

Winchester Town Lakes Committee Meeting, September 24th, 2025

9:00 am Library Community Room and Zoom

Present: Gary Engstrom (Rock Lake), Joe Discianno (Town Board Liaison), Brian Schumaker (Harris Lake), Abby Vogt (NLDC), Richard Logan (Vilas County Supervisor), Peter Stemper (Adelaide Lake), Rolf Ethun, Steve Budnick (Rock Lake), Arlene Kellet (South Turtle), Dave Burger (Birch Lake), Darrell Smith (Little Papoose), Dave Lull (Pardee Lake), Bill Schein (Rainbow Lake), Jim Evans (Harris Lake), Katie Hein (Trout lake Station), Nate Petreman (Papoose), Mark Christensen (Hiawatha), Nancy Russell (Hiawatha) Deb Silvis (North Turtle), Arlene Kellett (South Turtle), Glen Wildenberg

Meeting opened by Gary Engstrom at 9:00 am. Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Agenda Approved. Motion made by Brian Schumacher. Seconded by Peter Stemper. Motion carried.

Minutes from August 27th, 2025 meeting were approved. Motion made by Dave Lull, seconded by Dave Berger. Motion carried.

Financial Report: Gary Engstrom reported that there were no expenses since the last meeting. A final financial report will be prepared and distributed to the committee.

Report from Town Board- Joe Discianno. Joe indicated that the town is in their budget process now. At the recommendation of the WTLC, Town Supervisors will consider NLDC Proposal/Funding Request for management and prevention of AIS in town lakes. Beaver dam removal was discussed, and various options were identified ranging from Vilas County, Lake Associations, private payment and Winchester staff. Joe was asked about the progress of Winchester getting Broadband services. People have been working on this and things are looking more positive lately with Norvado awarded the majority of the Winchester service area. Joe also shared about ATV use. Interest was expressed about the EMS District. Joe was asked about maintenance of boat landings at Birch Lake. Joe said a feasibility study is being done regarding partnership opportunities between MW, BJ, PI and Winchester.

Abby Vogt, NLDC Woods and Water Director presented NLDC's 2025 End of Year Summary regarding AIS for Winchester. No new AIS has been detected in Winchester during surveys. One more year exists on current multi-year grant and NLDC will be applying for several additional grants in 2026 for four (4) Winchester lakes. Final 2025 reports will be completed this winter including information from Onterra's activity in our area. Onterra is a subcontractor for some of the projects. A copy of Abby's Presentation entitled, "2025 AIS

Year End Summary for Town of Winchester” will be distributed to Committee Members and is included in these Minutes by reference. A request for funding (\$33,990) the 2026 AIS Agreement has been submitted to Winchester with support from the Town Lakes Committee. This will go to the Town Board to be reviewed in the budgeting process. A copy of the Proposal was reviewed at the meeting and is included in these Minutes by reference.

Old Business-

1. Discussion on the Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) Presentation by Michelle Naught at the August Meeting. Information was very well received. It was noted that copies of the Manitowish Water Chain of Lakes Aquatic Plant Management Plan which was distributed to the committee is very consistent with the approach, recommendations and information developed and communicated by Michelle. This could be a useful resource if a similar plan is needed in Winchester.
2. The meeting topics that WTLC identified for 2025 were reviewed. Attendees suggested new topics for 2026, and Gary invited people to email him additional suggestions. We will work on identifying appropriate speakers for the topics over the winter.
3. Katie Hein has written a preproposal regarding climate change and may get invited to do a full proposal in January. She may be looking for partners and/or letters of support.

New Business-

Peter Stemper presented an update on the Adelaide Lake Management Plan and efforts of the Adelaide Lake Association. The watershed includes five (5) small seepage lakes, twenty-nine (29) houses and six (6) year-round residents.

Jim Evans and Brian Schumacher presented the Harris Lake Management Plan update along with Association activities and areas of focus. Two AIS species, including Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLP) are present in Harris Lake and efforts are being made to address this. Ninety-six (96) residences on the Lake and sixty (60) are in the Lake Association. Harris Lake Association has 501.c3 status.

Items from the Floor These items were included throughout the meeting.

2026 Meeting dates were agreed to remain on the fourth Wednesday of the Month at 9:00 AM in the Community Room of the Library. The meeting dates are:

1/28/26, 4/22/26, 5/27/26, 6/24/26, 7/22/26, 8/26/26 and 9/23/26.

The individual Lake Association and Management Plan Update Schedule will be in the same order as 2025.

Two articles were written and distributed based on the Shoreland Preservation and Restoration information presented by Cathy Higley at Vilas County. The papers can be edited and distributed to Lake Association members to help explain the key factors and actions that can be taken to help preserve water quality and shoreline habitat.

The Turtle Chain is developing a Fish Stick habitat project working with Cathy Higley to secure appropriate sites and permits. Information will be shared with the committee as we progress.

Adjournment Motion made by Jim Evans, seconded by Brian Schumacher.

OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE JANUARY, 28, 2026
COMMUNITY ROOM LIBRARY @ 9:00 am.