

Mead Lake District

3rd Quarter Meeting Minutes – Final

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| Date: | August 9, 2025 |
| Time: | 9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. |
| Location: | Greenwood Fire Department |

1. Meeting called to order by Commissioner Rick Mews
2. Roll Call: Rick Mews, Will Ruemmele, Mary Schalow, Greg Evans, Larry Koschak, Bob Eckes (Town of Mead), Roy Tyznik (Clark County). Quorum reached.
3. Q & A in Video Conference with Attorney Jared Walker Smith, attorney from Boardman Clark in Madison. He provides lake district management seminars and advises the UW-Madison lake experts on lake district business. Hired by Larry Koschak and gave the following opinions and advice:
 - Budget format: Mead Lake District’s 2026 budget was approved on the expense side only. The revenue side needs to match the expense side. Based on the annual meeting minutes, the intent was clear that voters wish to use up reserves rather than levy any sort of new tax. To correct the 2026 budget, a Special Voters meeting can be scheduled with the agenda item of amending the budget. The budget should indicate that the reserve fund is being used and then show the remaining amount that is left in the reserves. The upcoming semi-annual meeting could be changed to a Special Meeting for this purpose.
 - General reserve funds: Lake districts are not supposed to carry over funds from year to year. The statute does not allow a general reserve that can build up a surplus to use as needed. Many lake districts have compliance issues on this.
 - Non-lapsable funds: If our lake district wishes to set aside money for a project, we need to set up a non-lapsable fund at the annual voters’ meeting; the fund is

designed for capital improvement projects or maintenance for capital equipment, such as for a harvester or similar project. Although old minutes on file for Mead Lake District referred to non-lapsable funds, the intended use was not documented so we should start anew and set one up if needed.

- Calcium Chloride: Maintenance of public roads is the responsibility of the town. With permission from the town, it can be argued that the lake district has the authority to apply calcium chloride. The district should check to be sure there are no liability concerns.
 - Annual Meeting Minutes Changes: Minutes must be approved by voters at the next annual meeting, but the draft may be revised by the commissioners at a quarterly meeting.
4. Review and approval of 2nd Quarter meeting minutes – Mary Schallow: Minutes were read and several additions and changes were identified. Phil Strand clarified his intent regarding the 3rd party cost of the nanobubbler project. Mary will modify the minutes with that intent. Motion made by Larry Koschak and seconded by Greg Evans to approve the modified minutes; carried.
 5. Determine actions based on attorney recommendations – action item – Larry Koschak: A Special Meeting is needed to finalize the 2026 budget. August 30 would be a good day since our semi-annual meeting can be changed to a Special Meeting. This requires 14-day notice. Mary suggested we have one agenda item to fix the legal Budget issue. Larry felt we should open up the meeting for more agenda items, specifically to establish a non-lapsable fund and reestablish the tax. It was noted there is a tight deadline for providing tax instruction to the county. Will Ruummele asked if we have plans to spend the over \$70,000 in the reserve fund. Larry responded that yes, there are expensive aeration systems that could utilize those funds. Rick Mews moved the discussion of our Special Meeting agenda to later in the meeting (Agenda item #23).
 6. Discussion about \$100 assessment – Greg Evans:
 - Greg expressed concern that by stopping the tax assessment, there may be objections raised by voters when asked to reinstate it later. Mary stated we cannot reinstate taxing unless a specific non-lapsable fund is created. She read the Wisconsin Supreme Court and Wisconsin Attorney General opinions that clearly require specific identification of the purpose of the funds.
 - There were several suggestions made by meeting attendees and board members about setting up a lapsable fund and naming it something generic, such as “Capital

Improvements”, “Capital Maintenance”, or “Clean Water”. Once created, the purpose could be changed at any time.

