



2025 Summer Annual Member Meeting Minutes

July 25, 2025

Board Members Present: President Ron Guggisberg, Vice President Nathan Pedersen, Treasurer Dave Nelson, Communications Secretary Leigh Stepan, Director Kevin Rustad, Director Nik Fetzik, and AIS Subcommittee Leader Rick Nosan.

Member/Non-Member attendance: 20 total: 18 members in-person, two members online.

Board Members Not Present: Mike Oja

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by President Ron Guggisberg

Approvals and Treasurer's Report

- April 2 minutes: Reviewed and approved. Motion Jen Pederson, Second Nik Fetzik, none opposed.
- Treasurer's report: Presented from copies on tables and screen.
- Balances at prior (April) meeting: Checking \$15,735.62; Savings \$11,391.18; Total \$27,126.80.
- Income since last meeting: Dues \$1,180; Contributions \$2,700 (including from Long Pine and Pengilly Boosters); Total \$3,880.
- Expense since last meeting: \$1,000 to Itasca Soil and Water Conservation District (boat landing watercraft inspections).
- Current total balance: \$30,012.48. Treasurer's Report approved. Nik Fetzik motioned, Leigh Stepan Second, none opposed

Nutrients/clarity (Kevin):

- Secchi depth clarity higher than previously seen at this point in the season.
- Observed algae bloom followed by 2.5 inches of rain; bloom receded. Awaiting recent test results (second round of sampling was last week).
- Plans to produce trend graphs by next meeting.

Sample Location				Average (feet)					Impaired* if				
North				24.8	22.8				23.8	< 6.5 feet			
Central				24.5	22.5				23.5				
Bridge				20.8	17.2				19.0				
West Bay				15	10.6				12.8				
Roberts Bay				20.8	16.2				18.5				
Stones Bay				11.3	10.8				11.1				
Total Phosphorus													
Sample Location				Average (feet)					Impaired* if				
North				13					13.0	> 30 µg/L			
Central				16.7					16.7				
West Bay				15.7					15.7				
Chlorophyll													
Sample Location				Average (feet)					Impaired* if				
North				2.7					2.7	> 9 µg/L			
Central				3.2					3.2				
West Bay				2.7					2.7				

AIS—curly-leaf pondweed control (Rick):

- Spring project: Cleared the back channel with granular herbicide; treatment was successful. A second, larger nearby patch was also treated after more curly-leaf was observed.
- Next year: Plan to test granular herbicide in an area with notable current; may attempt temporary flow diversion. “DNR” and Soil & Water staff are skeptical about efficacy in high flow, but the team will proceed with treatment of a small plot as a trial.
- Current lake status: “Lots” of curly-leaf this year; thick growth can improve treatment effectiveness versus scattered plants.
- Long-term approach: Section-by-section reduction to improve boating and fishing; full eradication is unrealistic.
- Handling caution: Pulling can spread fragments and turions (overwintering buds) to new areas; contact herbicides may require re-application to address regrowth; costs are significant.

ICOLA and State AIS Funding (Ron)

- State AIS prevention budget: Proposed cut was averted; remains at \$10M for the next two years.

- New opportunity: One-time \$28M AIS funding available next year for projects; the Association will explore grant opportunities for 2026 work.
- New infestation: Zebra mussels detected in Moose Lake (north of Grand Rapids). Continued vigilance at Swan Lake stressed.

Guest Speaker: Commissioner John Johnson—Tax-Forfeited Shoreline Land Policy and County Strategy

- Scope of land: Itasca County manages over 300,000 acres of tax-forfeited land not on shoreline, and about 65,000 shoreline acres (estimated market value \$161M).
- Current rule: Shoreline tax-forfeited land sales require Minnesota DNR permission (delegated authority/policy, not statute). Non-shoreline parcels follow a different county process.
- Proposed legislation: Johnson introduced a two-year pilot to allow the county to consider selling up to 10% of shoreline tax-forfeited land, focusing on parcels with existing infrastructure or adjoining landowner interest, while allowing local discretion to exclude sensitive lakes or limit development based on water quality.
- Context: After bill introduction, DNR emphasized its control under current policy. Johnson met with Leech Lake Band leadership, who also saw value in reform. He cited the Tyler v. Hennepin Supreme Court decision that led to Minnesota revising tax-forfeited sale processes to return equity to former owners when applicable.
- Broader county effort: Johnson is forming a work group to deliver a 10-year strategic economic development plan (seeking funding from the Blandin Foundation and IRRRB). He invited constituent input and emphasized bipartisan support for AIS funding, noting that constituent outreach directly influences legislators.
- Q&A highlights: DNR's stance framed as conservation/water-quality focused and rooted in delegated policy rather than statute; AIS funding advocacy credited to Representative Spencer Igo; importance of local voices and county commissioners' engagement in St. Paul.



Sewer Project Status

- Swan Lake sewer initiative was not approved this year. The funding cap reportedly increased from \$7M to \$12M which could result in more complete funding; the team plans to apply again next year. Details on voting eligibility (Goodland/Greenway townships vs. broader area) remain unclear.

