



PROTECTION & REHABILITATION DISTRICT

CORRESPONDENCE:
W8155 COUNTY ROAD ZB
ONALASKA, WISCONSIN 54650
(608) 792-1445

Dear Lake Onalaska District Member:

You are invited to attend the 47th Annual Meeting of the Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District (LOPRD). Our meeting is Wednesday September 16, 2026 at USGS Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center 2630 Fanta Reed Rd. La Crosse WI 54603. You are receiving this meeting notice because you live or own property within the boundaries of LOPRD which comprises the shoreland area within the portions of the Village of French Island, Town of Onalaska and a small portion of the City of La Crosse.

The LOPRD is a special purpose unit of government created by La Crosse County in 1975 under Chapter 33 of the Wisconsin Statutes after receiving a petition by citizens from the Town of Onalaska and Campbell.

At each annual LOPRD meeting residents vote to elect Lake District commissioners as well as vote on certain items of the annual meeting agenda.

Meeting Notice & Agenda for the 2025 47th Annual Lake Onalaska District Meeting

Budget Hearing: 6:30 p.m.

Annual Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order & Introductions
2. Minutes of 2025 Annual Meeting
3. Treasurer Report & 2025 Financial Statement
4. Review of 2025-2026 Financials
5. Public Comment
6. Agency Reports
7. Report on Lake Onalaska Community Forum
8. State of the Lake Report
9. Discussion and Action on Dissolution of LOPRD
10. Discussion and Action on a minimal LOPRD Tax
11. Consider and Action on the 2026-2027 Budget
12. Commissioner Election
13. UW-L Impacts of Lake Onalaska Research Report
14. Dredge Project Update
15. Set 48th Annual LOPRD Meeting and Date
16. Adjourn

There will be a short meeting of the Lake District Board to select officers for 2026-2027.

Enclosed are 2025-26 Financial Statement, 2025-2026 Financial Review, 2026-2027 Proposed Budget, Commissioner Position Description

Chairman LOPRD

Questions or assistance, call Marc A Schultz at 608.792.1445

The 9-foot channel on the Upper Mississippi River was authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act of July 3, 1930, profoundly changing the culture and the ecosystem in the valley. Time elapsed since authorization: 96 years, 18 days

2024-25 Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District 45th Annual Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2025

City of Onalaska – Council Chambers, 425 Main St, Onalaska, WI 54650

DRAFT 07/22/2026

Budget Hearing, 6:30 pm

Marc Schultz called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm. Robin Schmidt stated the \$7,000 that is to be reimbursed by UW-L to the Lake District needs to be included as income.

Annual Meeting, 7:00 pm

Attendees: District Members: Ben Lachecki, Amy Noel, Lind Thomas, Marc Schultz, Dick Luick, Rock Corbeit, Beth Sherden, Dave Sherden, Steve Miller, Barbara Friell, Sue Paudler, David Paudler, Kathryn Lammers, Kay Ward, Anita Lemke, Arlan Gooden, Rob Gonzales, Luke Marcou, Fritz Funk, Sue Schultz, Greg Zitmann, Brenda Zitzmann, Connie Welch, Don Welch, Tom Ready, Robin Schmidt, Ben Toppelts, Amy Cooper, Steve Miller, Mike Todd, Dave Balduzzi. Non-district attendees: Tim Miller (US FWS), Kristina Pechacek (DNR), Brad Morris (USGS), Madeline Heim (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel), Ashley Kiley (DNR), Andy Meier (US ACE)

Rick Niemeier, City of Onalaska Administrator, welcomed the attendees.

Item 1. Call to Order and Introductions. Marc Schultz, District Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Commissioners were introduced. Those present were Marc Schultz, Fritz Funk, Dave Balduzzi, Rob Gonzalez, Ben Lachecki, Luke Marcou (incoming appointee by Town of Onalaska), and Connie Welch.

Item 2. Minutes of 2024 Annual Meeting. Marc read a suggested revision made by Robin Schmidt: “One member noted that it was important for the Lake District to ensure that the public notice for the Annual Meeting comply with the statutory requirements. The District Board recognized the challenges with Meeting notices and the statutory requirement that the Annual Meeting be held by the end of September.” Dave Paulder made a motion to amend the minutes, seconded by Robin Schmidt, MPU.