- It was noted that the Special Meeting will likely have very poor attendance. Mary Schalow recommended postponing decisions about large amounts of money until the annual meeting where voters are much better represented.
- Will Ruemmele reminded the board that our voters overwhelmingly sent a message to the board at the annual meeting that they don't want to be taxed while we have money to pay our expenses.
- Per Phil Strand, old meeting agendas from 2013 thru 2016 referenced a non-lapsable fund. The fund has increased through interest income, with no additional taxpayer funds added in recent years and clearly intended for capital projects. The tax assessment was spent on small things to hold everything together. At last year's annual meeting, the voters approved the purchase of capital equipment and money was used from those reserve accounts. The attorney said you can put money aside for capital expenses.
- Also, per Phil Strand, the Attorney General in 1987 stated a local government may maintain reasonable amounts to meet immediate cash flow needs of the current budgetary period or to accumulate needed capital in non-lapsing funds for specifically identified future capital expenditures. What is missing is “specifically identified”. Phil believes the \$100 should go ahead; a vote is needed. Some attendees at this Board meeting also spoke in support of capital accounts and reinstatement of the \$100 tax assessment.
- Rick Mews suggested we address the budget amendment before entertaining any motions for setting up a non-lapsable fund or bringing back the tax for 2026. He once again postponed further discussion until near the end of the meeting (item #23).

7. Buoy permit placement locations – Will Ruemmele: The slow wake zone buoys appear to be in a different location this year. How is this handled?

- Larry stated that the no-wake zone markers were placed beyond the no-wake zone this year to get people to slow down earlier; the property owners in that area are extremely happy. Will Ruemmele informed the board that the buoy permits can be revoked if buoys are incorrectly placed. Rick Mews clarified that since the lake district was issued the buoy permit, we are responsible for staying in compliance with the permit regarding their location.

8. Nanobubbles transparency – Schalow: There are documents in our lake district files that have never been presented to the voters, and we have learned more from the DNR.

- Mead Lake District and Balsam Lake were denied grants by the DNR due to nanobubbles not being scientifically proven technology. Larry Koschak wrote a subsequent letter to the DNR protesting the rejection, stating they ignored required statutes in their evaluation.
- DNR has advised our district to not overestimate the ability of nanobubbles to rehabilitate our lake. Phosphorous contributions from the watershed far exceed that of in-lake sources.
- Voters at the 2025 annual meeting were told the DNR will be planning the project with the lake district after the testing is complete, to determine the number of units needed and where to place them. However, the DNR stated in an email (attached) that they will NOT be involved in planning the number of units needed or where to place them. They have actively assisted with the test planning and water testing phase of this project, however, and are currently focused on making sure the test unit is not damaging the lake.
- Voters were told we need seven units at a cost of \$288,000 although there are no plans or estimates in the files. Larry Koschak stated we will use the test data in our planning; it is possible the DNR may not require permits going forward.
- Greg Evans was told that someone jumped into the water near the test site and for the first time they felt sand on the floor of the lake instead of muck.
- Bill Martens stated that he doesn't know what is going to work but something needs to be tried. If people don't like nanobubbles, they spend all their time on their computers to say why they don't work instead of figuring out what will work. Mary responded she is providing information that should be known by voters when making informed decisions.
- Will Ruummele learned a Notice of Noncompliance was issued to our lake district by the DNR for placing nanobubble units in the water without a permit. Our voters should have been informed of this. Phil Strand objected to this discussion and other items on the agenda as a poor use of our time.
- Upon request, Phil Strand clarified the sequence of events. Two bubblers were purchased and placed in the water for two weeks without a permit. They were pulled out and placed in storage. The 2025 budget set aside \$35,000 to buy the unit that is being tested right now. All checks were written after voter approval.

9. Web site management discussion and action – Koschak:

- Larry Koschak recommended hiring a website manager to monitor the site and make usability improvements. Rick Mews authorized Mary Schalow to be the new administrator of the site. Kendra Baierl, the web site's creator, will provide

training within the next week or so. Kendra is willing to make requested changes with compensation. The board agreed to this approach.

- Larry also recommended removing the password as it violates open meetings law. Greg Evans made a motion to remove the password from our website. Seconded by Larry; motion carried.
- Larry made a motion that we change the personal email addresses on the website to the lake district email address. Greg Evans seconded. Motion carried. Mary Schalow agreed to monitor the email box after these changes but clarified that commissioners may still email each other individually.

10. Accounting for social committee / fireworks funds – Ruemmele: Rick Mews clarified that the entertainment group is independent and not a committee of the lake district.

11. Audit of Mead Lake District financials – action item – Schalow: Audits are required to be done every year and presented at the annual meeting. No audits are documented in the files since 2016, other than an audit for 2024. We need to be diligent going forward.

