

Minutes of the Board of Directors Full Board Meeting  
Tuesday, October 15 2024, at 12:30 p.m.  
2 East Main Street  
Shawnee, OK

Members Present (\*at Roll Call)

Cleveland  
Vacant  
Lisa Schmidt\*

Logan  
Steve Gentling  
~~Sue DuCharme~~

Pottawatomie  
Tiffany Barrett\*  
Keli Pueblo

Lincoln  
Lee Doolen\*  
Vacant

Payne  
~~Chris Reding\*~~  
John Chaffin\*

Seminole  
~~Tim Porter\*~~  
~~Dennis Phillips~~

Staff Present:

Tracy Izell, Susan Nedrow, Cory Swearingen, Tina Lowery, and Carol Samuels

1. **Call to Order** at 12:30 p.m. by Commissioner Lee Doolen.
2. **The Roll was called**, and six members were present; therefore, quorum was met and the board was able to proceed with the meeting.
3. **Public Expressions** - The public may comment only on any item appearing on this agenda, subject to the following restrictions: statements to the COCAA board members are limited to no more than three (3) minutes for each speaker and, collectively, no more than 30 minutes are allowed for public expressions.
4. **COTS Training** presented by Tracy Izell due to Tina Lowery, COTS Director, having laryngitis. Ms. Lowery provided a written report that detailed the current status of the COTS program.
  - COTS is a demand response transportation system, which means a 24-48 notice to schedule rides is required. COTS provides transportation for medical appointments, employment, school, nutrition/food, shopping, and recreation. We are open to the public.

- Fleet of 10 vehicles – two 10 passenger busses and eight mini vans.
- Current hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 6 am to 7 pm, and Saturdays from 8 am to 5 pm.
- Rides include:
  - ModivCare (medical rides) – which serves Oklahoma, Cleveland, Pottawatomie, Seminole, and parts of Pontotoc counties and transports to medical facilities within the above counties.
  - Public rides in the local Shawnee area for \$4.00 one way.
  - Expanded medical rides to a limited area in Oklahoma, Seminole, Pottawatomie, and Cleveland Counties for those that do not qualify for Sooner Rides. Fees vary based on area of transport and mileage.

- Funding includes:
  - Federal Grants ( 5311, 5310, 5339a and 5339b)
  - State revolving fund grant
  - City of Shawnee contract
  - Fare box revenue
  - ModivCare Rides
  - SafeRide

- Revenue Statistics

Fare box revenue:

January – December 2023 - \$25,084.91

January – May 2024 0 \$7679.89

- COTS Revenue Miles for 2023/2024

2023 – 166.369.2

January – August 2204 – 116658.7

- The Future of COTS
  - Work to purchase more vehicles for replacement and expansion.
  - Work on extending the hours of operations to Monday – Friday from 6:30 am to 10 pm, and Saturdays 7 am to 7:00 pm, and to also include more drivers on Saturdays and expand the route from Shawnee only (Saturday current) to all of Pottawatomie County.
  
- Growing Pains
  - Need a secure location to house transportation vehicles.
  - The need for more drivers, either part-time or full-time to cover when staff take time off work, and if we can expand hours of operation; the longevity of many COTS drivers and office staff has many of the with large amounts of leave time. Good to maintain drivers but need for people to cover when they are off.

## Training

All drivers receive extensive training from the day they start to being recertified annually. The training starts with computer generated training through RTAP. The training consists of:

- ADA and Sensitivity
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Customer Service
- Defensive Driving
- Distracted Driving
- Drug and Alcohol Training

Drivers must receive annual training on the misuse of drugs and alcohol and the effects of drugs and or alcohol. Testing requirements per our policy and FTA.

COTS is a NO SECOND CeIHANCE PER POLICY. NO TOLERANCE.

Keli commented that she was pleased at how detailed the COTS report is.

John Chaffin asked if this is available in Payne County. Cory stated that OSU Transit and First Capital Trolley covers Payne County. We have been in conversations to try to link up with FCT to connect with Lincoln County. The Oklahoma Transportation Department started a Mobility Management program to help connect those transit agencies and clients to those agencies for connecting points. This is being implemented throughout the state and just recently in this area to connect and Payne County is included in this region. So there are connecting components that are trying to connect people to these programs.

5. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the Minutes of June 18 COCAA Board meeting.

