

Minutes of the COCAA Full Board Meeting  
Tuesday, July 15, 2025, 11:30 a.m.  
2 East Main Street  
Shawnee, OK

Members Present (\*at Roll Call)

Cleveland  
Beverly Felton\*  
Lisa Schmidt\*

Logan  
Mayor Adam Ropp\*  
Sue DuCharme

Pottawatomie  
Tiffany Barrett\*  
Keli Pueblo\*

Lincoln  
Lee Doolen\*  
Vacant

Payne  
Chris Reding\*  
John Chaffin\*

Seminole  
Gary Choate\*  
Dennis Phillips

Staff Present: Tracy Izell, Susan Nedrow, Cory Swearingen, Carol Samuels

1. The meeting was called to order at 11:33 am by Chris Reding.
2. The roll was called. Six members were present; therefore, a quorum was established.
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. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the Minutes of the Meeting from the April 15, 2025 Full Board Meeting.

**MOTION:**

**A Motion was made by Lee Doolen to approve the Minutes of the April 15, 2025 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Gary Choate.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate -Yes; Schmidt-Yes;  
Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

5. **Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove Adam Ropp and Beverly Felton as part of the COCAA board representing Cleveland and Logan counties.**

**MOTION: A motion was made by John Chaffin to approve Mayor Adam Ropp and Beverly Felton as part of the COCAA board representing Cleveland (Felton) and Logan (Ropp) counties. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Doolen.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate -Yes; Schmidt-Yes; Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

6. **Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve Lee Doolen and Tiffany Barrett to remain on the COCAA Board.**

**MOTION: A motion was made by Gary Choate to approve Lee Doolen and Tiffany Barrett to remain on the COCAA Board. The motion was seconded by Keli Pueblo.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate -Yes; Schmidt-Yes; Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

7. **Motion, Discussion and to vote on Board Officers.**

All board officers are required to be voted on annually typically in April to satisfy our organizational standards. The nominations were taken for COCAA Board officers.

- **Chairman – Lee Doolen nominated Chris Reding for Chairman for another term which was accepted by the nominee. The nomination was seconded by Gary Choate. There were no other nominations.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate -Yes; Schmidt-Yes; Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- **Vice Chair – Gary Choate nominated Lee Doolen as Vice-Chair which was accepted by the nominee. The nomination was seconded by Lisa Schmidt. There were no other nominations.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate –Yes; Schmidt-Yes;  
Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- **Secretary – Lee Doolen nominated Keli Pueblo for Secretary, and the nominee accepted. The nomination was seconded by Lisa Schmidt. There were no other nominations.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate –Yes; Schmidt-Yes;  
Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- **Treasurer – Lee Doolen nominated Tiffany Barrett for Treasurer, which she accepted from an earlier conversation. Lisa seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate –Yes; Schmidt-Yes;  
Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- **Member-at-Large – Lee Doolen nominated Gary Choate for Member-at-Large which he accepted. The nomination was seconded by Lisa Schmidt.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate –Yes; Schmidt-Yes;  
Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

AGENDA CHANGE: A Request was made by Chris Reding to change the order of the agenda to insert **Item #10** at this time.

**10. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the possible purchase of land in Stillwater, Payne County for a COCAA office.**

Chris has been able to find a lot in Stillwater for the Payne County COCAA office. This lot located at 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Perkins Road has utilities in the front and a curb cut-out making it an ideal spot to set up a small building. The assessed value is \$55,000 and the owner is ready to sell for \$40,000.

Discussion: Lisa Schmidt asked what businesses were nearby. Chris responded with a rundown of local businesses, Aaron Rents, across the street is On Cue gas station, next to that is a string of eight apartments, a car repair shop. Organizations such as Mission of Hope and Habitat Restore are within a few blocks of the vicinity.

He suggested that the proceeds from a COCAA property sold a while back combined with the remaining \$30,000 from the ARPA funds could be used to purchase a small building for office space.

Chris requested a motion to use a portion of the \$70,000 ARPA funds donated by Payne County to purchase the lot for \$40,000.

**MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Doolen to purchase the land in Stillwater, Payne County for a COCAA office. The motion was seconded by Lisa Schmidt.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate -Yes; Schmidt-Yes; Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**8. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the Program Report.**

Cory went over the items discussed at the May Program Committee meeting.

**New funding proposals:**

1. COEDD Older Americans Act 2025 – COCAA is applying for \$21,000 to assist older Americans with transportation services in Seminole, Pottawatomie, Lincoln, and Payne Counties.

2. State Appropriated Funds for Community Action Agencies – COCAA will apply if available. These funds assist with Executive Director’s salary and fringe to assist the agency staff with building community relationships.
3. Rx for OK – COCAA will apply if available. These funds help provide prescription assistance in all six counties of our service area.
4. Christian Missionary Alliance Church – COCAA is working with Christian Missionary Alliance Church to assist COCAA clients with rent and car repairs. The funding is \$22,000 in which the church will maintain, and our Payne County staff will coordinate with the church to assist the clients.

