

Lakes Committee - Town of Plum Lake
August 20, 2025, 9:00 am
Town of Plum Lake Town Hall, Sayner WI

Present: Wayne Ax, Cheryl Carper, Jim Haberle, Joe Heitz, Bob Jackson, Bob Marsh, Bob Munsen, Doug Pinney, John Richter, Lynn Wiggins, Lydia Dobberstein (AIS Coordinator, North Lakeland Discovery Center), Tim Hoyman (Onterra, LLC), Geroge Lannert (President, Plum Lake Association), Sara Thompson (Plum Lake), Abby Vogt (Woods and Water Director, North Lakeland Discovery Center)

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 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. Introductions – Attendees introduced themselves and the lake or organization they represent. Bob Jackson announced that Mike Stroh has resigned from the Committee. Mike has sold his property and moved to Elm Grove, Wisconsin. Mike was thanked for his years of service and work on the Committee.
3. Minutes of the July 16, 2025 Meeting – Upon a **motion** by Cheryl Carper and seconded by Wayne Ax, the minutes of the July 16, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved.
4. Treasurer's Report – Doug Pinney sent a copy of the 2025 Year to Date Project Analysis to the Committee prior to the meeting. The worksheets show the income and expense for each of the Town Lakes Committee projects:
 - Clean Boats/Clean Waters (CBCW)
 - Large Lake Surveying (Onterra, LLC Contract)
 - I-LIDS Acquisition and Monitoring
 - Small Lakes Monitoring
 - Little Star AIS Remediation
 - Fish Sticks

All of the Committee's projects remain within budget and there are sufficient resources remaining to complete all projects.

Work has started on the 2026 budget. Doug asked that anyone aware of projects which will require Town funds in 2026 submit that information to him as soon as possible.

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

5. New Business – Status of 2025 Programs –
 - A. Lake Management Plan Update Surveys – Tim Hoyman attended the meeting to describe Onterra's work on Town lakes in 2025, outline the significance of the findings and describe six grant applications proposed for 2026.

- i. Aquatic Plant Studies Phase I (Plum, West Plum, Star and Little Star) – All point-intercept surveys and community mapping surveys are complete. Data analysis and report writing will be completed in the second quarter of 2026.
- ii. Aquatic Plant Studies Phase II (White Birch, Ballard, Irving and Laura) – Grants will be submitted for the surveys planned for each of the four lakes in 2026.
 - 1. General - The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has modified its grant application for AIS related projects and now requires that lakes have documented aquatic invasive species, e.g. Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) or Curly Leaf Pondweed. Therefore, the Phase II lakes may not qualify for these grants but may be eligible for Lake and River Planning Grants. Although these latter grants are more competitive, the Town may move up in the ranking process due to the Town's implementation of the comprehensive lake management plan and the likelihood that non-Town sources, such as lake associations, will provide 10% of the local share of grant funding.
 - 2. Specifics – Tim presented a detailed financial analysis of the planned grant proposals. The total cost of the project is \$39,340.00 of which 67% will be paid by the WDNR and a limited amount funded through volunteer and in-kind matching opportunities. Total cost to the Town for this project is \$12,630.45. Due to the \$10,000 cap per grant, four separate grant applications will be submitted.
- iii. Plum Lake Hybrid Water Milfoil (HWM) Monitoring –
 - 1. Survey - The early season HWM survey on Plum Lake was completed in June. The plant is widespread throughout the lake and particularly prevalent in the East Bay area. Although these results appear concerning, the distribution of HWM closely parallels the distribution of native plants such as Common Waterweed and Coontail found in the point-intercept surveys conducted later in the summer. In addition, on these point-intercept studies HWM was only found in the East Bay and in two additional sites localized to the north shore of Plum. A late season survey for HWM will be conducted in late August or early September when HWM will be at its peak biomass.
 - 2. Grant – Tim proposed a shortened AIS grant application for a late season AIS survey for Plum Lake in 2026. Total cost of the project is \$4195.00 with the State paying 67%. Total cost to the Town is \$1,384.35.
- iv. Little Star Lake Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) Monitoring –
 - 1. Survey - The early season survey for Eurasian Water Milfoil on Little Star Lake was performed in June. This is the first survey in which a larger bed of EWM has been found. EWM remains scattered in the remainder of the lake. These results are not surprising due to the mild

weather conditions last winter which preferentially support the growth of invasives over native species. A late season survey will occur at the end of August or beginning of September.

Bob Jackson reported that Aquatic Plant Management removed 87 cubic feet of EWM from Little Star during their hand harvesting on August 5.

2. Grant - Tim proposed a shortened AIS grant application for early and late season AIS surveys on Little Star Lake in 2026. Total cost of the project is \$3,915.00 with the State paying 67%. Total cost to the Town is \$1,291.95

Bob Jackson made and Lynn Wiggins seconded a **motion** to approve the development of and Town funding for the Plum Lake and Little Star AIS survey grants. The motion passed unanimously.

