

**Horseshoe Lake Public Inland Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District Commissioner Meeting  
March 21 at Beaver Town Hall**

**Agenda Items**

**2025 Annual Meeting Minutes:** The minutes were reviewed with no changes made. They were approved and will be posted on Hlake.org webpage along with the LEAPS presentation given at the annual meeting.

**Treasurer's report:** The final 2025 income and expense report was reviewed. No significant changes from what was discussed at the annual meeting. Our current operating balances include \$12,579.24 in our money market checking and \$12,150.54 in CDs (plus another \$12,478.71 CD which is the Emergency Aquatic Invasive Species control reserve we inherited from the Lake Association when the Lake District was formed). It was recommended that we consider moving some of the CDs to other banks if we can get better interest rates.

We reviewed the 2026 budget approved at the annual meeting. We have kept our tax assessments flat for the past four years (thanks to grants) and will probably keep at that level for the next couple of years as we work down our extra cash levels. The main deposits year-to-date were the final \$3,157.53 in reimbursements from our 2023-24 DNR grant, a \$750.00 advance for our 2026 CBCW grant and \$5,769 in tax revenue, with no expenses Y-T-D. We may move some of the money market funds into a short-term interest-bearing CD depending on our final milfoil control and CBCW plans. We also need to finalize what projects LEAPS will do for us in 2026.

**Shoreline Preservations project:** At the annual meeting, a motion was passed to establish lake water levels for the Caution and Critical high-water stages, recommendations for wake restrictions at those levels and the creation of educational information brochure on boating safety and shoreline preservation. Craig Firl was in attendance, representing the Shoreline Preservation committee, to help with developing final plans for implementing this. Below are the plan components for a proactive communications plan that were discussed. Once we finalize designs and costs, then Craig will review this plan with his committee before moving forward.

These are the three High-Water Levels approved with wake recommendations:

- **NORMAL** (Standard WI DNR wake restrictions - no boat wake within 100 feet of dock/shore)
- **CAUTION** (No wake within 400 ft. of shore) - level reaches 1313.75 ft above sea level
- **CRITICAL** (No Wake on entire lake) - level reaches 1314.25 ft above sea level (*6" above Caution*)

**Education Information brochure:** Russ Patten is finalizing the draft of this which will be shared with owners (and hopefully with their summer guests). The plan would be to include this in our spring mailing to all owners and handed this out at the boat landing during Clean Boat Clean Water inspections.

**Boat landing signage:** We updated the big sign last fall with a map of the lake and current wake restrictions (under normal water levels). Once we hit "CAUTION" level, we will place a Yellow sign over the White sign area to let people know water levels are high and "request" No Wake within 400 feet of shoreline. When we hit "CRITICAL" level, we will replace the Yellow sign with a Red sign to let people know water levels are extremely high and "request" No Wake on the entire lake. Once water levels start to lower, we will go back to the Yellow and then the original White signs.

“Caution” and “Critical” Flags: To bring awareness when water levels are high, we will purchase Yellow and Red flags to attach to selected buoys to bring additional awareness of high-water levels. Craig and Joe Waldo will work on identifying the best way to attach the flags to buoys (only during high water). These would be placed on the buoys in the narrows, the rock buoys, the entrance of Buckwalls Bay and at least one of the “island” buoys. It was also agreed that we would identify 2-3 docks on the SE shore of the lake to also display these warning flags. We will either place another flag on the boat landing dock and/or add a special sign at the landing for additional attention. A motion was made and passed to approve \$500 for flags and the mechanisms to attach them to the buoys and docks.

New Buoys: We need to purchase two new PWC No-Wake buoys for the narrows as the old ones are 10+ years old and starting to get waterlogged (appr \$220 each plus shipping). A couple of the older rock buoys have faded and lost their reflectiveness, but we have found we can purchase new vinyl wraps vs needing to replace the buoys. We will keep the two old buoys to use on the west of the lake only during high water with flags attached, as that area would be No-Wake during the Caution and Critical stages.

Spring Communication Plans: Instead of our normal spring postcard mailing, we plan to do a 1<sup>st</sup> Class mailing to all property owners in mid-April. This will include the 2026 summer calendar, an explanation of our new high-water notification process, a copy of the Education Informational brochure and a request for updated owner contact information. We only have emails for about half of the owners currently. Our plan is to use email, Hlake.org website and Facebook to notify people when we reach high-water stages. We could also consider mailing everyone a quick postcard when water reaches CAUTION stage.

Spring meeting: To help kick off the education process, **we will hold a general information meeting on May 16th at 9:30 AM at the Beaver Town Hall** in conjunction with our next lake commissioners’ meeting. The objective of this meeting is to review our Shoreland Preservation Project, explain what is involved in being a boat inspector at the landing and update on other lake projects. Whether you are new to the lake or a long-time resident, it is a great opportunity to meet your lake neighbors and learn about what you can do to help take care of our wonderful lake.

