

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PROGRAMS COMMITTEE OF
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF
THE GOLDEN L.E.A.F. (Long-term Economic Advancement Foundation), INC.**

The regular meeting of the Programs Committee of the Board of Directors of The Golden L.E.A.F. (Long-term Economic Advancement Foundation), Inc. (the “Foundation”), was noticed for and convened on December 3, 2025, at the Golden LEAF Retreat Center located at 301 N. Winstead Ave., Rocky Mount, NC 27804. Committee members participating in the meeting were Barry Dodson, Michael Easley, Jr., Randy Isenhower, Buddy Keller, Laurence Lilley, Brian Raynor (Chair), Bobbie Richardson, David Rose, Jarette Sampson, Ralph Strayhorn, and Tom Taft. Board member Jim Harrell was also present. Also present were Scott T. Hamilton, President, Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation; Ted Lord, Senior Vice President/ General Counsel of the Foundation; Kasey Ginsberg, Vice President/ Chief of Staff of the Foundation; Erica Smith, Vice President of Finance of the Foundation; J.P. Boyd, Vice President of Investments of the Foundation; Marilyn Chism, Director of Programs of the Foundation; Jenny Tinklepaugh, Communications Manager of the Foundation; Brynn Fann, Program Officer and AV/ Tech Coordinator of the Foundation; and Byron Kirkland, legal counsel to the Foundation. Jenny Tinklepaugh served as secretary of the meeting.

Mr. Kirkland called the roll of the Programs Committee members.

Mr. Raynor called the meeting to order, declared a quorum to be present, and identified Ms. Tinklepaugh as secretary of the meeting.

Mr. Raynor welcomed Mr. Harrell to the Golden LEAF Board.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the open and closed sessions of the October 1, 2025 meeting of the Programs Committee. The motion was seconded and carried.

Mr. Raynor asked members of the Committee to disclose individual interests related to matters to come before the Committee.

In accordance with the Foundation's Conflicts of Interest Policy, the following standing disclosures and disclosures related to matters to come before the Committee were made or confirmed:

- Mr. Lilley disclosed that his son is Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Commerce and Mr. Lilley will abstain from the discussion and vote regarding projects for which Golden LEAF knows the Department of Commerce is or may be a funder.

In these minutes, where it is noted with respect to a matter that a director "would abstain" or "abstained," the subsequent vote is subject to all such abstentions.

Mr. Raynor informed members of the Committee that the Committee would organize its discussions and actions regarding proposals and other items by reference to the recommendations sheet distributed to the Committee prior to the meeting. The recommendations sheet reflecting the actions of the Committee is included in these minutes as Attachment A.

A motion was made to enter closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4) to prevent the disclosure of information relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the Foundation. The motion was seconded and carried.

Following the closed session, the Committee resumed its meeting in open session.

Mr. Raynor asked Ms. Chism and Mr. Lord to present the applications received in Stage Two of the Open Grants Program. After the presentation, recommendations, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the actions reported on Attachment A regarding the Stage Two applications received in the Open Grants Program, which are items numbered 1-4. The motion was seconded and carried.

Mr. Raynor asked Ms. Chism and Mr. Lord to present the applications received in Stage One of the Open Grants Program. After the presentation, recommendations, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the actions reported on Attachment A regarding the Stage One

applications received in the Open Grants Program that are items numbered 5-8 and 10-27. The motion was seconded and carried.

A motion was made to recommend that the Board take the action reported on Attachment A regarding the Stage One application received in the Open Grants Program that is item numbered 9. The motion was seconded and carried. Mr. Lilley declared a duality of interest because his son serves as Secretary of the NC Department of Commerce and abstained from the discussion and the vote.

Mr. Raynor asked Mr. Lord to present applications received in the SITE Program. After the presentation, recommendations, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the action reported on Attachment A regarding the SITE Program applications, which are items numbered 28-30. The motion was seconded and carried.

Mr. Raynor asked Ms. Ginsberg to present the modification in the Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief Program. After the presentation, recommendation, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the action reported on Attachment A regarding the modification in the Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief Program, which is item numbered 31. The motion was seconded and carried.

Mr. Raynor asked Mr. Lord and Ms. Chism to present the grant modification requests. After the presentation, recommendations, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the actions reported on Attachment A regarding the modification requests, which are items numbered 32-34. The motion was seconded and carried.

