

Advocacy & Operations Committee Meeting

6:00 PM – Thursday, February 26, 2026

JP Coughlin Center – Room B

625 E County Rd Y | Oshkosh, WI 54901

Present:

Connie Anderson, Danielle Viau, Gary Will, Michael Will, Raina Lyman, Tonya Hitz

Absent/Excused:

Deb Neet, Seth Therrian

Staff:

Tanya Marcoe, Tony Beregszazi, CJ Bruden, April Mullins-Datko, Kathy Doyle, Deb Shepro, Lisa Severson, Joe Lougher, Becky Heldt

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Chair Gary Will. A quorum of 6/7 was present.

Review and Approval of Agenda:

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Michael Will, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Review and Approval Minutes of December 18, 2025, Committee Meeting:

A motion was made by Tonya Hitz, with a second by Raina Lyman, to approve the meeting minutes for December 18, 2025, committee meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Review and Approval of Applications for Funds for Existing Programs and Service:

a) Homeless Prevention: State of Wisconsin – HOME American Rescue Plan (ARP), Supportive Services Grant:

Becky Heldt presented a grant application to the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) requesting authorization to apply for HOME-ARP Supportive Services funding to support ADVOCAP's Homeless Prevention Services for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2028, in an amount up to \$550,000. Funds would support expanded housing navigation and case management, rental assistance (including application fees, security deposits, utility arrears, moving costs, and rent), and transportation assistance to help participants access employment, support services, and medical and mental health appointments, with the goal of reducing barriers to stable housing.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Daniel Viau to approve ADVOCAP's application for HOME American Rescue Plan (ARP), Supportive Services Grant for \$550,000 in funding. Motion carried.

b) Homeless Prevention: Oshkosh Area Community Foundation – Green Lake County Basic Needs Grant:

Becky Heldt presented a grant application to the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation for the Green Lake County Basic Needs Grant, requesting authorization to apply for up to \$5,000 to support ADVOCAP's Homeless Prevention Services through the Green Lake Community Response Fund for the period of May 1, 2026, through April 30, 2026. The fund provides one-time emergency financial assistance to Green Lake County residents to help overcome barriers to self-sufficiency, including support for housing costs, utilities, car repairs, employment-related expenses, medical needs, and other stability-related costs. The program also includes case management and action planning to help prevent future crises.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Tonya Hitz to approve ADVOCAP's application for Oshkosh Area Community Foundation – Green Lake County Basic Needs Grant for \$5,000 in funding. Motion carried.

c) Volunteer Services: AmeriCorps Seniors – Foster Grandparent Program:

Lisa Serverson presented an annual grant renewal application to AmeriCorps Seniors for the Foster Grandparent Program, requesting authorization to apply for year one of a three-year funding cycle for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, with anticipated federal funding of \$246,329, supported by \$49,569 in state funds to meet the required match. The Foster Grandparent Program engages low-income volunteers age 55 and older to provide individualized academic and social support to children in schools and early childhood settings. During the 2024–2025 school year, 22 volunteers served 613 students, with measured improvements in academic engagement and school readiness among participating students.

A motion was made by Michael Will, with a second by Connie Anderson to approve ADVOCAP's applications for AmeriCorps Seniors – Foster Grandparent Program grant for \$246,329 in total funding. Motion carried.

d) Volunteer Services: AmeriCorps Seniors – Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP):

Lisa Severson presented an annual grant renewal application to AmeriCorps Seniors for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), requesting authorization to apply for year one of a three-year funding cycle for the period of April 1, 2026, through March 31, 2027, with anticipated federal funding of \$190,500, supported by \$26,221 in state funds. The RSVP program engages volunteers age 55 and older to serve throughout ADVOCAP's three-county area in roles supporting companionship, transportation, nutrition and food security, school support, thrift store operations, and other community-based services. During the 2024–2025 program year, 334 volunteers contributed approximately 86,000 hours of service, with notable increases in transportation services and food security support for older adults and families.

A motion was made by Mike Will, with a second by Tonya Hitz to approve ADVOCAP's applications for Volunteer Services: AmeriCorps Seniors – Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) grant for \$190,500 in funding. Motion carried.

e) Business Development: SSM Health St. Agnes Hospital – Opportunity Center:

Tanya Marcoe presented a grant application to SSM Health St. Agnes Hospital – Fond du Lac requesting authorization to apply for \$20,000 in funding to support ADVOCAP's Business Development Department and the Opportunity Center. The Opportunity Center serves as an entry point for individuals seeking to meet basic needs and connect to longer-term solutions

for housing and self-sufficiency, providing services such as benefits access, basic needs support, housing and employment assistance, mental health advocacy, transportation, and legal advocacy. The Opportunity Center aligns with SSM Health's Community Health Improvement Plan goals by supporting access to mental health services and transportation to appointments, and in 2025 served an unduplicated total of 515 individuals.

A motion was made by Gary Will, with a second by Raina Lyman to approve ADVOCAP's applications for Business Development: SSM Health St. Agnes Hospital – Opportunity Center grant for \$20,000 in funding. Motion carried.

2025 CSBG Year End Report:

Deb Shepro and Tony Beregszazi presented an overview of ADVOCAP's 2025 CSBG Annual Report, reviewing program goals and performance outcomes across departments. The report highlighted progress toward established benchmarks in housing stability, economic security, child and family development, food and nutrition, volunteer services, and business development, noting that while many goals were met or exceeded, some were not achieved due to changes in population needs and increased costs throughout the year. Overall, ADVOCAP served more than 7,000 unduplicated individuals in 2025 through its CSBG-funded programs.

Head Start Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance (ERSEA)

Training:

April Mullins-Datko presented the required Head Start Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) training to ensure compliance with federal guidelines, noting that the Board must receive this training within 180 days of a new funding cycle. She reviewed eligibility requirements, which are based on income or categorical criteria such as SNAP, homelessness, foster care, SSI, or disability, with verification conducted through in-person applications and documentation review. She explained that recruitment involves actively identifying families who would benefit from Head Start, while selection is based on a point system prioritizing the most vulnerable children. Enrollment procedures and attendance requirements were also discussed, including the federal expectation of 85% attendance and the strategies used by staff to support family engagement and school readiness.

Choose Representative for Nominations Committee:

Tonya Hitz was selected to serve as the A&O Committee's representative on the Nominations Committee.

Other Business/Announcements/Reports:

Tanya Marcoe provided updates and reminders regarding the following:

- a) Fond du Lac Community Development Initiative update
- b) Fund Developer update
- c) Update on 1303 application to purchase Redeemer School for Head Start
- d) Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership Legacy Award
- e) Eden Schneider Collaboration Award through Envision
- f) Newcap updates
- g) Executive Committee and Board of Directors meeting – March 19, 2026, Fond du Lac ADVOCAP office



- h) Spring All-Staff Meeting – April 17, 2026, Avenue 795, Fond du Lac
- i) Committee Meetings – April 23, 2026, Neenah ADVOCAP office
- j) Annual Meeting – May 14, 2026, Prairie Theater and Event Center, Fond du Lac

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Michael Will, to adjourn the meeting at 6:56pm. Motion carried.