Item 3. Treasurer Report 2024-2025 Financial Statement. Rob Gonzalez, Treasurer, reviewed the financial statement. There were 2 weed cuttings this year. Per the question posed at the Budget Hearing, the 2025-26 budget needs to be revised to include that \$7,000 reimbursement as income.

4. LOPRD Audit for 2024-2025. The audit was completed by Kathryn Lammers. Per a question from Robin Schmidt, Rob Gonzales, Treasurer, replied that the recommendations are being implemented. Robin Schmidt commended inclusion of funds for a commissioner to attend the annual WI Lakes and Rivers Convention.

5. Public Comment. None

6. Agency Reports. Reports were given by Kristina Pechasek, DNR (staffing and projects); Andy Meier, US ACE (staffing, collaboration with BPCA and LORC on dredge project, Rosebud Island project, UW-L plant specimen collection project); Tim Miller, US FWS (no buoys for migration area, dredge project team); and Brad Morris, USGS Center (staffing, project to prevent invasive carp).

7. State of the Lake Report. Marc Schultz gave the report. There was more sediment in 2019 than in any other year. He said that the lake needs help, and there are challenges for lakeshore property owners who need to deal with both the lake and river.

8. Consider Expansion of Lake District Boundaries. Marc Schultz stated that statute Chapter 33.33 includes requirements for attachment, including a petition, and requested discussion. Comments included: Mike Todd: get UW-L to do research on economic impact; Kathryn Lammers: define what a petition is; Dave Badduzzi: last estimate for a tax levy was \$70-\$80 per property for current District members and this would decrease if District is expanded; Robin Schmidt: not just economic impact but also fairness to include all those who benefit from the lake, not just the small number living along the lake; and Dave Paudler: money is needed for what the lake needs. All in attendance agreed that expansion of the District should be pursued.

9. Consider and Act on 2025-2026 Budget. Dave Paudler made motion to approve the 2025-26 budget (with the \$7,000 from DNR included as income), seconded by Mike Todd. Discussion: Dave Badduzzi: may need taxation to get La Crosse County donation; Dave Paudler: property owners do put in money for erosion control even though this isn't a tax; Robin Schmidt and Sue Paudler: concurred with Dave that this is important; Mike Todd: LORC has a blog that can put message out to include what property owners have done; Sue Schultz: members can speak to various groups; and Robin Schmidt suggested a user group. MPU.

10. Commissioner Election with Updated Information. Marc Schultz stated that 2 commissioners need to be elected; 1 for a 3-year term and 1 for a 2-year term (2 years instead of 3 to get back on schedule for elections every year). Two others from resignations (one recently and another after this meeting) will need to be appointed by the next Chair. The Town of

Onalaska has appointed Luke Marcou as a commissioner in place of Marc Schults. Fritz Funk made motion to nominate Tom Ready for a 3-year term, seconded by Dave Paudler. Dave Paudler made motion to close nominations for the 3-year term, seconded by Robin Schmidt, MPU. Dave Paudler made motion to nominate Marc Schultz for the 2-year term, seconded by Luke Marcou, MPU. Fritz Funk stated his term is up. Robin Schmidt made motion to nominate Fritz for a 3-year term, seconded by Sue Schultz. Robin Schmidt made motion to close nominations, seconded by Sue Paudler, MPU.

11. Dredge Project Update. Mike Todd stated an extension for the permit may be needed since there is still a need for \$100,000.

12. Set Next Year's Annual Meeting Date and Location. Robin Schmidt made a motion for Sept 16, 2026, at the City of Onalaska – Council Chambers, seconded by Luke Marcou, MPU. Dave Paudler made a motion to amend the motion to allow leeway with the date if the meeting room is not available, seconded by Sue Schultz, MPU.