2026 Milfoil Control plan: Our fall whole-lake plant survey showed an increase in the presence of hybrid Eurasian milfoil vs 2024. A copy of this will be posted on the HLAKE.org website. Scatter plants are showing up around the lake in several newer areas, but mostly in the east end. The main milfoil beds around the entrance of Mud Lake continue to persist despite using DASH in 2024 and diver manual removal in 2025 (no herbicide treatments since 2023) plus we have a new bed across the lake from it. We don’t have any grant money left but we did budget for 2026 Milfoil control expenses based on our average annual costs. Joe Waldo will get an estimate of what the cost to chemically treat the Mud Lake entrance and the new bed, then will share that information with the board via email to make a final decision. If we do decide to try to treat, we will still need DNR approval as it is illegal to use aquatic chemicals without a permit. We can also check into what is involved in becoming a certified applicator for restricted use aquatic pesticides for future years. Russ Patten and his daughter are certified divers and did utilize our SNUBA equipment last fall to do some manual removal. That would be the best way to remove some of the scattered plants around the lake in May and June (or if we can’t get a permit to spray, we might want to hire a couple of divers again for a day to assist).

Boat Landing Monitoring: Getting new volunteers to help do boat inspection and education at the landing needs to be an area of focus for 2026. This is our 1st line of defense in keeping new invasive species out of our lake! LEAPS has sourced a paid person for us for the past two years to provide 80-150 hours but will not be providing that service any longer. We need a new Boat Landing Volunteer

Coordinator to help oversee this project as well as additional volunteers. Polk County will be offering online CBCW training on Monday April 27<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-6:30 pm (great way to learn more and see if you are interested) or an in-person training Thursday April 30 from 1:00-3:00 PM at Polk County Government Center in Balsam Lake. The lake district did get a DNR Clean Boats Clean Water (CBCW) grant for 2026 (75% cost share for up to \$4000). In the past, we have paid our Boat Landing Volunteer Coordinator and could use the grant for this expense. We can also try to find a young person to hire directly to do inspections, but would prefer to avoid this, if possible, due to insurance concerns.

**LEAPS Involvement for 2026** – As Dave Blumer continues to wind down his business, he will only be available for special project only. He will teach Joe Waldo how to do herbicide treatment permits and will hopefully still be available to do spring and summer milfoil surveys and provide training if needed. He and his daughter might also be available to do some diving again to help with manual milfoil removal. We can get through 2026 okay on this basis but will probably need to find someone new in 2027 to help us update our Five-Year lake plan which needs to be updated for 2028.

**Other Lake Projects:** Steve Eichman will continue to do our Citizen Lake Monitoring project (water quality). Anyone interested in riding along when he takes samples (and/or eventually taking over this project) to let Steve know. They changed requirements for shipping water samples from USPS to UPS, but Tom Ludy can help with that. Joe Waldo will again take care of lake level the Polk County Lake to monitor lake levels from ice-out to ice-in and gather another year of lake level information. This gauge is provided by Polk County and surveyed by their County Surveyor twice a summer to allow us to collect accurate lake level data. This data will also be used to know when to implement our high-water notification plans. We probably won't release beetles this year for Purple Loosestrife but will monitor how many survived from last year's release.

**Polk County Zoning Update:** Polk County is in the process of getting public comments related to updating their Shoreline Ordinances. This is not a rewrite, but rather an update to get it recertified with the DNR. Reach out to them if you have comment. Note: The county cannot be more restrictive than the state regulations, so they are limited in what they can change.

**Lake Directory:** We will continue to maintain a director of lake owners (names and addresses are public information from county tax rolls) and work to compile phone and email addresses to help in our communications. We no longer print copies of the directory but rather make it available as a .PDF via email to owners that provide us with their emails.

**Hlake.org Website:** Russ Patten is our webmaster and maintains the information on the website. If you have suggestions for additional content, please reach out to him at russ.patten@hotmail.com.

### **2026 Calendar of Events:**

- April 27<sup>th</sup>, 5:00-6:30 pm: Polk County CBCW online training
- April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-3:00 PM: Polk County CBCW training at Polk County Cty Center, Balsam Lake
- May 16 @ 9:30 AM: Spring Information Meeting at the Beaver Town Hall to review our Shoreland Preservation Project, what is involved in being a boat inspector at the landing and update on other lake projects.
- July 4 @ 2 PM: Boat parade (assemble by "old beach" on south side of lake)
- July 10-12: Turtle Lake Inter-County Fair
- August 15 @ 9:30 AM: Lake District Annual Meeting at Beaver Town Hall

See hlake.org or our Facebook page for more info or email hlake.treasurer@gmail.com

**Meeting adjourned at 10:25 am.**