12. Potential sale of district assets – 2 Kingfisher aeration machines – Koschak: These machines were purchased before the DNR changed the scope of the test project; they were used for only two weeks. They are likely too small to be useful on Mead Lake. We paid \$15,300 with shipping. Larry has received a potential offer of \$14,000 for the pair and needs to know the lowest amount he can accept in negotiations. Greg Evans made a motion we accept no less than \$12,000 without further approval. Bob Eckes seconded; motion carried.

13. Calcium chloride funding and bid for application – Ruemmele:

- What happened this year?
 - i. Phil Strand worked out an agreement with the Town of Mead. Phil sought and received \$2600 in private donations and the town gave a one-time-only contribution of \$1588. South Lake Road was skipped due to road work. Ricky Mews is storing the equipment.
- Next Year?
 - i. There was discussion of paying a third party individually on a property-by-property basis, but it would be stop-and-start on the road and would miss the county owned roads.
 - ii. The town doesn't object to the lake district applying calcium chloride. Bob Eckes will check on liability issues. Patti Denk feels we should do it ourselves or it will not happen; the dust negatively affects property

values. Ideally this should be done before Memorial Day, but voter approval for the money cannot happen before the annual meeting. Will Ruummele stated the dust causes uncomfortable and dangerous situations with walkers and Amish buggies. The voters have overwhelmingly supported this; we own the equipment and have at least two people on the lake with knowledge of the application process. With spending roughly \$50 per household we can do all roads around the lake.

- iii. Larry Koschak suggested selling the sprayer as this is not our responsibility and we should not even be talking about this. Colleen Koschak added that we have been told in the past that we can address only water issues; we just need to slow down and prevent salt from going into the water.
- iv. Mary Schalow reminded the group that Larry's lawyer, this morning, stated we can do this with the Town of Mead's approval if liability isn't a concern. We should research the issue and bring it to the next quarterly meeting, since it is what the voters want. Rick Mews concurred that the lawyer did say that, and Bob Eckes is going to check on the liability. Future discussion is needed.

14. Proposed changes to 2025 Annual Meeting minutes draft – action item – Schalow. Mary read the existing draft and highlighted changes. The board accepted these changes to the draft. They will be presented at the 2026 Annual Meeting for voter approval.

15. Update on progress for fish crib drops on September 27, 2025 – Koschak: Plans are moving forward. Dave Nowak started building pallet tents. Still need some logs and pallets and different boards. Rick and Kris Okray have volunteered to provide some equipment and use of a truck. Details were discussed, with more information to come later. Larry stated there will likely be a nice lunch afterward.

16. Amend quantity of district meetings – action item – Ruummele: Larry stated that four quarterly meetings and one annual meeting are required. Our semi-annual meeting was a holdover from the days before the board realized quarterly meetings were required. Will Ruummele suggested we work toward having remote meetings so our voters will be able to attend when not at the lake. Greg Evans said this was discussed at a previous meeting, thinking we'd move the quarterly meetings to the Greenwood Fire Department after the bridge is fixed. Cost would be \$25 per meeting. Annual meetings must continue to be held in person at the lake. Bob Eckes shared that the Town of Mead will be discussing the addition of Wi-Fi for the town hall at their next meeting. Mary

Schalow made a motion to eliminate the semi-annual meeting going forward. Greg Evans seconded; motion carried.

17. Officers and terms of current commissioners for the record – Schalow. Offices are one-year assignments. The following are the current offices and terms:

- Ricky Mews – Chair – Two years remaining
- Will Ruemmele – Treasurer – One year remaining
- Mary Schalow – Secretary – Three years remaining
- Greg Evans – Commissioner – Two years remaining
- Larry Koschak – Commissioner – Three years remaining
- Bob Eckes – Town of Mead appointee – Ongoing
- Roy Tyznik – Clark County appointee – Ongoing

18. Review voting rights – Ruemmele: This has been answered.

19. Required legal components of Annual Meeting budget presentations – Schalow: There are several components required in the budget presented at the annual meeting. The University of Wisconsin put out a sample that can be used, which wonderfully includes all those components on one page, making it easy for the voters to see the whole picture when it arrives with the annual meeting agenda. Mary passed out the sample page for consideration by the treasurer in the future.

20. Mailing of invoices to Mead Lake District Treasurer – Schalow: Will Ruemmele changed the address that is on file at the bank to his own. The official Mead Lake District address is now Mary's home address on the lake. It will be listed on the website as soon as Mary receives training and can make those updates. It was clarified that commissioners can send invoices directly to the treasurer.

