

Richland Wilkin Joint Powers Authority
Board Meeting
January 13, 2026 at 9:00 AM
Richland County Courthouse – Commissioners Room

Members Present: Nathan Berseth, Eric Klindt, Perry Miller (phone), and Jon Braton (phone).

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Dennis Larson, Fred Strege, Amy Clark, Shawn Paczkowski, Mike Rosley, Jason Semerad, Rick Busko

Before starting on the agenda items, Berseth explained that Wilkin County has appointed Eric Klindt to replace Dennis Larson as a JPA Board member. Klindt was welcomed and Larson was thanked for his years of service. Larson made a motion to accept the appointment, and Braton seconded. The motion carried.

The board then proceeded with the following agenda items:

1. Review/Approve of 11/13/25 revised minutes, 12/11/25 minutes, and 12/16/25 minutes: Miller made a motion to approve the three sets of minutes as written, seconded by Braton. The motion carried.
2. Review/Approve of Sarah Erickson's 12/31/25 Financial Reports: Due to year end, Clark explained that only financial reports were available for December month end, and the usual spreadsheet showing fund balances was not yet available. Berseth suggested that the approval of financial reports be postponed until next month. The other board members agreed.
3. Old Business:
 - a. *Housing Program Updates:* Berseth noted that 6 houses remain in Breckenridge, with one closing next week. Nathan signed a consent to allow a garage to be moved in on the one that's closing. An additional one or two homes in Breckenridge are anticipated to sell. The JPA is sitting on some homes in Hankinson. The Hohenstein twin homes have become rent to own, so they are not subject to JPA buyout. Thomsen Homes is under contract to sell one of the homes in Colfax. Otherwise, there are 4 Silverline and 4 Burchill homes in Colfax for sale, with an additional home in Wyndmere.
 - b. *Renovation Project Updates:* Mario is putting siding on the red house (now beige). Windows should be here at the end of the month, and it's moving along. The red house project was delayed due to the extra work that Mario put into the Rothsay house, and the Rothsay house is now done. Clark gave an update on the status of the renovation projects that were approved last month. Miller noted that it would be nice to get updates every 30-60 days from contractors when we approve loans, and Clark noted that this is already required in the distribution agreements.
4. New Business:

- a. *Breckenridge Legacy Development – Updated Application:* Clark explained that an updated application from the Breckenridge Legacy group was expected to be received, but it hadn't come in yet. Clark summarized the updated terms that were discussed when she, Braton, and Larson met with the Breck Legacy group.
- b. *Building Inspector / Code Enforcements:* Berseth asked Paczkowski to look into what it would take for Paczkowski to become a building inspector. Richland County is concerned about enforcement of dilapidated homes not coming back to the county anymore due to the \$1,600 primary residence credit. He would like to explore whether the JPA could enforce codes, clean up the properties, and offer to buy them. Berseth suggested this may be a way forward until construction costs come down.
- c. *Funding Opportunities:*
 - i. Bois de Sioux Golf Course: An application was received from Fred Strege for financing involving an irrigation project for the golf course. The application provides that the City of Wahpeton (owner of the golf course property) would take out a loan for up to \$1M to install a new, modern irrigation system. Expected loan payments would be about \$90K a year, ½ paid by the JPA, ¼ paid by the City, and ¼ paid by the Golf Course. Strege explained that he met with the City of Wahpeton Finance Committee yesterday, and they approved the concept unanimously and enthusiastically. 5 lending institutions are interested in providing the financing. The City Council also needs to approve the project, but with the backing from the Finance Committee, Strege hopes that approval will be a slam dunk. Strege gave various other explanations about the project, the history of the golf course, and who the primary contractors are for this type of project. Berseth asked if the JPA would receive a mortgage against the property, and Strege said no, that it wouldn't work for this type of project. This financing request is essentially a grant of funds to the City of Wahpeton for use in paying on a loan. Significant discussion occurred as to whether this project should be funded only by Richland County, or whether Wilkin County funds should also be used, and board members disagreed on this topic. Berseth explained that the project benefits Wilkin County, and because property taxes are paid by the Golf Course to Wilkin County, it makes sense that Wilkin County should contribute to some extent. Klindt, along with Wilkin County Commissioners from the audience, disagreed. Miller noted that the Food Pantry is an example of another project that was located in Wahpeton, but benefitted residents of both counties, so both counties contributed to the project. Berseth suggested that membership costs should be different for ND and MN residents if only the ND fund contributes, and Strege explained that this would be unworkable. Before any motion was made, Braton had to leave in order to get on a plane. After much further discussion, Berseth made a motion to approve a distribution to the City of Wahpeton for the lesser of 50% of the loan payment or \$45,000 annually for a period of 15 years, which loan would be utilized by the City of Wahpeton for the golf