MOTION: Lee Doolen made a motion to approve the Minutes of the June 18, 2024 Board meeting. Seconded by Keli Pueblo.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett-Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt-Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

6. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove of the resignation of Tim Porter, Seminole County Board Member.

MOTION: Lisa Schmidt made the motion to approve the resignation of Tim Porter, Seminole County Board Member. Seconded by Tiffany Barrett.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett-Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt-Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

7. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove replacing Tim Porter with Gary Choate, Seminole County Board Member.

MOTION: Keli Pueblo made the motion to approve replacing Tim Porter with Gary Choate, Seminole County Board Member. The motion was seconded by Steve Gentling.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett-Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt-Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

8. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the election of Spence McConnell to the Low Income slot for Lincoln County.

Due to the sudden withdrawal of consideration to serve as a Lincoln County Board member of Spence McConnell no action was taken on this motion.

9. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the re-election of John Chaffin to the Low-Income Slot for Payne County.

MOTION: Tiffany Barrett made the motion to approve the re-election of John Chaffin to the Low-Income slot for Payne County. The motion was seconded by Lisa Schmidt.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett-Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt-Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

10. Motion, Discussion to vote to approve or disapprove the Fiscal Policies Retention Schedule.

Tracy reminded the board that in February of this year the board approved the Fiscal Policies but the State changed the retention policy from three to seven years. We had to reflect that in our policies. The following blurb was added to the COCAA retention policy that basically states that COCAA follows whatever retention schedule of the grant that we are using. The verbiage was approved by Sarah.

MOTION: Steve Gentling made the motion to approve or disapprove the Fiscal Policies Retention Schedule. Seconded by Keli Pueblo.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett-Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt-Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

11. Motion, Discussion to vote to approve or disapprove of any acceptance for the HUD Wewoka Sr. Project.

Tracy informed the board that there has not been any updates on this project since the application was submitted in July. However, in the event the process starts moving we would need board approval to progress to the next stage. Lee asked if there was a time

crunch at this time. If not, he proposed allowing the Executive Committee to call a special board meeting if board approval is needed to move the project forward.

MOTION: Lee made motion to allow the Executive Committee to make the decision if a Full Board meeting isn't scheduled for that time. Seconded by Steve Gentling.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett-Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt-Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**12. Motion, Discussion to vote to approve or disapprove of 2025 COCAA Holiday Schedule.**

MOTION: Tiffany Barrett made a motion to approve the proposed 2025 COCAA Holiday Schedule. Seconded by Keli Pueblo.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett-Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt-Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**13. Motion, Discussion to vote to approve or disapprove of 2025 COCAA Board Schedule.**

Tracy asked the board if the third Tuesday of the month works for board members. There was no change made to the schedule.

MOTION: Lisa Schmidt made the motion to approve the 2025 COCAA Board Schedule. Seconded by Steve Gentling.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett-Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt-Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**14. Executive Director's Report Tracy Izell**

- At our State Conference in September, Beth Perry won the Volunteer of the Year Award for our state Association and Thixe Totty, our Senior Services Manager, won the Guy Davis Leadership Award. This is the second year in a row that someone from COCAA has won the Guy Davis Leadership Award. In addition, much of our staff attended the conference which is always a productive training and good networking experience.

- As you know, Beth, Donna and myself traveled to Seattle at the end of August for Beth to receive the National Volunteer of the Year Award. She was quite the celebrity in (Thix was scheduled to go, however, her husband has been in poor health and had to cancel at the last minute. Donna took her place to help with Beth).
- There were 11 of our staff that attended State Association Summer Camp in July. This is a camp that is hosted more for networking and mental health. Everyone always enjoys going. This is the second year we have gone and it is free of charge.
- Tina, April and myself traveled to Montana to attend 2 trainings: Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance; and Reasonable Suspicion and Post Accident Testing Determination. This was an excellent training furthering my knowledge of all the COTS department has to keep up with.
- We have started Shoes that FIT program back up again and I have been reaching out to schools to touch base and see if they would like to participate in this program.
- Cory and Rayneta attended the Oklahoma Housing Conference at the end of September.
- Everyone received a COLA raise of 4% across the board. I also attended a zoom meeting regarding Community Action's pay rates and was pleasantly surprised that we are on par or above with other CA's around the state.
- Carol Samuels has enrolled in an online Case Management Certification Program. This is a national program through North Carolina Community Action in partnership with Southern University.
- August 6th and 7th, we traveled to Lincoln county and Payne county for Board elections.
- August 22nd in Perkins, we were introduced to the Iowa Tribe Victims Service Unit resources available for Domestic Violence and Assault Victims. Cory, Carol, Kathy, Mandi and myself attended.
- October 3rd, we are having the first meeting of Grandparents Raising Grandkids. This is what I hope will start a new Program for COCAA, as this is a massive need in Pott county as well as Seminole County.