Mr. Raynor asked Mr. Lord to present the modification requests in the Shell Building Program. Mr. Lord discussed the modification requests with the Committee, including the previously approved mechanism for considering grantee requests for increased funding and statutory match requirements and maximum grant awards. He also told the Committee that some of the projects are already underway and may be under contract for improvements that may be funded with increased funding. He told the Committee that it was impractical to prevent this situation because the projects are at different stages of

implementation, but the requests for increase had to be considered simultaneously to allow for equitable allocation of available funds. After the presentation, recommendation, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the actions reported on Attachment A regarding the Shell Building Program modification requests that are items numbered 36-38. The motion was seconded and carried.

A motion was made to recommend that the Board take the action reported on Attachment A regarding the Shell Building Program modification request that is item numbered 35. The motion was seconded and carried. Mr. Lilley declared a duality of interest because his son serves as Secretary of the NC Department of Commerce and abstained from the discussion and the vote.

Mr. Raynor asked Ms. Ginsberg to present the modification request in the Flood Mitigation Program. After the presentation, recommendation, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the actions reported on Attachment A regarding the Flood Mitigation Program modification request, which is item numbered 39. The motion was seconded and carried. Mr. Taft declared a duality of interest and abstained from the discussion and vote.

Mr. Raynor asked Ms. Ginsberg to present the modification requests in the Disaster Recovery Program. After the presentation, recommendations, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the actions reported on Attachment A regarding the Disaster Recovery Program modification requests, which are items numbered 40 and 41. The motion was seconded and carried.

Mr. Raynor asked Mr. Lord and Ms. Ginsberg to present items under Other Business.

Mr. Lord presented an update on the NC Ag Leads strategic plan and implementation. He shared that Golden LEAF staff members are engaged in the review of various next steps with the NC Ag Leads team and requests will be discussed with the NC Ag Leads steering committee in December and full Golden LEAF Board at its retreat in January 2026. Mr. Lord shared that the following items are in development:

- AgLaunch: Continuing to develop the model that addresses the needs identified through listening sessions to better connect innovations and farmers.
- Talent Pipeline Management: Broad implementation is paused temporarily while the national model is refreshed. Data collection and assessing demand for common workforce training are the next steps.
- Land Data Deep Dive: NC Ag Leads is in the process of developing a concept document and contract with American Farmland Trust and has been engaging with Google on mapping abilities.
- Extension Revitalization: NC Ag Leads is working with Dean Fox of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at NCSU and the new NCSU Extension Director, and the NCSU Chancellor's Office to continue the conversation around development of the new Cooperative Extension staffing model.

Mr. Lord also shared the current NC Ag Leads steering committee is made up of three Foundation Board members and the Foundation's President, along with Commissioner Troxler, and leaders from the Farm Bureau and NC Chamber. Mr. Flow and Mr. Lilley represent the Foundation on the steering committee. Lawrence Davenport was also a steering committee member until he was not reappointed to the Foundation Board. Mr. Lord shared that the role of the steering committee is to review information and insights gathered during Phase One of NC Ag Leads, focus the topics to be addressed in Phase Two, and establish the framework for moving into next steps. He added that, currently, the steering committee provides oversight and review of recommendations for implementation and that as that process moves forward, it is appropriate to consider appointing a new member of the Golden LEAF Board to the steering committee and to make any other revisions to the steering committee structure. The Committee discussed the important role Mr. Davenport played in the development and implementation of NC Ag Leads and the value of retaining him as a member of the steering committee. The Committee also

discussed replacing Mr. Davenport on the steering committee and determined that Mr. Lee would be an appropriate replacement because of his deep knowledge of and experience in the agriculture community in North Carolina.

After the presentation, recommendation, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the actions reported on Attachment A regarding item numbered 42 to appoint Mr. Lee as a Golden LEAF Board representative on the NC Ag Leads steering committee and to create a new at large position on the steering committee and to appoint Mr. Davenport to that new position. The motion was seconded and carried.

Ms. Ginsberg then presented an update regarding Golden LEAF Schools. Attendance at activities has been strong across all districts. She also shared that recruitment for the second cohort of the Performance Based Competency Education schools is starting, with applications due in February 2026 and the selection of schools expected by May 2026. NCDPI will use the same process that it followed in the first round. She added that during the most recent reporting period, the NCDPI Coaching Team conducted 25 school visits, Marzano Resources provided 19 professional development events, and 13 Open Up Resources professional development trainings were offered. Regarding the evaluation, Ms. Ginsberg reported that baseline metrics will be finalized in December 2025 and shared with Golden LEAF in the January 2026 report. Among other outcomes, schools are expected to achieve a 3–5% percentage point gain annually on end-of-grade assessments.

