S/C (Lumsden/Audia) to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes.

**2. APPROVE MINUTES**

**a. Minutes of January 27, 2021 Personnel Committee Meeting**

**b. Minutes of January 28, 2021 Board meeting**

M/S/C (Audia/Yoder) to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2021 Personnel Committee and January 28, 2021 Board Meeting. All ayes.

**3. FINANCIAL REPORT**

**a. Receive and File January Financial Statements for Audit**

Kurt said the operating balance remains steady and should increase next month due to the CARES funding and annual transit administration.

Bentley said there are two EDA CARES Rural Recovery Challenge spots open yet, 3 projects are included on the expense sheet for this month. Contact him for more details.

M/S/C (Heitshusen/Connolly) to receive and file the January financial statements for audit. All ayes.

**b. Approve Expenditures for February**

M/S/C (Lumsden/Pope) to approve the expenditures as presented. All ayes.

**4. ACTION ITEMS**

**a. Approve RLF Funding for Aura Event Center**

Jacobson said the RLF Committee reviewed an application for Aura Event Center to fund FF&E, working capital and landscaping. The committee's recommendation is a \$134,000 loan at 0% for two years, then 2% for the next 3 years with a 1<sup>st</sup> position mortgage lien and personal guaranty for collateral. Discussion followed.

M/S/C (Hocamp/Yoder) to approve the RLF Committee's recommendation to loan Aura Event Center \$134,000 at 0% for two years, then 2% for the next 3 years with a 1<sup>st</sup> position mortgage lien and personal guaranty for collateral. All ayes.

**b. Approve RLF Funding for Melting Bite LLC-amended**

Jacobson said the Board approved a loan last month for Melting Bite LLC. The bank has withdrawn their commitment because we would not give them 1<sup>st</sup> position on our collateral. The additional \$125,000 would allow the project to be fully funded. The committee's recommendation is a \$125,000 loan at 0% for two years, then 2% for the next 3 years with a UCC Lien and personal guarantees for both Sneh and Sachin Chopra for collateral. Discussion followed.

M/S/C (VanSteenhuysse/Hocamp) to approve the RLF Committee's recommendation to loan Melting Bite LLC \$125,000 at 0% for two years, then 2% for the next 3 years with a UCC Lien and personal guarantees for both Sneh and Sachin Chopra for collateral. All ayes.

**c. Approve RLF Funding for Bowers Chiropractic PLLC**

Jacobson said the RLF Committee reviewed an application for Bowers Chiropractic PLLC for equipment. The committee's recommendation is a \$39,593.70 loan at 0% for two years, then 2% for the next 3 years – purchase money liens for both pieces of equipment and a personal guaranty for collateral. Gage asked if there was a written policy regarding buying products locally. Jacobson said there was not but that could be revisited next year when the administrative plan will be updated.

M/S/C (Gage/Heitshusen) to approve the RLF Committee's recommendation to loan Bowers Chiropractic PLLC \$39,593.70 at 0% for two years, then 2% for the next 3 years - purchase money liens for both pieces of equipment and a personal guaranty for collateral. All ayes.

**d. Consider Executive Director Salary Increase**

Kurt said the Personnel Committee met on January 27 and conducted an executive director performance review. The committee recommends a 4% salary increase (2% base and 2% merit increase) effective July 1, 2021.

M/S/C (VanSteenhuysse/Fish) to approve the 4% salary increase for the Executive Director effective July 1, 2021. All ayes.

**5. REPORTS**

**a. Director's Report**

**b. Economic and Strategic Services Report**

Kurt said she has had conversations with EDA regarding the de-federalization of the original RLF funds and the \$3 billion proposed Biden package. She noted the \$3 billion would most likely not fund the RLF but would be able to be used for traditional EDA grants such as economic development and infrastructure. She noted staff is working on a series of webinars and Bentley and Jacobson have been working on the first one to promote the RLF program. The webinar will be presented on March 24 at 1 p.m. – watch for more information to be sent out.

**c. Community Development and Housing Report**

Achenbach gave an update on current projects and noted three Homes for Iowa projects are scheduled for our region.

**d. Transportation and Transit Report**

Rump gave an update on COVID-19 relief funding. She noted about \$122 million funds will come to Iowa and noted every city and county should receive funds. She will forward the memo from the IDOT after the meeting outlining the proposed funding allocation estimates for cities and counties.

**e. Environmental Services Report**

Fencl reported Alicia Presto had a baby boy at the end of January and will be on leave until the end of April. She said Women Caring for the Land will hold a virtual event on March 3.

**6. DISCUSSION/PRESENTATIONS**

**a. Standing Committee Assignments**

Hinson will present the committees at the March meeting.

**b. Annual Report**

Kurt thanked staff for their work on the annual report – she said it would be printed this year and distributed to the region.

**c. Board Member Updates**

Donna Brooks, Johnson County Citizen, introduced herself to the Board.

**7. NEXT MEETING: March 25, 2021**

M/S/C (Heitshusen/Audia) to adjourn the meeting at 2:20 p.m. All ayes.

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Dave Fish, Secretary