



Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District

Meeting Minutes (**DRAFT**)

www.LakeOnalaska.org

Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2026
Location: Brice Prairie EMS & Rescue, with Zoom remote option

1. Call to Order by Chair Marc Schultz at 4:30pm. Commissioners present: Marc Schultz, Luke Marcou, Mitch Lown, Jeff Fimreite and Fritz Funk. Others present included: Tim Miller (USFWS), Tony and Nancy Christnovich, Betty De Boer, and Don Brenegen.
2. Approve Minutes: Motion to approve May 27 minutes by Jeff Fimreite, seconded by Luke Marcou, passed unanimously with Funk abstaining (0:11)
3. Approve Treasurer Report: Treasurer was absent. No report. (0:40)
4. Public Comment: None (0:50)
5. Agency reports: None (1:04) Later addendum upon arrival from USFWS La Crosse District Manager Tim Miller: For celebrating Freedom 250, the Refuge has a an earned patch program similar to the former River Rat Relay. You must visit 3 sites to get a patch. See USFWS Refuge website for more details. Tree planting is ongoing in the Black River bottoms, crews have been encountering good site characteristics. (34:45-39:00)
6. Discussion and possible action to prepare for September 16 Annual Meeting (budget, audit, agenda, location, speakers etc). Both the City of Onalaska and USGS will be contacted for meeting room availability and asked to hold the date until our next meeting. Agenda to include dredge project update, UW-L bathymetry and economic studies. Chair to distribute a rough draft of annual meeting agenda before the next monthly meeting, along with draft invitational letter to members (1:10-4:10, 8:00-10:50).
7. Discussion of Lake Onalaska Navigation Topics (10:50)
 - a) Status of weed cutting. Chair Schultz to check with Schafers. (10:50)
 - b) Sommers Chute Navigation Channel. USFWS located funds to purchase 10 pairs of buoys, arrival time late July. Still need to cast concrete anchors. Motion by Fimreite/Marcou to apply for a State waterways permit to place the buoys between the emergency light area through the Sommers Chute alluvial fan (motion never received a vote). (12:20)
 - c) Lake Onalaska Exit Path. At the southwest exit of Lake Onalaska to the main channel, both the remnant ABC island and the new rock weir at Lock and Dam 7 are hazards to navigation along the southwest lake exit in need of aids to navigation. (18:10)
8. Discussion of dock and pier regulations. Both Brice Prairie and French Island shorelines are Limited Development Areas under the USACE Shoreline Management Plan, which specifics a maximum length from shore of 100 feet and 600 square feet total surface area with site-specific variances, although the Town of Onalaska has adopted more restrictive regulations. Possible annual meeting topic. (23:00)
9. Discussion about starting to build a new potential habitat project list (Blackdeer, dredging at Mosey, Fred Funk, Nelson Landings etc). Tim Miller reports that natural resource agencies are developing a list of small bite size projects that agencies have agreed on, along with a short

paragraph for the next meeting of the Lake Onalaska Sedimentation Team. Most of the mentioned projects are included. (29:10)

10. Reschedule social that was postponed on June 10. New date will be August 5 at the La Crosse Sailing Club on French Island. (4:10-8:15)
11. Update on UW-Extension-facilitated collaboration and funding of Lake Onalaska's future. Chair has met with UW Extension, who is developing a comprehensive list of stakeholders to participate. Currently waiting for extension to articulate process. Annual meeting topic. (39:08)
12. Update on North Shore Lane Dredge Project. Project is underway, pumping into large bags in Metallics field for dewatering. There have been several news updates about the project. Project is still about 30k short on the 300k project. (41:15)
13. Update on Izaak Walton Creel Survey. Chair reports the survey covered why people used the River, if for fishing, what catch of day way, frequency of use and other topics. There is interest in repeating survey effort in August, pending review information obtained so far. A total of 94 surveys have been entered so far, with more to go. (49:20)
14. Schedule next meeting: Motion by Funk/Marcou to continue with 4th Wednesday, which will be July 22, passed unanimously. (51:30)
15. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Fimreite/Marcou, passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 5:23pm. (52:35)

Submitted by Fritz Funk, Secretary

** (Times in parenthesis are indices to the start of the agenda item on the recording)*

Action Items

Responsible Party

Contact City of Onalaska (Rick Niemeyer) and USGS (Brad Morris) for available venue for September 16 Annual Meeting and hold date.	Chair Schultz
Prepare draft Annual Meeting agenda and letter to residents	Chair Schultz (for next meeting)
Contact Schafers about status of first weedcutting	Chair Schultz (soon)
Apply for a permit to place navigation buoys between the Sommers Chute area and the emergency light. State Waterways Permit for new buoy path	Unassigned

Acronyms

USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Service
UW-L	University of Wisconsin – La Crosse

Lake District Website: www.lakeonalaska.org/