- We partnered with Legacy Parenting in Shawnee for another Diaper Grant that will provide transportation to those families needing transport in the Seminole/Pott County Areas.
- I have been feverishly working on an RSVP Grant thru e-grants for funding assistance with VITA, Shoes that FIT, Meals on Wheels and transportation assistance. It is a 3-year grant for \$71,754 total. We have been informed that it will go on to the second phase of review.
- OKACAA and COCAA were awarded the Diaper Distribution Grant with a total two year value of \$229,500.
- For the second year in a row, COCAA received the VITA grant. We will have another year of VITA in the Shawnee office and hope to branch to Seminole this next year.
- Sr. Services were awarded a surprise \$10,000 grant for Shoes that Fit.
- We finished our CSBG Monitoring. Sarah said we had made great improvements. There are some corrective actions, but all “low-hanging fruit.”
- OGE has awarded COCAA another grant for this year. We should receive the check in November.

**15. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove Executive Director’s Report.**

MOTION: John Chaffin made the motion to approve or disapprove Executive Director’s Report. The motion was seconded by Steve Gentling.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett-Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt-Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**16. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove Finance Report.**

Susan Nedrow presented the Finance Report.



The monitoring went well and currently in the audit process. We need to submit items and questions still need to be answered. We will be working as a group to gather all of the information needed to complete the audit. We hope to have a report for you by the December board meeting but hopefully by the November committee meeting.

ODOC monitoring was a learning experience but it was all good things I need to know. It will change some of the reports I prepare for the board. Anytime we have a budget revision on any of our grants, according to our organizational standards, we must bring the revisions to the board for approval. Historically, to my understanding, we haven't brought budget revisions to the board, on a regular basis but that it something you will see going forward so that the financial statements the board approves are true and correct.

In our COTS program, we do Fee for Service rides, with vendors, ModiCare and SafeRide, and do have write-offs related to those contracts that they indicated they wanted those reported to the board. This is not significant but there is a portion every month that for some reason the person did not have the coverage that are disallowed. These are the only write-offs that I have seen since I have been here.

We will be doing some adjusting entries to come in line with everything on the monitoring to be able to close out.

A finance report was prepared as in previous months. The actual numbers in these reports are true and correct as stated. There are some places that I stated that we have not approved revenue with our monthly invoices. What is not accurate at this time is the budget numbers. Again, I will answer any questions you may have about the actual numbers which we are confident in with those disclosures but we will not be able to approve that because I have not gotten the budget entries in. We will be looking to propose to bring a new budget to the board for the rest of this fiscal year. We have grants coming in anytime throughout the year which means unless we can plan on these grants we do need to make budget revisions.

The latest financial statements are preliminary due to the budget issues related to that, I will be glad to make any clarifications for questions you may have.

**MOTION:** Lisa Schmidt made the motion to approve the Finance Report. The motion was seconded by John Chaffin.

**Vote:** Doolen–Yes; Barrett–Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt–Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

Client Services Report

This report included in your packet goes through August.

Monitorings

OHFA and ESG monitorings which were closed as of the September meeting.

We are getting ready for the CSBG and state appropriated funds monitoring.

Lisa asked about Community Cares grant. Cory explained that the Central Electric Cooperative has a Community Cares foundation which we were awarded \$2000 last year and reapplying this year; Oklahoma Community Cares is a foundation through the credit union in Stillwater, and awards under \$2000 to communities statewide but we will focus on Logan, Payne and Lincoln counties.

MOTION: John Chaffin made a motion to approve the Program Report. Seconded by Steve Gentling.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett–Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt–Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

18. New Business---any matter not known about or which could not have been reasonably foreseen prior to the time of the agenda posting. 25 Okla. Stat. §311 (A) (9).

No new business.

19. Motion to Adjourn ---

MOTION: After all business had been discussed, Keli made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Tiffany.

Vote: Doolen–Yes; Barrett–Yes; Pueblo–Yes; Chaffin–Yes; Gentling– Yes; Schmidt–Yes

The motion was passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm.



Signature

12-10-24: 2:00 pm  
Date & Time