Ms. Ginsberg reported that the Golden LEAF Schools Initiative is working to address the following issues:

- Negotiations with Khan Academy and NCDIT to incorporate the Khanmigo tool into Golden LEAF Schools are ongoing. There is a deadline of December 31, 2025 for Khan Academy to accept the contract.

- There is a need to strengthen internal coaching cohesion and structures, clarifying roles internally and externally to ensure that everyone understands the functions of NCDPI staff, Marzano, and Open Up.
- Consistent communication and clarity of expectations from Marzano and Open Up is needed.
- Data needs to be centralized or readily visible for daily decision-making through strategies such as clear dashboards are needed.

Mr. Lord then presented an update on the request from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke for its new College of Optometric Medicine. He shared that UNC-P anticipates bidding on the equipment for the building in 2027 but has expressed need for a decision by Golden LEAF on its funding request no later than February 5, 2025. He said that he is gathering information about the reason for the early decision in addition to continuing due diligence regarding the project.

Ms. Ginsberg then presented a grant modification request for the grant to the Housing Assistance Corporation in Helene Relief Program. Staff received the request after the Programs Committee materials were shared with the Committee. After the presentation, recommendation, and discussion, a motion was made to recommend that the Board take the action reported on Attachment A regarding the modification request from The Housing Assistance Corporation, which is item numbered 45. The motion was seconded and carried.

With no other business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.

Jenny Tinklepaugh, Secretary of the Meeting

Read and approved:

Brian Raynor, Chair of the Programs Committee

Attachment A
Programs Committee Recommendations

Open Grants Program Stage 2 Proposals				
#	Organization	Project Title	Programs Cmte Recs	Comments Special Conditions
1	Bladen's Bloomin' Agri-Industrial, Inc.	White Lake Sewer	Defer	
2	Isothermal Community College	Healthcare Simulation Equipment for Health & Sciences Center	\$1,000,000.00	Funding from healthcare workforce training leverage initiative
3	North Carolina State University	Implementing an Image-based Grading Method at Peanut Buying Points	\$200,000.00	No Golden LEAF funding for conference participation; funding for two years; release of funds contingent on Golden LEAF confirmation of industry support for the project
4	Southeastern Life Center, Incorporated	Southeastern Life Center Development Academy	\$0.00	
Open Grants Program Stage 1 Proposals				
#	Organization	Project Title	Programs Cmte Recs	Programs Cmte Recs
5	Appalachian State University	Preparing the Rural Nursing Workforce: Lab Expansion at App State Hickory Campus	Y	
6	Dunn Police Athletic & Activities League, Inc.	Dunn PAL Campus Renovation and Career Readiness Expansion	Y	
7	Haywood County Schools Foundation	Career Technical Education: Bridging Skills and Opportunities	Y	

8	Haywood Vocational Opportunities, Inc.	Advancing Workforce Development and Manufacturing Capacity Through Automation	Y	
9	Mountain Community Health Partnership Incorporated	MCHP Spruce Pine Healthcare Clinic Equipment Project	Y	
10	Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc. (RMOIC)	Building Economic Futures: OIC's Regional Workforce and Business Development Hub	Y	
11	Casa Azul De Wilson	Building a Bilingual Workforce Pipeline	N	
12	Communities In Schools of Robeson County	College Access Inspires Students	N	
13	Communities In Schools of Thomasville	Supporting Student Success for Workforce Development	N	
14	Designed for Joy	From Crisis to Career: Expanding Workforce Pathways for Women	N	
15	Drug Free Moore County, Inc.	Operation Uplift Moore & Beyond	N	
16	Duplin Christian Outreach Ministries Crisis Center	Crisis Center Update	N	
17	Healing Lives Fellowship Inc.	Vision Beyond Trauma: Women's Empowerment Program	N	

