Advocacy & Operations Committee Meeting

6:00 PM – Thursday, June 25, 2026
ADVOCAP – Fond du Lac Office
19 W 1st Street | Fond du Lac, WI 54935

Present:

Connie Anderson, Danielle Viau *(virtual)*, Michael Will, Raina Lyman, Deb Neet

Absent/Excused:

Tonya Hitz, Seth Therrian

Staff:

Tanya Marcoe, Tony Beregszazi, CJ Bruden, Joe Lougher, April Mullins-Datko, Kelly Mauer, Dawn Paterson, Deb Shepro, Becky Heldt, Kathy Doyle, Jason VanderVelden, Justin McArthur

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Acting Chairperson Connie Anderson. A quorum of 5/6 was present.

Review and Approval of Agenda:

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

Review and Approval Minutes of February 26, 2026, Committee Meeting:

A motion was made by Raina Lyman, with a second by Connie Anderson, to approve the meeting minutes for February 26, 2026, committee meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Election of Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson:

Connie Anderson nominated Raina Lyman to serve as Chairperson of the Advocacy & Operations (A&O) Committee for the June 2026–May 2027 term. The nomination was seconded by Michael Will. There being no opposition, the motion carried, and Raina Lyman was elected Chairperson.

Raina Lyman nominated Michael Will to serve as Vice-Chairperson of the Advocacy & Operations (A&O) Committee for the June 2026–May 2027 term. The nomination was seconded by Connie Anderson. There being no opposition, the motion carried, and Michael Will was elected Vice-Chairperson.

Review and Approval of Committee Duties and Responsibilities:

Tanya Marcoe, Executive Director, presented the annual review of the Advocacy & Operations Committee Duties and Responsibilities. She reviewed a proposed revision establishing a grant application threshold requiring committee review and approval of plans and budgets for applications for existing Agency programs and services exceeding $50,000. Grant applications of $50,000 or less will be administratively approved to streamline the application process and

ensure funding deadlines can be met. A quarterly Grant Summary Report will be provided to the Committee and Board to review all grant activity.

A motion was made by Deb Neet, with a second by Michael Will, to approve the Duties and Responsibilities of the A&O Committee. Motion carried.

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

a) **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) - ADVOCAP Business and Workforce Development Department - Microloan Program Technical Assistance:**

Kathy Doyle, Business & Workforce Development Director, presented a funding award from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) requesting authorization to accept Microloan Program Technical Assistance funding for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, in an estimated amount of $60,119. The funding supports technical training and assistance for low-income micro-entrepreneurs, including business planning, marketing and financial plan development, skills assessments, referrals, and personalized QuickBooks training. Kathy noted that ADVOCAP qualified for the funding by meeting the required program performance benchmarks and received additional bonus funding for exceeding rural lending goals.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Deb Neet, to authorize ADVOCAP to accept the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Microloan Program Technical Assistance funding in the estimated amount of $60,119. Motion carried.

b) Fond du Lac Area Foundation Impact Grant - ADVOCAP Business & Workforce Development Opportunity Center:

Kathy Doyle, Business & Workforce Development Director, presented a grant application to the Fond du Lac Area Foundation requesting authorization to apply for an Impact Grant in an amount up to $100,000 to support ADVOCAP's Business & Workforce Development Department and the Opportunity Center for the period of January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2027. The Opportunity Center serves as a central access point for individuals seeking assistance with housing, employment, benefits, and other basic needs while connecting them to long-term solutions that promote self-sufficiency. In 2025, the Opportunity Center served 515 unduplicated individuals through a variety of supportive services.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Michael Will, to approve ADVOCAP's application for the Fond du Lac Area Foundation Impact Grant for up to $100,000 in funding. Motion carried.

c) Oshkosh Area Community Foundation Otto Bremer Trust Community Responsive Fund - ADVOCAP Food & Nutrition and Homeless Prevention Services:

Becky Heldt, Homeless Prevention Director, and Dawn Paterson, Food & Nutrition Director, presented a funding award from the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation – Otto Bremer Trust Community Responsive Fund requesting authorization to accept $75,000 in funding for the period of August 1, 2026, through July 31, 2027. The funding will support ADVOCAP's Green Lake Community Response Fund by providing emergency shelter and housing

stabilization assistance for families experiencing homelessness or at risk of eviction, as well as the Senior Nutrition Program, which provides meals to older adults in Winnebago County to reduce food insecurity and social isolation while promoting independence and wellness.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Deb Neet, to authorize ADVOCAP to accept funding from the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation – Otto Bremer Trust Community Responsive Fund in the amount of $75,000. Motion carried.

d) WI Balance of State/WI Dept of Admin Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) & Homeless Prevention Program (HPP) - ADVOCAP Homeless Prevention Department Rapid Re-Housing & Prevention:

Becky Heldt, Homeless Prevention Director, presented grant applications to the Wisconsin Balance of State/Wisconsin Department of Administration requesting authorization to apply for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Homeless Prevention Program (HPP) for the period of October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027. ADVOCAP was allocated $165,030 in ESG funding and $59,450 in HPP funding to support the Agency's Rapid Re-Housing and Prevention Program. The funding will provide financial assistance and case management to individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Fond du Lac, Green Lake, and Winnebago Counties, helping participants secure stable housing and connect with community resources that promote long-term self-sufficiency.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Michael Will, to approve ADVOCAP's applications for the Wisconsin Balance of State/Wisconsin Department of Administration Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Homeless Prevention Program (HPP) in the allocated amounts of $165,030 and $59,450, respectively. Motion carried.

e) Wisconsin Dept of Transportation (DOT) - ADVOCAP Volunteer Services Transportation Program:

Deb Shepro, Grant Writer, presented a grant application to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) requesting authorization to apply for up to $75,000 in funding to support ADVOCAP's Volunteer Services Transportation Program for the period of January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2027. The Transportation Program provides rides and grocery delivery services to older adults and individuals with disabilities, helping participants access medical appointments, essential services, and community resources while promoting independence. Deb noted that demand for transportation services continues to increase, with the program serving 148 unduplicated participants and providing 3,662 rides in 2025.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Deb Neet, to approve ADVOCAP's application for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) Transportation Program grant for up to $75,000 in funding. Motion carried.

f) Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) Foundation Housing Grant Program - ADVOCAP Shared Services – Affordable Housing:

Justin McArthur, Property Services Manager, presented a grant application to the Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) Foundation requesting authorization to apply for $50,000 in funding through the Housing Grant Program to support ADVOCAP's Affordable Housing Program for the period of January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2027. The requested funding will be used to make capital improvements to the Agency's affordable

housing duplex located at 360 Western Avenue in Fond du Lac, including potential window replacement, chimney removal, sewer line replacement, and porch repairs. The final scope of the project will be determined following the review of contractor bids.

A motion was made by Michael Will, with a second by Deb Neet, to approve ADVOCAP's application for the Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) Foundation Housing Grant Program for $50,000 in funding. Motion carried.

g) Wisconsin Division of Energy, Housing, and Community Resources (DEHCR) - ADVOCAP Weatherization Program:

Jason VanderVelden, Weatherization Director, presented a funding award from the Wisconsin Division of Energy, Housing, and Community Resources (DEHCR) requesting authorization to accept $3,298,477 in funding to support ADVOCAP's Weatherization Program for the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027. The Weatherization Assistance Program provides energy efficiency improvements to eligible low-income households to reduce energy costs and improve housing conditions. Funding also supports the Home Energy Plus HVAC and Water Conservation Programs, which provide heating, cooling, and water heater repairs or replacements when needed. In 2025, the program served 436 unduplicated households, benefiting 1,175 family members.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Deb Neet, to authorize ADVOCAP to accept funding from the Wisconsin Division of Energy, Housing, and Community Resources (DEHCR) Weatherization Program in the amount of $3,298,477. Motion carried.

h) Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region Annual Responsive Grant - ADVOCAP Food & Nutrition/Senior Nutrition:

Dawn Paterson, Food & Nutrition Director, presented a grant application to the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region requesting authorization to apply for the Annual Responsive Grant in the amount of $15,000 to support ADVOCAP's Food & Nutrition Department and Senior Nutrition Program for the period of August 1, 2026, through July 31, 2027. The requested funding will provide flexible support for the Senior Nutrition Program, which offers nutritious meals, wellness checks, and opportunities for social connection to older adults in the Neenah and Menasha area, helping participants maintain their health, independence, and ability to remain in their homes and communities.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Deb Neet, to approve ADVOCAP's application for the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region Annual Responsive Grant for $15,000 in funding. Motion carried.

i) Schneider Foundation - ADVOCAP Food & Nutrition/Senior Nutrition:

Dawn Paterson, Food & Nutrition Director, presented a grant application to the Schneider Foundation requesting authorization to apply for $10,000 in funding to support ADVOCAP's Food & Nutrition Department and Senior Nutrition Program. The requested funding will help maintain home-delivered meal vehicles and offset transportation expenses, including fuel, for the period of August 1, 2026, through July 31, 2027. Reliable transportation is essential to ensuring older adults continue to receive nutritious meals, reducing food insecurity and social isolation while supporting their health, independence, and ability to remain in their homes.

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Michael Will, to approve ADVOCAP's application for the Schneider Foundation grant for $10,000 in funding. Motion carried.

j) Office of Head Start - Supplemental Nutrition and Healthy Eating Application:

April Mullins-Datko, Head Start Director, presented a supplemental funding application to the Office of Head Start requesting authorization to apply for $49,000 in one-time Supplemental Nutrition and Healthy Eating funding. The requested funding will support modernization of ADVOCAP Head Start's central kitchen through the replacement of essential commercial kitchen equipment and installation of a new commercial sink and dishwasher, while also establishing a Farm-to-Table Project to provide hands-on nutrition education for children. These improvements will enhance the program's ability to prepare and serve fresh, nutritious meals while promoting healthy eating habits and supporting children's long-term health and school readiness.

A motion was made by Michael Will, with a second by Deb Neet, to approve ADVOCAP's application for the Office of Head Start Supplemental Nutrition and Healthy Eating grant for $49,000 in funding. Motion carried.

Progress Reports:

a) Grant Application Status:

Deb Shepro, Grant Writer, presented the 2026 Grant Application Status Report, providing the Committee with an update on grant applications submitted throughout the year, including awards received, pending applications, applications in development, and grants that were not awarded. Deb reported that the Agency has requested more than $8.1 million in grant funding to date, with approximately $2.1 million awarded and an overall 67% funding success rate. She also noted that the Agency has achieved a 90% application success rate on grant decisions received thus far.

Other Business/Announcements/Reports:

Tanya Marcoe, Executive Director, shared the following announcements and upcoming meeting reminders:

a) Deb Shepro recently earned her Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) credential, becoming ADVOCAP's third CCAP-certified professional. Tanya noted that Deb will be recognized at the 2026 annual awards ceremony in St. Louis and is currently the only professional in Wisconsin to receive the CCAP credential in 2026.

b) The next Board of Directors Meeting will be held on July 23, 2026, at the ADVOCAP Prairie View Center, W911 State Highway 44, Markesan, WI 53946.

c) The next Committee Meetings will be held on August 27, 2026, at the JP Coughlin Center, 625 E. County Road Y, Oshkosh, WI 54901.

d) The following Board of Directors Meeting will be held on September 24, 2026, at the ADVOCAP Fond du Lac Office, 19 W. 1st Street, Fond du Lac, WI 54935.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Connie Anderson, with a second by Deb Neet, to adjourn the meeting at 6:48pm. Motion carried.