

*Lakes Committee - Town of Plum Lake*  
*June 18, 2025, 9:00 am*  
*Town of Plum Lake Town Hall, Sayner WI*

Present: Jim Haberle, Joe Heitz, Cathy Higley (Vilas County), Bob Jackson, Doug Pinney, John Richter, Mike Stroh, Tracy Wallace, Lynn Wiggins, Jona Eliason (Town Supervisor) Becky Gaskill (Lakeland Times), George Lannert (President, Plum Lake Association), Grace Marrer and Jordan Mueller (Decontamination Unit)

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Bob Jackson, Chair.

1. Open Meeting Verification – Notice of the meeting was appropriately posted at the Sayner United States Post Office and on the Town of Plum Lake website.
2. Minutes of the May 21, 2025 Meeting – Upon a **motion** by Joe Heitz and seconded by John Richter, the minutes of the May 21, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved.

Lynn thanked Doug for taking the minutes of the May meeting.

3. Treasurer's Report – Doug Pinney sent a copy of the 2025 Year to Date Project Analysis to the Committee prior to the meeting. The report shows the income and expense for the following Town Lakes Committee projects:

- Clean Boats/Clean Waters (CBCW)
- Large Lake Surveying (Onterra LLC Contract)
- I-LIDS Monitoring
- Small Lakes Monitoring
- Little Star AIS Remediation
- Fish Sticks

The transactions in these reports are in agreement with Town records and show that we have sufficient budgetary funds to complete these 2025 projects.

*CBCW* - We have received \$8875.00 in donations to date. The annual budgeted amount is \$11,782.00. Year to date expenses are noted in the report. The Plum Lake Association increased its donation from \$3000.00 to \$5000.00, in part to help cover possible future expenses related to the hybrid milfoil found on Plum Lake.

*Little Star AIS Remediation* - Tim Hoyman completed the final reimbursement request for the Little Star Quick Response grant for remediation of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) in Little Star. Once that request is signed and approved the Town is expected to receive \$19,966.50 from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR).

Upon a **motion** by Joe Heitz and seconded by Jim Haberle, the Treasurer's report was unanimously accepted.

4. New Business – Status of 2025 Programs –
  - A. Lake Management Plan Update Surveys – With the assistance of Tim Hoyman of Onterra LLC the Town applied for and received a Surface Water Planning Grant to perform aquatic plant surveys on Plum, West Plum, Star and Little Star, including

additional late spring-early summer monitoring on Plum Lake for the hybrid water milfoil identified last fall. Monitoring should begin in June.

In addition to monitoring provided by the Surface Water Planning Grant, this year's budget included a quick response grant for controlling the hybrid milfoil found on Plum. The grant was not pursued by the Town as we learned that Plum Lake is too large to be eligible for a Quick Response grant and the hybrid is not EWM identified as an invasive by the DNR.

B. BLIMS

- i. Maintenance – Cameras were installed in early May. All cameras are operational. The speaker on Irving is not working properly and will be repaired.

Smaller and more efficient cameras are being developed. These will hopefully decrease maintenance and installation costs in the future.

- ii. Enforcement and Video Monitoring – Joe Heitz is contacting the WDNR regarding this issue.

C. Clean Boats/Clean Waters (CBCW)

- i. Monitoring Coverage - Interns from the University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh (UW-Osh) began their scheduled monitoring of the lakes in late May. Interns appear to be active during their assigned shifts.

- ii. Towels – Bob Jackson reported that a new vendor for CBCW towels is available with a cost of \$3.75 per towel plus set up fees.

Doug Pinney made and Mike Stroh seconded a **motion** to purchase 300 towels from this vendor. The motion was unanimously approved.

D. Little Star Remediation – Mapping of the EWM will be performed by Onterra, LLC during June. Aquatic Plant Management will perform hand harvesting later in the summer based on survey results.

E. Rapid Response Lake Surveys –

- i. 2025 Surveys – The contract with North Lakeland Discovery Center to perform surveys on multiple lakes as outlined in last month's meeting minutes has been signed.

F. Fish Sticks –

- i. Star Lake – Installation of fish sticks on Star Lake is planned for January-February 2026.

G. Boat Decontamination – Decontamination Units will be present on the landings at Star, Plum, Trout and Big Muskellunge Lakes during the summer of 2025. Cathy Higley introduced two interns, Grace Marrer and Jordan Mueller, who will be

manning the units this summer. The unit was available in the Town Hall parking lot; Cathy demonstrated its use to Committee members at the conclusion of the meeting. Cathy distributed handouts, tracking sheets and samples of spiny water fleas to Tracy Wallace, Joe Heitz and Bob Jackson who have volunteered to do outreach for the decontamination project. Cathy noted that one of the main purposes of the decontamination unit is to control spiny water flea which is difficult to detect on boats and decontaminate by other means.

5. Vilas County Update – Bob Jackson congratulated Cathy Higley on her receipt of the 2025 Invasive Species Action Award in June.

Cathy reported:

A. Phragmites -

- i. Removal and Detection - Phragmite removal is still active on Razorback Lake and will be done monthly throughout the summer. Lake Laura is being evaluated to determine if phragmites are present. It is anticipated that the Lakeland Discovery Center will also detect phragmites if present during its lake surveys this summer.
- ii. Training sessions – Cathy has completed training sessions for Town road crews and crews from Conover on dealing with phragmites on roadsides.

B. Decontamination Units – See 4.G. above

6. Other New Business and Citizens' Comments –

A. Wake Boat Ordinance –

- i. Notification of Property Owners and Rental Units – John Richter discussed the role of the Lakes Committee and lake associations in assisting with the notification of wake boat ordinances to Town residents and particularly to owners and renters of rental cottages. Ideally notification will occur before the busy July 4 weekend. The Town of Plum Lake, the Sayner-Star Lake Chamber of Commerce, and Vilas County Zoning have access to rental unit information which can be used to identify rental properties. Posters and other forms of notification were discussed. The Chamber of Commerce may also be effective in notifying visitors of the ordinance.  
At Cathy's suggestion, Lynn Wiggins will contact the Vilas County Department of Zoning to obtain the "Tourist Rooming House Permit List" to assist with rental property identification on the various lakes.
- ii. Border Lake Ordinances – The border lakes should be covered by wake boat ordinances as well. For the Town of Plum, this will be done in coordination with Boulder Junction. Jona Eliason reported that the Town has planned a special meeting to address the border lakes. Signage for the border lakes' landings is being developed.
- iii. Legal Challenges – Mike Stroh reported that legal challenges to the ordinance are beginning to appear. John reported that the Last Wilderness Alliance is aware and is addressing the legal issues with the townships involved. John expressed the opinion that the legal expenses of the towns associated with these challenges are covered by insurance. Jona will check Town of Plum Lake coverage.

- B. Swans – Trumpeter Swans, including one successful breeding pair, were reported on Plum Lake, Irving and Stewart Lakes.
- C. Orange Storm Fences – John questioned the presence of the orange storm fences on lakes. Joe Heitz reported that these have been placed by the WDNR to monitor the impact of water fowl on wild rice beds.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:53 am.

The next meeting of the Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake will be held on Wednesday, July 16, 2025 at 9:00 am in the Town of Plum Lake Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynn Wiggins  
Secretary

Approved July 16, 2025.