21. New business: WDNR Grants, deadlines for application – discussion and action – Koschak: Larry will apply again this year for a surface water planning grant, with maximum value of \$10,000 if awarded. It would cover water testing expenses. Deadline of September 15 is for pre-application, stating intent. November 15 is final application deadline. Resolution of Authorization must come from the board; Rick Mews agreed to sign it and the board authorized Larry to move forward on this. We were not awarded the grant last year but have more knowledge now so are hoping for a better outcome. The money needs to be in the budget in case the grant is not awarded.

22. New business: Alternate aeration project and future options discussion and action – Koschak: Air Diffusion System’s aeration system was installed at Lake Eau Claire ten years ago. Fishing has improved immensely, with anecdotal reports of terrific walleye fishing. The system circulates water from bottom to top and eliminates stratification of the water. Larry distributed an email from an Air Diffusion representative with a drawing and explanation of how this could be installed in Mead Lake, at a price of approximately \$120,000. DNR offers grants of up to \$200,000 for approved projects, and this is a technology that the DNR loves. A permit is required, but no testing phase. Emphasis is on water circulation rather than the addition of oxygen. Larry is seeking approval to continue investigating. Lake Eau Claire is willing to show us their system upon request. Mary asked if this would replace nanobubbles or run concurrently. Larry is not sure, but they cover different aspects. One person noted these diffusers work beautifully in golf club ponds. One unit would be placed at the dam, one in front of Martens’ house; they would be starting at edge of dike and running up to Wiskerchen’s. They don’t interfere with boating, as they sit on bottom of lake, not buried. They are powered by electricity in one or two sheds on shore at the dam. The Board gave Larry permission to investigate further.

23. Special Meeting and Agenda - Continuation of Item #5. Budget amendment is needed to add a revenue portion. Requires voter approval at a Special Meeting. It was decided to wait until the annual meeting to discuss lapsable funds and future taxation, when the voters are properly represented. To hold the Special Meeting on August 30, we have six days to get the proper notices out to voters. We need to designate money from our assets to the revenue portion of our budget to cover the 2026 expenses. It was decided to transfer funds from our reserve to cover the expenses. Larry Koschak made a motion to have a special meeting on August 30 at 9:00 at the Mead Lake dam pavilion. Seconded by Bob Eckes; motion carried. Another motion by Larry Koschak for the agenda item to amend the 2026 budget to include the revenue adjustment. Seconded by Will Ruemmele; carried.

24. Sunday Fun Day – Greg Evans: As a positive note after a tough meeting, Greg Evans is hosting a Sunday Fun Day over Labor Day weekend. This will include music; come on over by car or boat. Jenny Polhemus added that there will be a light lunch of pulled pork sandwiches, chips etc. Bring your own drinks and chairs.

25. South Lake Road – Eckes: Bob estimates that South Lake Road roadwork will be completed this year. The town put 6” of gravel on just past the boat landing, which hadn’t been planned for this year. August 26 will be the completion date unless it rains.

The town is not responsible for driveways but Blackie may do some fill-in on driveways that have drastic drop-offs. Anyone wishing to obtain a load of gravel will get a discount if they order and pay in advance to receive the same day they're hauling. Call Haas Trucking at 715-669-5469. Once the road is compacted and packed down, the road will be dusty but will be better. The town is spending \$120,000 on South Lake Road.

26. Motion to adjourn: Motion by Greg Evans to adjourn, seconded by Mary Schalow; enthusiastically carried!

Mead Lake District Secretary

Mary Schalow

Lepsch, Jodi A - DNR <Jodi.Lepsch@wisconsin.gov>
To: Mary Schalow <schalowmf@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 7 at 9:56 AM

Hi Mary

That information is mostly correct. A couple clarifications:

The DNR won't be the agency to determine how many units you will need in the future. If we determine the technology doesn't have detrimental effects and can be used without permits, it will be up to lake groups to figure out where and how many units are "needed". That will probably involve hiring a consultant.

They state that the most significant contribution of phosphorus is the mucky sediments. That is true for the in-lake sources but the contributions from the watershed far exceed that of in-lake sources.

Will they be providing a virtual link to the meeting?

Jodi Lepsch

Lakes Biologist

Cell Phone: 715-495-0765

Jodi.Lepsch@wisconsin.gov