

**State of Iowa
Energy Center Board
Meeting Minutes of March 6, 2024
at IEDA, 1963 Bell Avenue, Suite 200
Helmick Conference Room
Des Moines, Iowa
Or Via Teams Webinar**

Call to order 4:00 p.m.

Board Members Present

Stuart Anderson, Board Chair
Craig Just, Vice Chair*
Troy DeJooode**
Naomi DeWinter*
Debi Durham
Erik Helland*
Anne Kimber*
Dan Nickey
Taaf Vermeulen*
Matt Washburn*
Lanny Zieman*

Absent

Kelcey Brown
Terry Kouba

Iowa Economic Development Authority Staff Present

Kristin Hanks-Bents
Amber Buckingham
Stephanie Weisenbach
Lisa Connell
Shelly Peterson*
Michelle Cook
Vicky Clinkscates
Terry Roberson
Kanan Kappelman
Emily Hockins*

Iowa Finance Authority Staff Present

Tim Morlan*

*Participated via Teams

**Joined via Teams at 4:09 pm

Welcome & Introductions by Board Chair Stuart Anderson

Stuart Anderson welcomed everyone to the March 6th IEC Board meeting.

Roll Call

Michelle Cook did roll call and a quorum was established.

Consideration of November 16, 2023 IEC Board Meeting Minutes

Motion by Dan Nickey

Motion I move approval of the November 16, 2023 minutes as presented.
Second Craig Just
Voice Vote Nine ayes in favor (Durham abstained). Motion passes.

Competitive Grant Program Update

Amber Buckingham noted that all grants that were funded at the November meeting have executed their contracts and are underway. We are planning to launch the next round of funding in July after we have approved our new policies and procedures at the May meeting and new proposed rule changes have gone into effect. Funding decisions will happen at the November board meeting which should line up better with Regent institutions hiring practices. With our current timeline, we are getting a lot of no cost extensions pretty immediately on those projects. Ms. Buckingham will provide an update on all the grant progress reports at the August meeting.

Chairperson Anderson asked if there were questions. No questions were asked.

Grant Modification Request for 20-IEC-010 – Iowa State University – Development of Low Cost, Safe, and High-Performance Sodium Batteries for Wind Energy Storage

Amber Buckingham requested board approval for a no cost extension for 20-IEC-010 as they had to train a newly hired Ph.D. student to assist with remaining project tasks. This would extend the end date to February 28, 2025. That does put them at the five-year maximum but still within the confines of the rules.

Chairperson Anderson asked if there were questions. No questions were asked.

Motion by Debi Durham
Motion I move to approve the no cost extension request for 20-IEC-010.
Second Dan Nickey
Roll Call Yes: 10 Abstain: 0
Motion approved.

Grant Modification Request for 21-IEC-005 – Iowa State University – GIS Tool to Plan Mitigation and Recovery of Gridlines Under Natural Hazards to Improve Resiliency

Amber Buckingham requested board approval for a no cost extension and budget modification for 21-IEC-005 as analysis of data, project partner meetings, and GIS specialist onboarding have taken longer than anticipated. A budget modification moving \$29,599 from tuition to salaries and wages and payroll benefits is also requested as the students that they originally planned to hire could not complete the tasks.

Chairperson Anderson asked if there were questions. No questions were asked.

Motion by Craig Just
Motion I move to approve the grant modification request to 21-IEC-005.

Second Anne Kimber
Roll Call Yes: 10 Abstain: 0
Motion approved.

Grant Modification Request for 24-IEC-004 – University of Northern Iowa – Resilient Iowa Communities Rural Support Project

Amber Buckingham requested board approval for a budget modification for 24-IEC-004 to correct errors found upon review of the project budget. UNI is requesting to move \$11,511 from Indirect Costs, Other Direct Costs, and Fringe Benefits to Salaries and Wages, Travel, and Supplies and Materials. This request is not a change to the overall budget for this project.

Chairperson Anderson asked if there were questions. No questions were asked.

Motion by Debi Durham
Motion I move to approve the budget modification request to 24-IEC-004.

Second Dan Nickey
Roll Call Yes: 11 Abstain: 0
Motion approved.

