



Board Meeting Agenda
Zoom Meeting
 1:30 pm March 25, 2021
 700 16th 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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1-2	1. Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recognition of Alternates b. Public Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o General Public o Legislators or Legislative Staff c. Approve Agenda
3-4	2. Public Hearing: Consolidated Transit Application <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Resolution for the FY 22 Consolidated Transit Application
5-7	3. Approve Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Minutes of February 25, 2021 Board Meeting
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Minutes of March 16, 2021 Personnel Committee Meeting
9-20	4. Financial Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Receive and File February Financial Statements for Audit b. Approve Expenditures for March
21-22	5. Action Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Approve Employee Handbook
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Consider Expenditure from the Regional Transit Account
24-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Amend Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Administrative Plan for CARES RLF Program
26-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Amend Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Administrative Plan for Legacy RLF Program e. Approve RLF Funding for Schnoebelen Inc (tentative)

28	6. Reports
29-30	a. Director's Report
31-35	b. Economic and Strategic Services Report
36-40	c. Community Development and Housing Report
41-43	d. Transportation and Transit Report
44-46	e. Environmental Services Report

47	7. Discussions/Presentations
	a. Presentation: Revolving Loan Fund Marketing
48-53	b. Regional Vision Strategy (CEDs)
54	c. Committee Assignments
	d. Board Member Updates

8. Adjourn – Next Meeting: April 29, 2021

MINUTES

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

MEMBERS PRESENT

- Dave Fish-City of Belle Plaine*
- Kathleen Van Steenhuyse-Benton County Citizen*
- Tracy Seeman-Benton County Supervisor*
- Kevin Heitshusen-Iowa County Supervisor*
- Vicki Pope-Iowa County Supervisor*
- Louise From-Mayor of University Heights*
- Rod Sullivan-Johnson County Supervisor*
- Donna Brooks-Johnson County Citizen*
- Derek Lumsden-Jones County Citizen*
- Jon Zirkelbach-Jones County Supervisor*
- David Connolly-Linn County Citizen*
- Adam Griggs-Mayor of Central City*
- Bethany Sarazin-Mayor of Alburnett*
- Darrin Gage-Linn County Policy & Administration*
- Brent Hinson-City of Washington*
- Bob Yoder-Washington County Supervisor*
- Mary Audia-Washington County Citizen*

MEMBERS ABSENT

- Rod Smith-City of Anamosa*
- Lauren Whitehead-City of Solon Mayor ProTem*
- Tony Hocamp-Iowa County Citizen*
- Ben Rogers-Linn County Supervisor*

ALTERNATES PRESENT-none

OTHERS PRESENT

- Libby Larsen-Senator Ernst’s Office*
- Rochelle Fuller-Senator Grassley’s Office*

STAFF PRESENT

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Hinson at 1:30 p.m.

- a. Recognition of Alternates** - none
- b. Public Comments**

Adam Griggs and Bethany Sarazin introduced themselves, they both are newly appointed Linn County representatives. Fuller gave an update on Senator Grassley’s schedule and encouraged board members to contact her if she could be of assistance.

- c. Approve Agenda**

M/S/C (Yoder/Pope) to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes.

2. PUBLIC HEARING: CONSOLIDATED TRANSIT APPLICATION

Hinson opened the public hearing at 1:34 p.m. Grenis stated the purpose of this hearing is to solicit citizen input regarding the FY 2022 Consolidated Transit Application. This application to the Iowa Department of Transportation is for financial assistance for FY 2022 transit operating and capital needs. ECICOG will request federal and state transit assistance amounting to approximately \$1,975,601 and \$562,357 respectively for the support of day-to-day operations for Corridor Rides Transit, which consists of the following public transit providers: Benton County Transportation, Iowa County Transportation, Johnson County SEATS, Jones County JETS, Linn County LIFTS, Washington County Mini Bus, 380Express and CorridorRides vanpool. ECICOG will also request federal transit assistance to support planned capital equipment. The total estimated cost of these capital purchases is \$1,740,610. If approved, federal funds will be matched with local financing on an 85% federal - 15% local basis. These projects will not have significant detrimental environmental effects on the area and no persons or businesses will be displaced by these activities. The transit projects are in conformance with the Region 10 FY 2022-2025 TIP. No comments were received.

M/S/C (Sullivan/Van Steenhuyse) to close the public hearing at 1:35 p.m. All ayes.

a. Resolution for the FY22 Consolidated Transit Application

An authorizing resolution was included in the packet.

M/S/C (Sullivan/Gage) to approve the Consolidated Transit Application by authorizing the Chair to sign the resolution designating Brock Grenis as the authorized signatory for CorridorRides for FY 2022. All ayes.

3. APPROVE MINUTES

a. Minutes of February 25, 2021 Board Meeting

M/S/C (Lumsden/Yoder) to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2021 Board Meeting as presented. All ayes.

b. Minutes of March 16, 2021 Personnel Committee Meeting

M/S/C (Audia/Van Steenhuyse) to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2021 Personnel Committee Meeting as presented. All ayes.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT

a. Receive and File February Financial Statements for Audit

Kurt gave an overview of the cash receipts for February. She said the payables list includes payments listed at the bottom of the page for the Iowa City Business Assistance Program and noted payment is expected tomorrow.

M/S/C (Griggs/Fish) to receive and file the February financial statements for audit. All ayes.

b. Approve Expenditures for March

M/S/C (Yoder/Gage) to approve the expenditures as presented. All ayes.

5. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approve Employee Handbook

Kurt noted one her goals was to update the employee handbook and she has been working on it since last fall. The handbook was developed by the leadership team using the prior handbook as a guide and it was reviewed by an employment law attorney. Staff was also given an opportunity to review the changes and provide comment. She then met with the Personnel Committee and they recommend approval of the handbook with the addition of a reference to the long-term illness account donation policy. Kurt outlined changes to the plan and discussion followed. Gage asked if all employees are exempt? Kurt stated all were considered exempt when she started at ECICOG. Kurt noted Lumsden noted in the harassment section it was not clear who to go to if the Executive Director is the harasser. Kurt will add language stating if the harasser is the Executive Director, staff is to contact the ECICOG Board Chair.

M/S/C (Sullivan/Connolly) to approve the handbook with the addition of language stating if the harasser is the Executive Director, staff is to contact the ECICOG Board Chair. All ayes.

b. Consider Expenditure from the Regional Transit Account

Grenis noted the regional transit account was created to ensure that proceeds from the sale of transit vehicles would remain available for transit use. Expending these funds requires a recommendation from the Transit Operators Group (TOG) and approval from the Board. Grenis said the TOG recommends using up to \$230,600 in the regional transit account to cover the local match required for new vehicle purchases for 18 vehicle replacements. Discussion followed.

M/S/C (Seeman/Gage) to allow for up to \$230,600 in regional transit funds to be used as local match for 18 vehicle replacements. All ayes.

c. Amend Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Administrative Plan for CARES RLF Program

Jacobson gave an overview of the RLF plans and an overview of the proposed changes to the CARES RLF Plan. She noted the RLF committee recommends these changes and approval of the plan. Lumsden asked why under the Allowable Lending Activities the purchase of property was not allowed. Jacobson noted property purchase requires environmental reviews to be done and those take a considerable amount of time. Discussion followed about adding a statement that requires an environmental review to be completed in advance of the application. M/S/C (Lumsden/Audia) to approve the amendment of the CARES RLF Administrative Plan and to also include purchase of property would only be considered when required environmental review has been completed in advance of the application. All ayes.

d. Amend Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Administrative Plan for the Legacy RLF Program

Jacobson reviewed the changes to the plan and Hinson said the purchase of property amendment added to the CARES RLF Program should be added to this plan as well.

M/S/C (Gage/Sullivan) to approve the amendment of the Legacy RLF Administrative Plan to also include purchase of property would only be considered when required environmental review has been completed in advance of the application. All ayes.

e. Approve RLF Funding for Schnoebelen

Jacobson said the RLF Committee reviewed an application for Schnoebelen to fund equipment and working capital. The committee's recommendation is a \$107,500 loan at 0% for two years, then 2% for the 5 years with a UCC lien and personal guaranty for collateral. Discussion followed.

M/S/C (Audia/Seeman) to approve the RLF Committee's recommendation to loan Schnoebelen \$107,500 at 0% for two years, then 2% for the next 5 years with a UCC lien and personal guaranty for collateral. All ayes.

6. REPORTS

a. Director's Report

Kurt put out a request for legislative advocacy from board members and asked that they contact her directly. She noted she would be out April 1-11 and Rump will serve as the acting director during this time.

b. Economic and Strategic Services Report

Kurt said Bentley and Jacobson held the first ECICOG webinar yesterday on the RLF programs and had about 20 participants.

c. Community Development and Housing Report

Achenbach gave an update on current projects.

d. Transportation and Transit Report

Rump said she will meet with the Policy Committee in April to review the STBG and TAP applications that were received. She noted the IDOT approved \$5 million for trail projects with no match required but they are looking for \$500,000-\$1.5 million projects, May 15th is the deadline for applications and she will forward more information as she receives it. Hinson led discussion on the American Rescue Plan, Brooks offered to forward information she received from NACo. Discussion also followed on CARES funding.

e. Environmental Services Report

Fencl gave an update on watershed projects and noted Senator Ernst will tour Moss Farm on April 8th to look at the practices in place and the flood center station.

7. DISCUSSION/PRESENTATIONS

a. Presentation: Revolving Loan Fund Marketing

Jacobson noted she has been working with MonkeyThis to develop a website: ecicogrlf.org that allows people to apply for RLF loans online. She noted the RLF webinar will also be available on the website. Discussion followed.

b. Regional Vision Strategy (CEDs)

Kurt gave an overview of the CEDs and noted \$80,000 is budgeted through the CARES Act to update the plan. She said the partners may be willing to contribute if the cost was above the budgeted amount. She asked board members to contact her if they would like to serve a liaison to the Strategy Committee. She noted the ECICOG Board would be the body to approve the CEDs before it is submitted to EDA for approval. Discussion followed.

c. Committee Assignments

Hinson noted the list of committee assignments was included in the packet. Discussion followed on updating the by-laws in the near future.

d. Board Member Updates

Yoder gave an update on the 911 system in Washington County. Seeman gave an update on the Benton County Transportation building in Vinton. Kurt thanked everyone for their patience and said the plan was for staff to be back in the office in June and to hold the June board meeting in person.

8. NEXT MEETING: April 29, 2021

M/S/C (Yoder/Lumsden) to adjourn the meeting at 3:08 p.m. All ayes.

Dave Fish, Secretary