

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS OF EASTERN IOWA SECRETARIAL NOTES

DATE Thursday, May 22, 2025

TIME 11:00 a.m.

PLACE Zoom/Phone/7600 Commerce Park, Dubuque, Iowa

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- ☒ Martha Donnelly Sister, Presentation BVMs
- ☒ Sharon Gaul, EXIT Realty
- ☐ Beth Bonz, City Manager, City of Asbury
- ☒ Connie Behnken, Mayor, City of Manchester
- ☒ Mindy Wiley, ECIA/EIRHA
- ☒ Cori Burbach, Assistant City Manager, City of Dubuque
- ☐ Stephanie Ottavi, Community Volunteer
- ☒ Andy Mozena, Premier Bank
- ☐ Nicole Recker, Mental Health Advocate, Delaware County
Community Services
- ☐ Rick Mihm, Executive Director, Dubuque Rescue Mission
- ☒ Sam Wooden, RSH Legal

STAFF PRESENT:

- ☒ Jennifer Walker, Director of Special Programs
- ☐ Steve Stoffel, Director of Finance and Administration
- ☒ Shelby Eipperle, Homeless Program Coordinator
- ☒ Christine Efferding, Homeless Program Coordinator

1. - CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

Vice Chair Burbach called the CSEI meeting to order at 11:01 a.m. Introductions followed by board members and staff.

The members of the CSEI are holding this session by electronic means pursuant to the provisions of the Iowa Open Meetings Law, Section 21.8, Code of Iowa, and due to the limited agenda for this meeting, relatively short period of time that this meeting is expected to be held, the expense of transporting the board members in person is impractical. The meeting is being held by phone or internet means originating from the ECIA offices in Dubuque. It is open to the public and those in attendance can hear the proceedings. Public notice of the meeting has been issued in accordance with Iowa Code Section 21.4.

2. – REVIEW/APPROVE CSEI MINUTES AND SECRETARIAL NOTES FOR March 20, 2025

Motion by Wooden, second by Mozena to approve the Minutes and Secretarial Notes of the March 20, 2025 CSEI Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. – Review/Approve CSEI Budget and Grants through April 30, 2025

Walker reviewed the CSEI FY 25 Revenues and Expenses report through April 30, 2025. All internal grant expenditure is on or ahead of schedule. ICARE, a pass through to Fountain of Youth, is behind schedule which is consistent from the start of the project. Walker also added that initially, a shortfall of

\$34,216 was projected in the budget, which has now been more than made up and CSEI is projected to end the year \$19,189 ahead without using any reserves. Finally, Walker noted the Carry Over line was present on past budgets has been removed for clarity.

Motion by Behnken, second by Wiley to approve the CSEI Budget and Grants reports through April 30, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

4. – Review and Approve FY26 Budget

Walker presented the projected FY26 Budget to the board beginning with Revenues. Burbach informed the board CSEI's ask of \$35,000 from the City of Dubuque was approved, an increase from \$13,000 in past years. Conversely, Dubuque County has decreased the amount CSEI can apply for and is limited to \$10,000. Walker noted United Way funding will stay consistent, and she expects local gifts from banks, ESG grant funding, and private donations to maintain or increase as well. Walker then discussed the ERA2 grant amendment. All funds from the initial grant were expended, and CSEI was granted additional funds, all of which will be spent by September. Walker indicated she expects the ICARES revenues to be consistent with this past fiscal year. Additionally, Walker discussed TBRA funding that expires in October. This grant has been reapplied for and CSEI will be notified in September of the decision. Finally, Walker informed the board of the HOME ARP SSO grant in the amount of \$237,279 that was awarded to CSEI primarily for operational expenses.

Walker continued with the presentation of the FY26 budget by discussing expenses. Walker expects expenses to stay consistent and is hopeful about grant renewal for some existing programs including TBRA, ESG, and CoC. Additionally, \$83,974 will be utilized from HOME ARP SSO to directly provide assistance to clients.

Burbach noted she has seen a difference in awareness of CSEI services since Walker's leadership began and stated her gratitude for the community outreach and development.

Motion by Mozena, seconded by Wooden to approve the FY26 budget as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Grant Update

Walker asked the board for input on how CSEI can best support board members in community advocacy. Burbach mentioned a list of board members and prior donors would be helpful in guiding conversations at community events. Gaul also indicated a one-page information sheet, or elevator pitch, may be helpful for board members who are newer, like herself. Walker thanked the board for their input and encouraged the sharing of any grant opportunities that board members may become aware of. Walker then discussed future grants that are in the works, such as Spahn and Rose and CoC YHDP.

Mozena inquired about the intention for the HOME ARP SSO money, and what the position funded by those dollars would entail. Walker explained the primary role of the communication staff member hired will be annual reports, newsletters, social media, and coordinating fundraising and speaking opportunities for the organization. Walker intended to share a draft of the job description with the board for their information.

6. – HUD TBRA Gap Funding Option

Walker discussed the possibility of a gap in funding for the TBRA grant and asked the board for conversation about how to navigate a gap should one appear. Burbach stated she would be supportive of CSEI utilizing donor funds to cover one month of rent should a gap occur, which would be roughly \$18,000. Wiley indicated a gap has happened once before for EIRHA, and the gap was a two-month span. Wiley suggested that however CSEI chooses to proceed, to be sure staff are communicating with clients and landlords in enough time to give them opportunity to plan for making rent payments on their own. Wiley also suggested checking in with all clients regarding income changes if that had not already been done. Walker stated a motion will be brought to the board in July as to whether CSEI will cover a gap. Walker was hopeful CSEI will have more specific numbers, and possibly clearer indication regarding grant funding, at that point.

7. – July Point In Time Count – July 30, 2025

Walker noted July PIT count will likely be either July 23 or 30. Board members are encouraged to participate with staff. Donnelly inquired whether local news had ever done a story about PIT count. Eipperle indicated the Telegraph Herald had done a story, but local TV news had not done a story in Dubuque.

8. – United Way of the Dubuque Area Tri-States Over the Edge – September 12, 2025

Walker informed the board that Efferding and Wooden will be participating in Over the Edge to raise money for United Way, who is a CSEI funder. Once more information is received, Walker will organize an event for the board and others interested to cheer on participants.

9. – Other Business

Walker reminded the board that she aims for the July meeting to be in person, at which time they will review the strategic plan.

10. – ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Wooden, second by Wiley to adjourn the CSEI meeting at 11:55 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Walker
Director of Special Programs, ECIA