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

**August 5, 2026**

---

A meeting of the Western Panhandle Regional Land Bank (WPRLB) Board was held in open session on August 5, 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, Tony Kaufman, and Amy Newman. Absent: Brady Shaul, John Stinner and Sarah Flores. Also present were the following: Annie Folck (Gering City Engineer), Michelle Coolidge (BB Associates), Karen Heins (Gering City Admin Support), and Lyndsey Mathews (Gering City Finance Director).

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
   Board Chair Tony Kaufman called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. It was noted that a quorum of the WPRLB Board was present and business could be conducted.

2. **Open Meetings Act**
   Chair Kaufman 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.

   Chair Kaufman 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 Western Panhandle Regional Land Bank 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**
   Chair Kaufman 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 June 3, 2026 WPRLB Board Meeting**

   **A motion was made by Board Member Ingram to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2026 WPRLB Board meeting. Seconded by Board Member Newman. There was no discussion. The Secretary called the roll. "AYES": Newman, Ingram, Garrett and Kaufman. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Shaul, Stinner and Flores. Motion carried.**

5. **Board Designation of Method for Reasonable Advanced Notice of the Meeting**
   Ms. Coolidge presented a proposed policy regarding the official designation of meeting notification methods and noted recent changes to the Open Meetings Act. She highlighted five methods of notification including official electronic platform, public notice, board notification, news media, and record of notice.

   Discussion included the required quarterly publication of meeting dates in the Star-Herald, and posting meeting notices and agendas electronically. The Board also discussed responsibility for providing notices and the use of the WPRLB website once established.

   Following discussion, the Board designated quarterly publication of the WPRLB meeting schedule in the Star-Herald, with meeting notices and agendas posted on the WPRLB website once established, as the official methods of meeting notification. The Board further designated the Executive Director as responsible for coordinating and providing meeting notifications.

   **A motion was made by Board Member Ingram to designate quarterly publication of the WPRLB meeting schedule in the Star-Herald, with meeting notices and agendas posted on the WPRLB website once established, as the official methods of meeting notification. Seconded by Board Member Garrett. There was no further discussion. The Secretary called the roll. "AYES": Kaufman, Garrett, Ingram and Newman. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Shaul, Stinner and Flores. Motion carried.**

6. **Designation of Signers to WPRLB Bank Accounts**
Ms. Folck reported that the process of establishing the bank account was nearly complete and that the Board needed to designate authorized signers for the account. Following discussion, the Board agreed that two authorized signatures would be required on all checks.

**A motion was made by Board Member Ingram to designate the following individuals as authorized signers on the Western Panhandle Regional Land Bank bank account, with two signatures required on each check: Tony Kaufman, Gabe Ingram, Amy Newman, Michelle Coolidge, and Lyndsey Mathews. The motion was seconded by Board Member Newman. There was no further discussion. The Secretary called the roll. "AYES": Newman, Ingram, Kaufman and Garrett. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Shaul, Stinner and Flores. Motion carried.**

7. **Review of Fundraising Presentation Materials and Strategy**
Ms. Coolidge presented the fundraising materials included in the agenda packet, including a PowerPoint presentation and a front-and-back informational flyer, which will be used as part of the WPRLB fundraising efforts and presentations to potential funders. She noted that certain portions of the presentation may be customized for specific audiences and that minor formatting revisions remain to be completed. Ms. Coolidge also noted that the logo was obtained from a template and that branding for the WPRLB's materials will be discussed at a future meeting. Board members were invited to provide comments and suggestions regarding the materials.

During discussion, Board Chair Kaufman asked about the specific contribution amounts being made by Kimball and Gering. Ms. Coolidge noted that the budget was a separate agenda item to be discussed next and that the contribution amount from the City of Kimball was not yet included. Board Member Ingram noted that the Kimball City Council had possibly discussed the matter at its meeting the previous evening. Chair Kaufman stated that he and Board Member Stinner had discussed some strategies for approaching potential contributors so that fundraising materials could begin to be presented with specific dollar amounts. He noted that they would likely formalize those strategies when Board Member Stinner returned and that they would look for larger dollar commitments over multiple years.

Ms. Folck noted that the Finance Director wanted to participate in the upcoming budget discussion and asked Ms. Mathews to join the meeting. Board members were invited to provide any additional comments or suggested revisions to Ms. Coolidge following the meeting.

8. **Review of Draft Budget for FY2027**
Ms. Coolidge referenced the draft budget documents included in the agenda packet and explained that the budget was a preliminary, high-level draft based on information discussed at previous Board meetings and estimates where specific amounts were not yet known. She noted that the City of Gering's anticipated $100,000 contribution of ARPA funds had been spread over three years for purposes of the draft and that a contribution amount from the City of Kimball was not yet available. Ms. Coolidge stated that she planned to meet with staff and the City Council in Kimball to discuss the Land Bank.