- v. Southern Naiad on Plum Lake – John Richter reported that there appears to be explosive growth of Southern Naiad in the East Bay of Plum Lake. Identification of the plant was confirmed by Susan Knight at Trout Lake Station. Tim noted that Southern Naiad is a native species that can become locally aggressive and dominant. When it becomes dominant, it typically exhibits explosive growth initially and then dies out over the next three to five years.

Southern Naiad was found to be prevalent in the East Bay of Plum on the point-intercept surveys with a small amount of the plant localized to an area of the north shore. Point intercept studies indicate that neither Southern Naiad nor HWM are dominant species in Plum Lake.

B. BLIMS

- i. Maintenance – All cameras are operational. The audio is not working at Irving and at Statehouse Point and will be repaired.
- ii. Enforcement and Video Monitoring – No suspected violations have been reported this year to date.
- iii. Change of Ownership of Sentry – Eric Lindberg has sold Environmental Sentry Protection, LLC to two of his associates who will continue the business. Improvements have been made to the new camera units; maintenance of the older units will be supported for the foreseeable future.

C. Clean Boats/Clean Waters (CBCW)

- i. Monitoring Coverage – Scheduled coverage by the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh interns ended on August 18. Interns, many from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, have done a wonderful job this year. Bob Munsen reported that we currently have several paid volunteers staffing the landings into the fall. Additional volunteers are being sought.

- D. Little Star Remediation – See V.A.iv. above. Bob Jackson reported that 87 cubic feet of EWM were hand harvested from Little Star Lake on August 5 by Aquatic Plant Management. Survey results and the volume of EWM harvested in August indicate that a second hand harvesting of EWM will be necessary this year.

Doug Pinney made and John Richter seconded a **motion** to approve funding for a second hand harvesting of EWM by Aquatic Plant Management on Little Star Lake this year. The motion passed unanimously.

- E. Rapid Response Lake Surveys – Abby Vogt, Woods and Water Coordinator, and Lydia Dobbertstein, AIS Coordinator, of the and North Lakeland Discovery Center introduced themselves and described their new roles with the Discovery Center. The Center is performing several surveys on Town lakes in 2025.

- i. Aquatic Invasive Species Early Detection Surveys – The Center is currently working on early detection surveys of Ballard, Irving, Laura, Plum, Razorback, Star and White Birch Lakes. Surveys include inspection of each lake's boat landing(s) and five targeted sites representing different habitats throughout the lakes. Surveys on Ballard, White Birch and Laura are complete; surveys of the remaining lakes will be complete by mid-September.
- ii. Spiny Water Flea Sampling – will be performed on the lakes in late August and early September.
- iii. Quagga and Zebra Mussel Monitoring – Residents on each of the lakes have been given “bricks” to place off of their piers and report any Quagga or Zebra mussels found. Bricks will be returned to the Discovery Center.

AIS, Spiny Water Flea and Mussel surveys will be performed by the Discovery Center again in 2026.

- F. Fish Sticks – no new information.

- G. Boat Decontamination – Program continues until the end of August.

- H. Wake Boat Ordinance –

- i. Notification of Property Owners and Rental Units - The Vilas County Department of Zoning “Tourist Rooming House Permit List” was distributed to the Committee. Additional action related to the list will be determined next spring prior to the busy summer rental season.
- ii. Signage – It has been reported that some of the signage at landings is being compromised. This will be monitored and action taken if needed.
- iii. Border Lake Ordinances – John Richter reported that over 60 ordinances are in place throughout Wisconsin and 50 townships in several counties are developing ordinances. Wisconsin Lakes has become more active in the process.
- iv. Legal Challenges – The current legal challenge to the ordinance in Wisconsin was removed to federal court and is progressing slowly. A challenge to the ordinance in Manitowish Waters is pending.

- v. Wake Boat Usage – Sara Thompson reported that owners of wake boats are being challenged when using their boats without the ballast and wake boat function engaged. It was stressed that the Town ordinance does not prohibit the use of the wake boat itself, only limits use of the ballast and wake boat functions.

6. Vilas County Update – no report

7. 2026 Budget -

The 2026 budget is being developed and will include funding for current projects as well as Town funding for the Little Star and Plum Lake AIS grants mentioned in 5.A.iii. and 5.A.iv. above.

The budgeting process is similar to last year. Bob Klager, Town Treasurer, will enter the Committee's funding requests into the Town's proposed budget with subsequent review and approval by the Town Supervisors.

8. Other New Business and Citizens' Comments –

- A. Access to Lakes – Bob Munsen reported that several members of the community have expressed concern about public access to a few of the smaller lakes in the Town where local property owners have installed barriers to discourage access. These barriers have been addressed by the Town. Bob suggested the Committee make a public statement that the Committee supports public lake access.

Joe Heitz made and John Richter seconded a **motion** that the Committee state for the public record that it supports public access to all lakes in the Town. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:27 am.

The next meeting of the Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake will be held on Wednesday, September 17, 2025 at 9:00 am in the Town of Plum Lake Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynn Wiggins
Secretary