Grant Modification Request for 20-IEC-003 – Iowa State University – Wind Turbines in Cold Winter: Icing Physics and Novel Strategies for Wind Turbine Icing Mitigation

Amber Buckingham requested board approval for a no cost extension for 20-IEC-003 as the graduate student hired for the project arrived later than expected, delaying work on the project. This would extend the end date to August 31, 2024.

Chairperson Anderson asked if there were questions. No questions were asked.

Motion by Dan Nickey
Motion I move to approve the no cost extension request to 20-IEC-003.

Second Craig Just
Roll Call Yes: 11 Abstain: 0
Motion approved.

Competitive Grant Program Rule Changes

Lisa Connell expressed her appreciation to the board on their flexibility with this meeting due to the timing of the rule changes. Ms. Connell reviewed several recommended updates to the administrative rules that govern the grant program. The grant committee participated in finalizing these recommendations. The recommended updates include: adding private asset development as an eligible project type; equipment purchases related to for-profit applicants; project sustainability considered rather than dissemination plan for for-profit applicants; pre-application optional, in practice, we will continue requesting a pre-application for now but it will be shorter and easier for both applicants and grant committee members and staff; change rules so that board will only approve awards, will not deny or defer applications as those will be handled at the staff and committee level; and minimum amount per disbursement request increase from \$500 to \$1,000.

Ms. Connell asked if there were questions. Craig Just said he applauded the changes.

Ms. Connell shared about the process. In January of last year, the rule making process changed pursuant to an executive order that was issued by the governor. That executive order means there are some extra steps that are required when we make rules, and we are required to review all of IEDA's rules by the end of 2025. There were enough changes in this chapter that it made sense to go through with this process mandated by the executive order. The action today is to rescind the existing rule chapter and replace it with a new chapter that has the updates just described. A cost benefit analysis of the rules has already been published and had opportunity for comment. A hearing was held on that analysis. No comments have been received on these rules. Ms. Connell asked the board to approve filing a notice of intended action. There will be two hearings on that notice and then you will see the rules again at the next meeting.

Motion by	Lanny Zieman
Motion	Move to approve Filing Notice of Intended Action to Rescind and Replace Iowa Energy Center Grant Program Rules, 261 Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 404
Second	Debi Durham
Voice Vote	All ayes in favor. Motion approved.

Energy Infrastructure Revolving Loan Program (EIRLP) – EIRLP Update – Stephanie Weisenbach reported no new applications were received this cycle. We were waiting to see if a previously submitted application would produce the required collateral and they have not been able to do that yet. The application is being kept as an active pending application to give them a little bit longer to consider if they can fulfill that. The loan committee met this quarter and discussed the low volume of applications in the program. There is an interest from the committee to plan out some strategies and look at options for the future of the program. Staff will research and present some potential strategies and projects to the committee in the next few months and keep the board updated on that conversation.

Ms. Weisenbach asked if there were questions; no questions were asked.

Energy Infrastructure Revolving Loan Program Loan Award Revision Request – City of Hawarden

Stephanie Weisenbach reviewed the loan award revision request from the City of Hawarden changing the term from nine years to 15 years because the nine-year loan term would require a much higher rate increase for their customers. This is the first loan award that the board has made to a municipal electric utility. Because they are a municipal borrower, they have the utility revenues as security and also a bond planned as match to complete the project.

Ms. Weisenbach asked if there were questions; no questions were asked.

Motion by	Dan Nickey
Motion	I move to revise the loan award to a 15-year term.

Second Roll Call
Craig Just
Yes: 10 Abstain: 1 (DeJooode)
Motion approved.

Fiscal Update

Terry Roberson shared that as expected at the start of a fiscal year, grant payments on the main program increased considerably. Interest earnings on each of the funds have also increased dramatically as the Treasurer of State has caught up on their interest allocations.

Mr. Roberson asked if there were questions; no questions were asked.

Other Business

Stuart Anderson turned it over to Kristin Hanks-Bents to give Energy Office updates.

Energy Center Office Updates

Kristin Hanks-Bents, new Energy Division Administrator, introduced herself and provided updates: Grid Resilience Fund recently closed and we received \$44 million in funding requests, about three times what we have to make awards; EECEBG applications are due March 18th; and TREC training is expected to start this summer.

Public Comment Period No public comments.

Chairperson Anderson adjourned the meeting.

Adjournment 4:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michelle Cook, IEC Board Administrator