

**THE OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF
THE WESTERN PANHANDLE REGIONAL
LAND BANK BOARD MEETING**

October 7, 2026

A meeting of the Western Panhandle Regional Land Bank (WPRLB) Board was held in open session on October 7, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. in the Gering City Hall Conference Room, 1025 P Street, Gering, NE. Present were Board Members Nancy Garrett, Gabe Ingram, Amy Newman, John Stinner and Sarah Flores. Absent: Tony Kaufman and Brady Shaul. Also present were the following: Michelle Coolidge (Executive Director), Annie Folck and Karen Heins (Gering). Notice of the meeting was published on the City of Gering website on September 23, 2026, and the agenda was posted on the City of Gering website on October 1, 2026. At the time of publication, the WPRLB website had not yet been established. All proceedings hereafter were taken while the meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Board Vice Chair Gabe Ingram called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. It was noted that a quorum of the WPRLB Board was present and business could be conducted.

2. Open Meetings Act

Vice Chair Ingram reviewed the Nebraska Revised Statutes Chapter 84, Article 14, requiring by State Law, public bodies shall make available current copies of the Open Meetings Act available in the meeting room. He also noted that agenda items may be moved up or down on the agenda at the discretion of the Chairperson. He further noted that additions may not be made to the agenda less than 24 hours before the beginning of the meeting unless they are considered under the appropriate section of the agenda and the WPRLB Board determines that the matter requires emergency action.

3. Board reserves the right to enter into closed session if deemed necessary if the items on the agenda as per Section 84-1410 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes

Vice Chair Ingram stated the Board reserves the right to enter into closed session when appropriate, as required by Nebraska law, for any item on the agenda as per Section 84-1410 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes.

4. Approval of Minutes of the September 2, 2026 WPRLB Board Meeting

A motion was made by Board Member Stinner to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2026 WPRLB Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Board Member Garrett. There was no discussion. The Secretary called the roll. "AYES": Newman, Ingram, Stinner, Garrett, Flores. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Kaufman and Shaul. Motion carried.

5. Discussion and Possible Action on Contribution Commitments by Member Communities and Options for Meeting the Commitment

Executive Director Michelle Coolidge clarified that the item was included as a follow-up to the previous month's discussion regarding contribution commitments, particularly the City of Kimball's commitment. To her knowledge, there had been no changes since the prior meeting, and the contribution had been included in the draft budget. With no further comments or questions, the Board proceeded to the next agenda item.

6. Review of Draft Budget for FY2027

Ms. Coolidge presented the draft budget, explaining that the figures reflected recent discussions, including \$50,000 for the City of Kimball and an estimated starting balance of approximately \$97,000 as of October 1, following the September 30 year-end. The draft included placeholder amounts for potential donations and grant income, as well as a proposed \$46,800 executive director expense split between the two communities, subject to adjustment based on the actual allocation of time. The budget would track year-to-date expenditures and variances against budgeted amounts.

The Board discussed whether to retain budget allowances for accounting, legal, and administrative expenses, given that the cities were expected to provide many of these services at no charge. Ms. Coolidge

recommended retaining the placeholders to account for the possibility that the Land Bank might incur these expenses in the future. Snow removal and lawn maintenance were also retained as potential expenses in the event city staff were unavailable to provide the services.

Ms. Coolidge explained that the budget was a preliminary forecast that could be adjusted as more information became available, but that a budget would need to be adopted and submitted to the auditor's office. The fiscal year would run from October 1 through September 30, consistent with the municipal budget year. Potential future revenue sources, including fundraising and tax revenue associated with properties returned to the tax rolls, were discussed, although reliable estimates were not yet available.

The Board also discussed liability insurance. Ms. Coolidge reported that JG Elliott had obtained preliminary quotes from multiple carriers using an address for estimation purposes. The need for coverage and its potential cost would depend on the properties held by the Land Bank and the anticipated length of ownership. She noted that some properties might be transferred or sold relatively quickly, potentially limiting the period of coverage needed.

Regarding financial reporting, Ms. Coolidge indicated that an outside accountant was not currently anticipated to be necessary, although a waiver would need to be filed based on the Land Bank's expected revenue level. She referenced information from another land bank indicating that the waiver threshold was estimated at \$500,000, noting that the Land Bank was not expected to approach that level in the near term.

Following discussion, a motion was made to approve the budget and move the process forward.

A motion was made by Board Member Stinner to approve the draft budget. The motion was seconded by Board Member Newman. There was no discussion. The Secretary called the roll. "AYES": Newman, Stinner, Ingram, Garrett, Flores. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Kaufman and Shaul. Motion carried.

7. Discussion and Possible Action on Proposed WPRLB Policies

- a. Financial Management Policy**
- b. General Operating Policy**

Ms. Coolidge presented the proposed revisions to the Financial Management Policy and General Operating Policy, which incorporated feedback from the previous meeting and additional input from legal counsel. The Board reviewed the redlined versions reflecting the proposed changes.

After a brief discussion and no further questions or proposed changes, a motion was made to adopt both the Financial Management Policy and the General Operating Policy as presented.

A motion was made by Board Member Stinner to adopt both the Financial Management Policy and the General Operating Policy. The motion was seconded by Board Member Flores. There was no discussion. The Secretary called the roll. "AYES": Garrett, Newman, Flores, Stinner, Ingram. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Kaufman and Shaul. Motion carried.