course irrigation project. Miller seconded the motion. Discussion continued, including Berseth expressing his desire for Wilkin to exempt the golf course from property taxes as a form of contribution toward the project. Strege noted that he would look into it. Miller, Berseth, and Klindt all voted in favor of the motion, and the motion carried.

- d. *Realtor for Breckenridge Houses:* Clark noted that the Miller Realty contracts for the Breckenridge houses are set to expire soon. Larson explained that he reached out to Andrew Yaggie late last week and referred him to Braton for follow up. He expects Yaggie to make a proposal to list the Breckenridge homes, including the amount of any required retainer. Berseth recommended that the proposal be made in person. Discussion occurred regarding Yaggie's prior idea to hold an auction on one of the homes. Semerad provided comments regarding realtor retainers. Because the Miller Realty listings will soon expire, the board discussed extending the Miller Realty listings to next month's meeting. Klindt made a motion to extend the Miller Realty listings to February 10, 2025, and Miller seconded. The motion unanimously carried by roll call vote. Clark was instructed to reach out to Lisa Mauch to request the extension.
- 5. Approve Bills. Klindt made a motion to approve the bills, seconded by Miller. The motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.
 - 6. Misc.
 - a. Strege gave an update on the status of the Legacy Lakes plat. Dusty Vosberg expects the new plat to be done within a week. Once done, the PUD ordinance and an example of the special lot regulations will be ready for the JPA Board's review/approval, then it will go to the City of Wahpeton for input. Berseth asked if this can all be simultaneous with the bidding process, and Strege noted that for the project to go to bids, just the plat needs to be done. Berseth noted that the goal is for the project to go to bid no later than February 10th, that the project needs to be bid while contractors are hungry, and the sale of the commercial property to the north is still a go.
 - b. Discussion occurred regarding revising the JPA agreement to allow for substitute board members or proxies. It was noted that meetings can be rescheduled to accommodate scheduling conflicts. No action was taken.
 - c. Discussion occurred regarding the status of verification from the MN State Auditor on whether Wilkin County must approve the JPA's distribution of Wilkin County funds. Clark explained that she called the auditor's office, hasn't heard back, and needs to follow up.
 - d. The Board then discussed the purpose of the JPA. Klindt stated that he doesn't believe the comments at the last meeting were accurate. His understanding is that the reason we keep the counties together is to ensure that what the JPA doesn't violate the Settlement Agreement, and he understood this board's purpose to just

ensure its actions are legal. Strege explained that the JPA board is a screening device, which is necessary because there are lots of requirements in the settlement agreement regarding clawbacks and conditions that require screening. If things were to be different, the Settlement Agreement would need to be completed amended. Strege also noted that he cannot believe that at either the county level or the state level, if they were provided with the settlement agreement and the joint powers agreement, that they would agree with Klindt's position. Berseth stated that this is the answer we need from the State Auditor (the answer Clark is trying to get). If Klindt is right, if that's the letter of the law, we're not complying with the State Auditor. Strege noted that everything is modifiable, but numerous entities would have to agree to all amendments. Discussion occurred as to how each county wishes to allocate its funds. Further discussion occurred as to whether the Wilkin County JPA board members wish for the Wilkin County Commissioners to approve projects, or whether there should be dollar thresholds, whether all terms set by the JPA on projects should require approval, and the delay this may cause and/or the special meetings that may be required. Clark was instructed to add this topic to next month's agenda.

Thereafter the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Clark