Ms. Folck clarified that the City of Gering's $100,000 ARPA contribution must be provided during the current fiscal year and therefore should be reflected in the first year of the budget. Ms. Mathews further explained that the ARPA funds must be spent within the required timeframe, although the Land Bank would not necessarily need to expend the entire $100,000 during the fiscal year. She noted that the budget should distinguish between the funds received and the timing of expenditures. It was noted that both a balance sheet and an operating budget need to be created.

Discussion was held regarding donations, grants, and other anticipated income. Ms. Mathews recommended that donations and grants not be included as budgeted revenue until they have actually been received. Ms. Coolidge also explained that the amount included for other income was based on potential property sales; however, Ms. Mathews recommended that no property sale revenue be budgeted in the first fiscal year because the timing of property acquisitions, development, and sales is currently unknown.

Ms. Folck discussed the potential for the City of Gering to provide in-kind contributions, such as staff time for property cleanup and demolition, in lieu of or in addition to direct financial contributions. She noted that she believed this was something the City of Gering could provide, although she could not speak on behalf of the City of Kimball. The value of such contributions could be tracked as part of the Cities' commitments to the Land Bank. Board Member Ingram also raised the possibility of proposing that Kimball use funds previously allocated for CRA purposes for Land Bank activities, although the status of that possibility was not known. These potential funding and in-kind contribution options were identified as matters to be discussed with Kimball staff and City Council.

The Board discussed the need to identify an initial property in each community in order to develop a more realistic budget. Chair Kaufman suggested that a property be identified in both Gering and Kimball to allow Ms. Coolidge to develop budgets based on actual projects. Ms. Folck recommended that the Land Bank initially focus on properties that can be acquired at little or no cost and that acquisition and demolition expenditures be kept to a minimum. She noted that some properties may be available through donation and that properties requiring significant expenditures may not be appropriate initial projects. The Board discussed the potential costs associated with asbestos and other remediation and the possibility of seeking grants to assist with those costs. Ms. Folck noted that she had already applied for a grant related to a Gering property and that the grant process could provide information regarding remediation needs before the Land Bank accepts a property. It was suggested that a similar grant application be considered for the Kimball property.

The Board agreed that the initial projects should focus on low-cost or donated properties that can provide early successes for the Land Bank. Ms. Coolidge summarized that she would revise the draft budget to reflect the minimum necessary expenditures as the Land Bank begins operations.

**9. Discussion and Action on Adoption of WPRLB Policies**

**a. Financial Management Policy**

**b. General Operating Policy**

Ms. Coolidge presented draft Financial Management and General Operating Policies for Board review. She noted that the policies had been prepared to establish clear procedures for the WPRLB as it begins operations and that the drafts had been reviewed by legal counsel. Ms. Folck added that while the City and legal counsel had reviewed the policies, legal recommended adding language clarifying that the policies reflect best practices but that the Land Bank reserves the right to deviate from the policies when necessary for maximum efficiency. Ms. Coolidge noted that the language had been added to the General Operating Policy and agreed that it could also be added to the Financial Management Policy. She expressed some concern about making the policies too flexible given the level of scrutiny of land banks.

Ms. Coolidge noted that the General Operating Policy had been marked to identify provisions required by state statute and provisions that require Board direction or action.

Chair Kaufman asked whether the policies needed to be adopted at the current meeting. It was noted that the policies were presented for review and action could take place at the next meeting. Chair Kaufman recommended that Ms. Coolidge work with City legal counsel to finalize the language before the policies are brought back to the Board for approval.

Ms. Coolidge encouraged Board members to provide any questions or comments by email. The Board will review final versions of the policies at the next meeting.

**10. Standing Items:**

**a. Financial Report**

No financial report was presented as the WPRLB's financial accounts and processes are still being established.

**b. Property Identification**

Ms. Folck noted that property identification had been discussed previously and that additional due diligence is being conducted before properties are recommended to the Board for acquisition. Going forward, the Executive Director will work on property identification and due diligence as the Cities bring potential properties forward.

c. **Property Status Report**
No property status was presented at this time.

d. **Executive Director Report**
Ms. Coolidge noted that her written Executive Director Report was included in the agenda packet. She also raised the need to establish procedures for handling invoices and authorizing payments during periods when the Board does not have a quorum or is unable to meet. She noted that this should be addressed and documented in the WPRLB's policies and minutes to ensure appropriate authorization for necessary payments.

e. **Next Meeting: September 2, 2026, 1:00 p.m.**

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

Meeting adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

___________________________
Tony Kaufman, Chair

ATTEST:

_______________________________
Karen Heins, Administrative Secretary