8. Discussion on Process of Accepting Donated Property to Land Bank – Kimball property proposed with Title Issues

Ms. Coolidge introduced a discussion regarding the process for accepting donated properties, particularly those with title issues. She explained that a property owner in Kimball was willing to donate a property currently titled in the name of a deceased family member. The City of Kimball had consulted with legal counsel regarding the necessary work and asked whether the property could be referred to the Land Bank before the title issues were resolved.

Ms. Coolidge explained that addressing title issues is consistent with the Land Bank's purpose of removing barriers that prevent properties from returning to productive use. She noted that the Land Bank could begin reviewing a property and coordinating the necessary work before formally taking title, provided there was an understanding of the intended transfer. The Board discussed the importance of evaluating each property before acceptance, including its marketability, anticipated holding period, carrying costs, potential property

tax obligations, and any environmental concerns. The Board would retain discretion to determine whether a property should be accepted based on the circumstances and anticipated challenges.

The discussion also addressed environmental assessments, particularly asbestos surveys. Ms. Folck referenced a property in Gering for which she had applied for a grant through the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE), noting that the process was taking considerable time. The Land Bank could potentially fund asbestos surveys to expedite the process, but doing so for multiple properties could quickly consume a significant portion of its limited budget. The estimated cost per survey was noted to be approximately \$1,400.

Ms. Coolidge also indicated that the Land Bank's status as a separate 501(c)(3) organization might provide opportunities to pursue grants for asbestos abatement or other property related costs. Eligibility requirements, including whether ownership must be established before applying, would need to be researched. A question was also raised regarding potential historic preservation restrictions on the Kimball property, which was believed to date to the late 1800s. The discussion indicated that additional requirements could depend on the property's historic designation and whether federal funding was involved.

The Board agreed that the Kimball property could be brought forward for consideration before title was cleared, allowing the Land Bank to evaluate the property and determine whether to proceed with the necessary steps toward acceptance. Ms. Coolidge agreed to lead the follow-up process and coordinate with the City of Kimball. The goal was to bring information back to the Board at its next meeting. Ms. Folck encouraged that the City of Kimball proceed with requesting an asbestos survey through DWEE, if it had not already done so, noting that the survey could be a significant factor in the timeline.

9. Demo and Review of Draft WPRLB Inventory Database and Tracking System

Ms. Coolidge presented a draft WPRLB inventory database and tracking system, developed to maintain comprehensive property records, monitor acquisitions and dispositions, and track associated costs and activities required for statutory reporting.

The system includes an overview dashboard and individual sections for property information, acquisition and due diligence, disposition, activity logs, expenses, and reporting. Features include tracking property status and eligibility requirements, acquisition and disposition dates, length of ownership, property assessments, maintenance activities, vendor payments, and expenses attributable to each municipality.

The Board discussed how to categorize zoning classifications consistently between Gering and Kimball, including whether to use general categories or incorporate each municipality's specific zoning classifications. Members raised questions about which inventory information would be made publicly available, with further consideration needed regarding statutory reporting requirements and the appropriate level of detail for public access.

Ms. Coolidge noted that the system was still in draft form and that some fields and reporting functions would need refinement. She invited additional feedback and indicated that she would arrange a more detailed working session with Ms. Folck and a representative from Kimball to review the system and identify any further adjustments. No formal action was taken.

10. Standing Items:

a. Financial Report

Ms. Coolidge presented the financial report and reviewed the year-end financial position as of September 30, 2026. Beginning with \$100,000, the Land Bank incurred \$2,947.50 in executive director expenses and earned \$11.32 in interest income, resulting in an ending balance of \$97,063.82. This amount carried forward as the beginning balance for the new fiscal year and was reflected in the statement of net position.

b. Property Identification

There were no properties to report at this time.

c. Property Status Report

No property status was presented at this time.

d. Executive Director Report

Ms. Coolidge noted that her written report for September was included in the agenda packet and highlighted updates on ongoing items and anticipated next steps. She stated that she would continue refining the property tracking system and that the Board would need to clarify the referral process and determine when properties should be referred to the Land Bank. She anticipated that the process would become clearer as the Land Bank began working with specific properties.

Ms. Coolidge reported that she had secured the domain name wprlandbank.org through GoDaddy and purchased a basic Squarespace membership to begin developing the Land Bank's website. Following an initial discovery call with Squarespace, she identified three primary website purposes: meeting the statutory requirement to publish the Land Bank's property inventory, promoting transparency and building public trust regarding the use of funds, and marketing properties when they become available. The website could also accommodate legal notices and other functions as needed in the future. She anticipated continuing website development in October and suggested involving others in discussions about branding and the potential creation of a logo.

e. Next Meeting: November 4, 2026, 1:00 p.m.

It was announced that the next meeting was scheduled for November 4, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. at the same location. The Board discussed the possibility of offering a Zoom option when member availability could impact achieving a quorum or when weather conditions might affect attendance. Any change to a virtual or hybrid format would need to be determined far enough in advance to allow for proper public notice. Ms. Coolidge noted she would conduct a poll to assess members' availability and determine whether a Zoom option should be publicized for the next meeting.

- 11. Open Comment:** Discussion or action by the Western Panhandle Regional Land Bank Board regarding unscheduled business will not take place. This section is for citizen comment only.

No public comments were received.

12. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Board Member Stinner and it was seconded by Board Member Newman. There was no discussion. On roll call vote, the following voted "AYE": Garrett, Newman, Flores, Stinner and Ingram. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Kaufman and Shaul.

Meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Tony Kaufman, Chair

ATTEST:

Karen Heins, Administrative Secretary