

**Richland County Board**  
**January 8, 2026**

**Convene**

Travis Paddock called the meeting of the Richland County Board to order at 7:00pm on January 8, 2026, in the Jail Meeting Room. The meeting was proclaimed open, the Pledge of Allegiance recited, and prayer was led by Jason Burckhartt. Attendance: Cindy Given, Present; Morgan Henton, Present; Travis Paddock, Present; Steve Schonert, Present; Alexis McFarland, Present; Brian VanBlaricum, Present; Dennis Graves, Present.

**Changes/Approval of Agenda**

Steve Schonert stated that he was not prepared to discuss 7C and would like to table until next month. Cindy Given made a motion to approve the agenda with changes stated above. Dennis Graves seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Information, Correspondence, Upcoming Meetings**

The February County Board meeting will be moved to Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at 7pm. 911 meets on Wednesday January 28 at 9am at the Fire Station.

**Motion/Vote - Consent Agenda**

Cindy Given made a motion to approve all items under the consent agenda. Brian VanBlaricum seconded the motion. Items approved were the minutes from December 11, 2025, for County Board, January 2, 2026, for Road and Bridge meeting, November 12, 2025, for 911 ETSB meeting; the county officer reports; Mis Tres Potrillos Liquor License renewal; Intergovernmental agreement with Kane County; Re-appointment of Chris Waller to RMTD Board; Re-appointment of Larry Dunn to Housing Authority Board and Appointment of Tiffany Fulk to Housing Authority Board; Appointment of Cindy Given to Southeastern Illinois Economic Development Authority (SIEDA) Board.

**Motion/Vote - Finance Committee**

Steve Schonert discussed the claims totaling \$99,429.67 county and \$103,790.68 non-county. There is a claim to ROSC for \$74,000, but the county is going to split that in half and only pay \$37,000 this month. Mr. Schonert then made a motion to approve the claims. Dennis Graves seconded the motion. The roll call was as follows; Alexis McFarland, yes; Cindy Given, yes; Morgan Henton, yes; Steve Schonert, yes; Travis Paddock, yes. Dennis Graves, yes; Brian VanBlaricum, yes. Motion carried.

Mr. Schonert discussed the possible amendments to the County Solar Farm Ordinance. Mr. Schonert stated the current application fee is \$5000 total but would like to adjust to \$5000 per megawatt and add a yearly inspection fee of \$10,000. Mr. Schonert stated that the finance committee would like to change the minimum acreage to 20 acres for farms. He stated that if the board passes the proposed changes, they should go into effect immediately.

Steve Schonert made a motion to increase the application fee to \$5000 per megawatt, add a \$10,000 yearly inspection fee and have a minimum of 20 acres. Cindy Given seconded the motion. Brian VanBlaricum asked where the \$10,000 would go. Mr. Schonert stated that it would go into County General fund. Motion carried.

### **Sheriff's Report**

Sheriff Hires gave an update on the radio project. He stated that three sites were secured for the transmitters and working on the fourth site in Wakefield. Hopefully it will be done in the Spring. Mr. Schonert asked Sheriff Hires if we have recently sent any juveniles anywhere. Sheriff Hires stated that we do not have anywhere to send them.

### **State's Attorney Report**

State's Attorney Chelsey Clark stated that as of year-end 2025, she had filed 276 felony charges, 110 misdemeanors, 106 major traffic offenses and 263 minor traffic offenses and sent 30 individuals to IDOC.

### **Highway Business**

Brian VanBlaricum stated that the County only received one bid from Wabash Valley F.S. to provide diesel fuel for 2026 and the road and bridge committee accepted the bid. Brian VanBlaricum made a motion to approve Wabash Valley F.S.'s bid for diesel fuel for 2026. Steve Schonert seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Board Committee Reports**

#### **IT.**

Corey McDonald stated the website is receiving around 2,300 – 2,400 users a month. Corey McDonald discussed issues with Highway department's internet service. Mr. McDonald also discussed reaching out to Greater Wabash Regional Planning for possible grants available. He then stated that he will start cutting back from using Kemper on certain software, which will save the county money.

Shelly Harmon discussed the new Mapping Program and stated that the meetings will start in April. Mr. Schonert asked if she had an update on the new Starbucks. Shelly stated that she thought they would be close to opening towards the end of January.

### **Executive Session**

Cindy Given made a motion to enter executive session to discuss possible purchase of real estate and Labor Union negotiations. Steve Schonert seconded the motion. The roll call was as follows; Alexis McFarland, yes; Cindy Given, yes; Morgan Henton, yes; Steve Schonert, yes; Travis Paddock, yes. Dennis Graves, yes; Brian VanBlaricum, yes. Motion carried. The board entered executive session at 7:23 PM.

Brian VanBlaricum made a motion to exit executive session. Cindy Given seconded the motion. The board exited executive session at 7:37 PM.

### **Adjournment**

Cindy Give made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alexis McFarland seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM.

Amanda Troyer  
County Clerk

Travis Paddock  
County Board Chairman