**Previous funding proposal updates:**

ODOT 5339a grant – COCAA received \$276,675 to assist the COTS transportation program in the purchase of one bus and two mini vans for replacement and expansion purposes.

Ms. Swearingen presented the 2025 COCAA programs and client services report during the May meeting.

**Upcoming monitorings** for the CSBG and State Appropriated Funds will be in August.

**MOTION: A Motion was made by John Chaffin to approve the Program Report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Choate.**

**Vote: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate -Yes; Schmidt-Yes; Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

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

The Finance Report was presented by Susan Nedrow.

The May Financial statements were provided previously, and there are no other additional items on the Finance Report other than what needs to be approved. She directed the board to review the Statement of Financial Position which shows the cash balance. At the end of May \$190,000. Now that we have gone through the first couple of months which has the higher expenses, this balance should be

consistent for the next few months. The ARPA funds, \$70,000, is reflected in the savings account, will be used for the purchase of the property.

In a recent committee meeting, Lee had brought up unrestricted cash balance. Overall, the unrestricted cash balance runs about \$150,000, however, most all of our programs are reimbursement-based contracts. We have very few we get money up front for. Those accounts receivable run about \$150,000 a month, depending on what programs we have. We rely on the unrestricted dollars to carry us forward each month in order to satisfy our obligations.

Lee asked if we had usable unrestricted funds for other purposes, such as fundraising. Susan answered that we have very little at this time.

Lee mentioned the Harvest of Hope fundraiser gave us a little momentum but that was the last effort. Tracy commented that the ROI (about \$6000) was not worth the time and effort.

Keli stated that we need more awareness in the communities we serve. Lee reminded the board how we tried to be more visible by community participation. Tracy asked Keli to sit down with her to come up with ideas to address COCAA awareness and public image.

Lee began the discussion of raffling off a house as a fundraiser. He has a builder who is willing to finance, we just need to figure out the legalities of it. Tracy explained that the house or property must be owned by the non-profit.

Cory shared that City of Shawnee has been donating lots to non-profits for community initiatives such as Affordable Housing projects. Cory will look further into this opportunity.

**MOTION: A motion was made by Keli to accept the Finance Report. The motion was seconded by John Chaffin.**

**VOTE: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate -Yes; Schmidt-Yes; Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**11. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the Executive Director Report.**

- Tracy updated the board on the future state of Community Action programs. The ED's within the state in addition to the director of the State Association continue to meet and strategize how to engage with legislators to talk about the CSBG proposed funding cuts. Although, CSBG is always on the chopping block, the possibility is likely that we will see reduced funding and do not anticipate any programs to be cut. One strategy is to invite legislators to do ride-along's with our transportation and Meals on Wheels programs so they can see firsthand what we do and who budget cuts will affect.
- The ESG contract was finally signed by the Mayor of Seminole. For a couple of months, we made several attempts to get the Shawnee Mayor signature, but he was not very responsive to us. We expressed our disappointment with the City Commissioners who we were able to forge a positive connection. Thankfully, Steve Saxon, Seminole City Manager, was able to facilitate the signature process. Cory was able to have a conversation with the Shawnee mayor, and he asked about the services we provided. She was able to go over the specifics of the grant and by the questions he asked she got the impression that he thought the grant would bring in more homeless people and outsiders into Shawnee.
- Tracy informed the board that the Wewoka property has flooded again from the recent rains. She has been on the phone with insurance, adjusters and getting estimates. Our deductible is \$10,000 and the adjuster estimated \$3900 to repair the damage inside the unit. Since this is about the third or fourth time to repair damages to the units caused by flooding, it is time to look beyond that and make some changes outside of the units, such as adding guttering, building a French drain or recalibrating the property landing by fixing it to keep from causing damage to the duplexes. Cory got quotes for guttering and a French drain, and Tracy got a quote of \$4400 to see how the property could be worked to keep the water away from the duplexes. The contractor did not include a French drain because of the maintenance involved but did provide an alternative that would work just as well. Commissioner Choate added that there are many issues with flooding in Wewoka. He is willing to meet Tracy to look at the property.

**MOTION: A motion was made by John Chaffin to accept the Executive Director Report. The motion was seconded by Keli Pueblo.**

**VOTE: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate -Yes; Schmidt-Yes;  
Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- 12. 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).

Keli asked who maintained the website and suggested that we should update and make some improvements. Keli felt this is crucial to our fundraising efforts. She volunteered her son who lives in Tecumseh, who would be able to redesign and train staff to maintain the website.

Commissioner Doolen asked the board and staff to be on the lookout for grants or funding for the Child Advocacy center in the District 23 (DA District) which covers Lincoln and Pottawatomie Counties. The center is a safe place for children to give forensic interviews and allows the interviewer to go on the stand for the child. This is extremely important and needed in our area.

- 13. Motion to Adjourn**

**MOTION: After all business had been discussed, Lisa Schmidt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Choate.**

**VOTE: Reding-Yes; Doolen-Yes; Chaffin-Yes; Choate -Yes; Schmidt-Yes;  
Pueblo-Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:33 pm.**

Signature



Date & Time

8-19-25; 1:15pm