Administration and Records Management

- Mailbox keys: Previously both keys were with Dave; now split—Dave keeps one, a backup key assigned for contingency. Leigh will maintain a key-holder log.
- Data backup: Implementing a solid-state external backup drive to store all Association documents (including website files and bylaws). Dave will hold the drive in a fire-safe. Plan to scan legacy paper records and update backups periodically (e.g., a couple of times per year).

Membership, Outreach, and Events

- Membership: 59 paid members so far this year (pre-meeting). Last year: 108; prior year: 151. Pop-up signups at the Marathon Station continue; targeted emails and a small postal mailing will reach those without current emails (SCI broadband email changes noted).
- Facebook: ~1,200 followers; ~25,000 reached in the past month. Page serves lake visitors as well as owners; July is a high-engagement period.
- Flotilla: 79 boats counted (likely a record); photos posted.

- Stream testing: Budgeted previously; seeking volunteers to help with periodic stream sampling. Kevin will train; a small equipment purchase may be needed.
- Welcome packets: A few assembled from existing materials; will likely seek sponsor support for printing updated packets.

Next Meeting Planning

- Timing: Late October; aiming for Wednesday 10/22 or Thursday 10/23 (avoiding MEA week).
- Prospective guest: Invite Erica Herr (DNR) to speak on mining and permitting updates.

Budget Decisions

- Curly-leaf pondweed control line item increased from \$1,000 to \$2,500 to support expanded granular herbicide work (prior \$1,000 purchase yielded 40 lbs and supported two treatments). Intention is to apply for grants (including new AIS funds) and consider targeted fundraising if needed.
- Lake testing: This year covering three sites (noted cost context: \$375 per site; last year four sites totaled \$1,500; this year's three-site total noted as \$1,075).
- Budget approved as amended. Dave Nelson motioned, Adele Yorde Second, none opposed.

2025 Budget Requests			
Revenue	Expected	YTD	Comments
Member Dues	\$ 3,000.00	\$1,180	
Donations			Pengilly Boster, Lone Pine Township, additional member donations.
	\$ 3,500.00	\$2,700	
Total	\$ 6,500.00	\$3,880	
Expenses	Original Request		
Water Quality Testing	\$1,975	Annual	Stream Testing included
Annual Member Mailing	\$150	Annual	
MN Lakes	\$185	Annual	
ICOLA	\$60	Annual	
PO Box	\$90	Annual	
Other Sponsorships	\$300	One time	
Insurance	\$450	Annual	
Additional Inspectors	\$1,000	Annual	
Curlyleaf Control	\$2,500	One time	Investigating treatment removal options
Total	\$ 6,710.00		

Financial Management (CDs)

- Seasonal CDs: As last year, Association plans to place funds into ~7-month CDs over winter (~4–4.1% rate; earned about \$150 per CD last winter). To optimize interest, the new CDs will be funded from checking (savings already earns interest).

Elections

- Directors:
 - Kevin re-elected to a three-year term.
 - Mike Oja's vacated seat: Dave Sainio appointed to serve the one-year remainder; eligible to run next year.
- Officers (term alignment): Members approved having Nathan and Ron continue one additional year to correct last year's missed officer election cycle.

Operations at the Public Landing

- Boat inspections: Noted gap during the Swan Lake Classic (boats launching early; inspector shift reportedly began at 8:00 a.m.). Request to schedule earlier inspector coverage (e.g., 5:00–7:00 a.m.) during tournaments. Rick will raise this with Bill Grange (Itasca SWCD). Options discussed included overtime funding and trained volunteers.

Swimmer's Itch Discussion

- Current observations: Cases persist; anecdotal reports of fewer live snails and fewer mergansers in some areas this year.
- Prevention and relief shared by members:
 - Apply a greasy barrier (e.g., sunscreen or petroleum jelly) before swimming; towel off vigorously and shower after.
 - Some use permitted copper sulfate near shore, but effectiveness is limited: it kills only snails present; cercariae live ~1 day; whole-lake treatment is impractical and costly.
 - A topical "GotuCream" was mentioned as providing relief for one attendee; cost noted as high.

Other Notices

- New boating law: As of July 1, a phased-in boater education card requirement applies to operators born after 1987 (online course ~ \$35). Sheriff's Office reportedly focusing on education this season; enforcement expected next year. Recommend ensuring youth and new operators obtain required certification.

Actions and Next Steps

- Rick to coordinate with Bill Grange (Itasca SWCD) on earlier inspector hours during fishing tournaments.
- Ron to contact Erica Herr (DNR) to speak at the October meeting.
- Apply in Sep/Oct for 2026 AIS grants (including the one-time \$28M pool); consider fundraising if grants are not secured.
- Kevin to prepare water quality trend graphs and continue lake testing; recruit and train a volunteer for stream testing (procure equipment if needed).
- Implement records backup: scan legacy documents; update the external backup drive periodically; Leigh to maintain key-holder log and document custodianship.
- Set fall meeting date (target 10/22 or 10/23) and confirm venue.
- Proceed with winter CDs funded from checking per the established practice.
- Continue membership outreach (pop-ups, email, small postal mailing) and leverage Facebook for lake-wide communications.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:29 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Leigh Stepan
Communications Secretary