18	Industries of the Blind Inc	Mobile robots helping people who are blind in distribution settings	N	
19	Macon County Schools	C++STEMIC	N	
20	Marizetta Kerry Child Development Center Inc	MZK & CORA'S Intergenerational Campus & Resource HUB	N	
21	MedAid Foundation	MedAid Workforce Development Program	N	
22	Partnership for Children of Cumberland County, Inc.	Operation Restoration - Phase III	N	
23	Pathway Community Foundation Corp	Wilson County Smart Tech Workforce Program	N	
24	Real Life Inc	Pathways to Prosperity Workforce Readiness Program	N	
25	Smart Start of Forsyth County	Forsyth Drive & Care Workforce Bridge: CDL + CNA Pathways for Rural Families	N	
26	Team Leading Edge	Construction Technology Education	N	
27	The Carrington Center, Inc.	Digital Workforce & Housing Stability Hub for Rural Families	N	

SITE Program				
#	Organization	Project Title	Programs Cmte Recs	Comments Special Conditions
Identification				
28	Yadkin, County of	Yadkin County Commerce Park	Approve request	Golden LEAF will provide consulting support through this program
Due Diligence				
29	Troy, Town of	Uwharrie Business Park	\$120,000.00	Golden LEAF funds may only be used for due diligence items approved by Golden LEAF.
Development				
30	Warren, County of	Warren County Hwy 1 Industrial Site Development & Waterline Extension	\$1,087,460.00	Golden LEAF funds for due diligence and remediation may only be used for items approved by Golden LEAF; use of Golden LEAF funds for construction and related expenditures is conditioned on Golden LEAF approval of due diligence and, if needed, remediation
Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief –Modification				
#	Organization	Project Title	Programs Cmte Recs	Comments Special Conditions
31	North Carolina Baptist Men	Helene Relief Project	Y	Increase of \$750,000 to \$3,290,000
Modifications				
#	Organization	Project Title	Programs Cmte Recs	Comments Special Conditions
32	Graham County	Stanley Furniture Economic Efficiency Project	Defer	
33	North Carolina State University	Aviary Facility for Pullet And Layer Research and Extension	Approve	

34	Uwharrie Charter Academy	Advanced Manufacturing	Approve in part	Allow the grantee to use up to \$50,000 of the Golden LEAF award for construction and renovation of the areas of the building that will be used for advanced manufacturing, including common areas in the building.
Shell Building Program Modification				
#	Organization	Project Title	Programs Cmte Recs	Comments Special Conditions
35	Ashe County	Ashe County - Shell Building	Approve	Award Ashe County an additional \$1,075,000, bringing the total award to \$2,500,000
36	Robeson County	Robeson County Shell Project	Approve	Award Robeson County an additional \$1,075,000, bringing the total award amount to \$2,500,000.
37	Scotland County Economic Development Corporation	Building 3	Approve	Award Scotland County EDC an additional \$296,415.25, bringing the total award amount to \$1,696,415.25.
38	Tabor City	Tabor City Shell Building	Approve	Award Tabor City an additional \$620,000, bringing the total award amount to \$2,045,000.
Flood Mitigation –Modification				
#	Organization	Project Title	Programs Cmte Recs	Comments Special Conditions
39	Town of Beech Mountain	Greenbriar Rd. Flood Mitigation	Approve	Approve the request to modify the purpose to allow for a broader range of solutions to implement the project.

Disaster Recovery –Modification				
#	Organization	Project Title	Programs Cmte Recs	Comments Special Conditions
40	Town of Fairmont	Pump Station Rehabilitation	Approve	Increase grant award by \$1,278,500 to \$1,623,500 and modify purpose to install generators, elevate the controls, and make other mitigation improvements at all three pump stations.
41	City of Washington	Washington Medical District Storm Water Project	Defer	Defer until Golden LEAF makes a final determination of funding needed for other disaster recovery projects.
Other Business				
#	Topic	Comments Special Conditions		
42	NC Ag Leads Update	Authorize staff to revise the NC Ag Leads contract with the NC Chamber Foundation to include an at large member appointed by Golden LEAF on the steering; clarify that the vote of the at large member shall not be considered when determining the vote of a majority of Golden LEAF appointees; and appoint Mr. Lee as a Golden LEAF member of the steering committee and Lawrence Davenport as the at-large member of the steering committee.		
43	Golden LEAF Schools Update	Staff will provide an update regarding Golden LEAF Schools, including information from recent reports submitted by DPI.		
44	UNC-Pembroke	Update regarding the UNC-P application seeking funding for the Doctor of Optometry facility.		
45	The Housing Assistance Corporation	Approve the request to modify the purpose of the grant to allow for purchase of two vehicles.		