13. Adjourn. Mike Todd made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30, seconded by Sue Schultz, MPU.

Submitted by Connie Welch, Commissioner



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2025-26 Financial Statement

Financial Transactions
Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District

REGULAR CHECKING ACCOUNT

Balance 12-3-2025	\$9,789.40	
<i>Transactions</i>		
July 10, 2026	\$182.96	La Crosse Mail
August 26, 2026	\$188.56	La Crosse Mail
Balance 08-28-2026	\$9,417.88	

WEED CUTTING CHECKING ACCOUNT

Balance 10-31-2025	\$9,119.55	
<i>Transactions</i>		
April 22, 2026	\$100.00	Teller Deposit (Donation)
August 24, 2026	\$2,000.00	Village of French Island
August 26, 2026	\$10,000.00	La Crosse County
Balance 08-26-2026	\$21,219.56	



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2026-27 Proposed Budget Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District

EXPENSES

Cutting Travel Channels	\$19,500
Lake District Convention	400
Annual Meeting	550
Social	200
Administration	100
Project & Grant Cost Share	17,500
Total	\$20,750

INCOME

LAX County	\$10,000
Village of French Island	2,000
La Crosse Sailing Club	250
Expore La Crosse	500
DNR Grant Refund	2,500
Lake District Tax	20,000
Total	\$35,250

BMO Checking \$9,417.88

BMO Weed Cutting \$21,219.56

Total **\$30,826.12**

Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District 2025-2026 Financial Review August 29, 2026

We have been requested to review the financial transactions of the Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District checking accounts

The accounts are held with BMO Bank at 1300 Rose St La Crosse WI.

Each account has a separate purpose and bank statement

The Weed Cutting Account (3889) is used to fund the operation and maintenance of the Lake Onalaska permitted and buoyed Boat Travel Channel

The purpose of the Boat Travel Channel is to provide and maintain a recreational boat channel navigation opportunity for lake users.

Large beds of both emergent and submergent aquatic vegetation develop each summer growing season. Schafer Marine is hired by the Lake Onalaska District to harvest and remove the aquatic vegetation within the marked channel to provide safe recreational boat travel.

The purpose of the Regular Account (6757) is for administration, operation and cost share funds of the Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District.

These funds are used to pay expenses for the annual meeting, educational events, cost sharing for projects and grants as well as other budget items.

We have reviewed the BMO Bank deposit and expenditure transaction record as well deposit and check records of the Lake Onalaska District.

The BMO Bank records are in agreement with the Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District 2025-2026 Financial Statement.

Mike Schultz Lake District Resident

Dave Balduzzi Former Lake District Commissioner



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COMMISSIONER JOB DESCRIPTION

Five members of the Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District seven member Board of Commissioners are elected at the annual meeting by a plurality vote. Two members are appointed. One by the La Crosse County and one by the Town of Onalaska. A full term in office is 3 years; seats come up for election on a staggered basis. The Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District Board of Commissioners is broadly responsible for the governance of the Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District. Except for powers reserved to the electors and property owners at the annual meeting, all the powers of the Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District are exercised by the board of commissioners.

- Know and effectively articulate the mission, purpose, goals, policies, and programs of the Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District.
- Attend annual Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District meeting, monthly/periodic board meetings and committee meetings to which assigned.
- Chair and/or participate in at least one Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District board committee.
- Commit time, thought, and effort to the Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District.
- Participate in establishing and enforcing organizational policies.
- Accept responsibility for the Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District's financial accountability.
- Identify friends and associates who may be prospective Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District or board members.
- Participate in electing Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District officers and their periodic evaluation.
- Support and advise the Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District's chairperson as appropriate.
- Participate actively in assessing the Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District's performance and setting its strategic goals and objectives.
- Represent the Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District to the community.
- Avoid conflicts of interest.
- Attend and complete the Wisconsin Lakes & Rivers Convention's Basic Lake Board Member Training at the earliest opportunity.

Minimum Qualifications:

- To qualify for commissioner elections, a person must be either a resident elector or property owner in the Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District. The ownership qualification is satisfied if a person is an official representative, officer or employee of any trust, foundation, corporation, association or organization which is an owner of property within the district.
- To be appointed by the town, city, or village a person would be a member of the governing body or a resident of the district who owns property within the district.
- The Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District Board meets immediately after every Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District annual meeting to select three officers (*chair, secretary, treasurer*) from among themselves. Elected and appointed Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District commissioners are eligible for officer positions.
- Become familiar with the role of the three river management agencies: US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish & Wildlife Services, and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources regarding use, regulation and each agencies rules and public policy.

How to begin:

People seeking to be elected to the Lake Onalaska Protection & Rehabilitation District board of commissioners are encouraged to attend one of the regular meetings of the Lake board to discuss details about declaring candidacy and the Lake District's voting process. People seeking to be appointed to the Lake District board are encouraged to connect with the president/mayor of the applicable town/city/village or the chair of the county's land and water conservation committee.

Signature

Printed Name

Date