

Horsehead Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District No. 1

Meeting Notes

November 15, 2025

Present: Tony, Dave (quorum established)

Approvals:

- Agenda approved
 - Minutes from August 2, 2025 meeting approved
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Executive Summary

The commissioners met to address operational continuity, financial oversight, and the upcoming season's lake management work. Key themes included formalizing the secretary handoff process, distributing committee workload more evenly, professionalizing the annual audit, building out a master project calendar, and preparing public bids for several 2026 lake management contracts. The meeting closed with discussions on website modernization, ADA compliance, and a transition toward electronic newsletter distribution.

Discussion Summary

1. Secretary Transition Framework

Tony raised the need for a smoother handoff between outgoing and incoming secretaries. Dave concurred, noting he received no formal handoff when he took over as treasurer. Tony will develop a framework — including a job description, calendar of events, and standard procedures — for presentation in April.

2. Committee Workload & Financial Updates

The commissioners discussed the need to better distribute responsibilities. Dave delivered the treasurer's report:

- Fiscal year runs September 1 – August 31
- Prior-year operating expenses came in under budget
- Period 1 activity included insurance payment, aerator service, website fees, and completion of the final budget and tax documentation (certified to both county and town)
- Annual audit was delayed due to the auditor's family medical emergency

The group also flagged the need for more consistent use of Google Drive for document storage.

3. Annual Audit Process

Dave currently tracks expenses via spreadsheets and bank statements, with Chuck reviewing. Tony recommended moving to a professional CPA going forward, given the growing budget and the importance of proper financial oversight. Formal consideration deferred to April.

4. Lake Study Calendar & Vendor Management

The multi-year lake study plan exists but lacks a formalized implementation process. A subcommittee will oversee the calendar and vendor selection — Kevin and Dave volunteered. The group identified the need for a master project list capturing all required tasks.

5. Grant Funding & Compliance

Key points:

- Projects over \$2,500 require public bid
- The Wisconsin DNR Surface Water Grant Program previously funded an aerator and may apply to other projects
- DNR expectations for lake management plans must be followed; non-compliance could jeopardize future grant applications
- An alternative provider to Ontara was discussed — a company operating on 200 lakes including the Managua chain

6. Invasive Species Bid Planning

Dave proposed a separate bid-request document with detailed project information and contact details. The website will host a dedicated AIS survey bid page. Tony will contact the Lakeland Times about ad placement and best practices (current ad runs ~\$125 each).

7. Lake Management Bids — 2026

Bids to be issued for:

- AIS early-season survey
- Weed harvesting (multi-year contract approach proposed to reduce admin burden)
- Aerator maintenance
- 2027 lake study (grant application must be completed this year)

8. Project Planning & Communication

- Tony will build a master project plan in Google Sheets, shared via the Lake Association email account
- Horsehead will reach out to Kevin about commissioner-call participation or written pre-meeting summaries
- Dave will power on and verify the aerators over the weekend
- Horsehead will compare Google Meet vs. Zoom costs given the length of meetings

9. Newsletter & Technology

- Fall newsletter will go out via mail and electronic distribution; full electronic shift to be proposed at the annual meeting
 - Horsehead will lead a technology subcommittee (with James and others) to evaluate ADA compliance and website migration options away from WordPress, presenting findings in April
 - Existing lake plan document cannot be modified; current weed harvesting volunteer restrictions remain in place
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Action Items

Tony

- Develop commissioner handoff framework — present in April
- Draft secretary job description, calendar of events, and procedures — present in April
- Obtain 3 quotes from CPA firms for annual audit services — bring to April meeting
- Create master project spreadsheet (dates, tasks, ownership, multi-year timeline) in Google Sheets
- Contact Lakeland Times re: bid placement process and AIS survey best practices
- Monitor lake ice conditions from his property; check aerator operation
- Send out fall newsletter via mail and electronic distribution

Dave

- Send treasurer documentation/process to Tony for review
- Turn on aerators before going home Monday

Horsehead (District / collective)

- Create bid submission webpage on Lake Association website with contact info
- Carve off AIS survey document from lake plan; send to Dave and Tony
- Place public bid requests for: AIS early-season survey, weed harvesting, aerator maintenance, and 2027 lake study
- Reach out to Andrew McFerrin re: Aquatic Plant Management services and capabilities
- Reach out to Kevin re: attending commissioner calls or providing written summaries
- Compare Zoom vs. Google Meet costs; circulate via email
- Form technology subcommittee (James + others) to evaluate website ADA compliance and migration options — summary in April
- Organize weed harvesting assessment volunteers for next year

Next Meeting

April 2026 — agenda items to include: secretary transition framework, CPA audit quotes, technology subcommittee findings, lake study calendar, and electronic newsletter proposal for the annual meeting.