

DRAFT – not reviewed or approved

PIPE & NORTH PIPE LAKES PROTECTION & REHABILITATION DISTRICT  
Commissioners' Meeting (virtually by Zoom)  
Saturday, January 24, 2026, 9:00 a.m.

(note - the items on the agenda for the January 28, 2026 meeting that were not addressed at that meeting were addressed at March 7, 2026 meeting (and hence, in that sense, these minutes are Part 1 of 2, as separate minutes are being generated regarding that March 7, 2026 meeting)

**Commissioners Attending**

Jim Ladner, Gene Schultz, Carla Gillespie, Jim McCarthy, Tom McIntee

**Absent**

Brad Olson, Dan Lowe

**Public**

Fewer than 10

**Call to Order**

After some technical difficulties, the meeting is called to order at 9:17.

**Review & Approval of Draft Minutes of November 12, 2025 Commissioners' Meeting**

Draft minutes from the November 12, 2025 meeting are approved.

**Treasurer's Report - 2025 wrap-up & 2026 Budget**

Per report for the January 28, 2026 meeting, the District had \$34,000 in its checking account, and \$78,000 in its "rapid response" savings account.

With \$14,844 that needs to be paid toward grants before they are closed out, \$17,700 in cost-sharing commitments and \$25,000 earmarked as a safeguard for use in the event of an rapid response AIS issue, the District has about \$54,000 available for use on projects and other approved expenses.

Income sources were grants, donations and the tax levy. The tax levy was \$17,000 which has remained unchanged for many years.

Overall expenses for 2025 were \$39,000, and the District had revenue in in 2025 in excess of expenses of \$7,000.

**Township Report**

Boat Landing Repair - The township has been focussed on road repair, and has not yet addressed the landing repair. The township has received a bid from one contractor and is continuing discussions about that bid.

Based on some preliminary discussions by the Township Board, it seems likely that the Township Board will recommend a levy increase this year. Part of the reason is the loss of state funding to maintain township roads. It can cost \$300,000 to \$400,000 to replace a mile of road. Seal coating is also

expensive \$40,000 to seal coat Pipe Lake Lane last fall. Turning some roads back to gravel is part of the ongoing discussion.

Equipment Issues- The township needs to plow the roads. The equipment they have is old and in need of repair. A new plow truck costs about \$300,000. And due to tariff issues it takes about 18 months to get one of these trucks now. These are among the reasons that tilt in favor of a levy increase.

The Township Board declined to grant a request that a firm named the "Secluded Land Company" (SLC) had lodged with the township Board seeking to have a parcel of land east of North Pipe Lake rezoned to create a subdivision. Just prior to the Township Board meeting where the request was to be heard, SLC cancelled its appearance before the Township Board, but the Board discussed the matter and declined the rezoning request in any event.

Except parcels around the lake, most of Johnstown is zoned Ag20, meaning that property owners can't have any buildings on a parcel smaller than 20 acres. The developer SLC wanted that the two 40 acre parcels in question rezoned to Ag5 allowing it to have a subdivision with 2-acre lots.

### **County Report**

Polk County may be revising the shoreline ordinance pertaining to boathouses.

The Wisconsin Lake Alliance gave a presentation about wake boats to the Wisconsin Township Association.

### **District Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Program (including Matt Berg Report)**

#### **Matt Berg's study**

Each year, local scientist, Matt Berg, who runs Endangered Resource Services, LLC, conducts a study of the landing area on the north end of Pipe Lake, and the shoreline around the lakes based on information from samples collected on four separate dates.

Periodically, Matt & his company does a study of the entire portions of both Pipe & North Pipe Lakes, - that larger study was most recently conducted in 2024. The report from the 2024 study was published December 2025, and is available on the Lake District website.

In his work in 2025, Matt found no invasive species in and around the landing and adjacent shoreline. The reports that Matt generates are kept in the Lake District archives, and also posted on the Lake District website.

In a separate matter, the Commissioners noted that Zebra mussels are one of the fastest-spreading AIS in Polk and Barron Counties. The Commissioners agreed that we are very fortunate that zebra mussels have not been found in Pipe & N. Pipe Lakes to date..

#### **Boat landing monitors**

The landing monitors who served at the landing last year, Mark and Doug, will both be returning for the 2026 boating season. It noted that the cost to the District for landing monitors has increased over the years.

Indeed, it was noted that years ago, the cost for landing monitor wages was completely covered by the state, then it went to half of the expense that the District incurs for landing monitors, and, more recently, the state of Wisconsin contribution for the funds that the District pays to landing monitors is capped at \$4,000 a year.

## **Landing Improvement Update**

The first year of the boat-washing station went reasonably well. There were a few times when someone parked in front of the sign. Some stakes may be added to mark off the area so that people do not park in the area where the boat-washing station sites.

The Commissioners provided an update on the possibility of adding an internet video AIS monitoring system, called iLids, at the landing. The firm "Environmental Sentry" was sold in May 2025 to a firm called "Lake Shield" (<https://www.lake-shield.com>), and Lake Shield is has upgraded the monitoring equipment and looks to have improved data collection, and simplified interface for the 2026 season. A Lake Shield representative will be coming out to assess if our landing has suitable conditions for such a system. If it would be possible to add such a monitoring system at the District landing, the District would apply for a WDNR grant in the fall of 2026 so assist with the costs of adding such a system.

## **District Projects Update**

### **SW Pipe Lake Culvert Project**

Over the years, and, in particular, in the past few years, the phosphorous level of water from the drainage into Pipe Lake from the culvert in the southwest portion of Pipe Lake was noted to be unusually high. Over the past few years, the District has been exploring options to better understand and potentially address this issue.

Water flow through the culvert from the Ag holding pond is intermittent, not steady. But at times, especially in the Spring, the flow can be heavy. The District would absorb the cost of a corrective action, and has funds available through a WDNR grant that was awarded in early 2025 to study the situation in more detail.

There are several possible options, but the initial steps that the District would be prepared to undertake is to study the situation in more detail.

Some of the owners of property in and around the southwest culvert, or that have property that appears to drain into and create flow into that southwest Culvert have concerns that the phosphorus readings the District has taken may be inaccurate that the flow into the SW culvert is minimal. They also have raised concerns about the the behavior of some boaters who beach their boats on south beach on Pipe Lake (which is located well east of the SW culvert).

The District will continue conversations with these property owners in an effort to find a mutually agreeable solution.

A flow meter may be added to the culvert this Spring.

### **Danniger Property Project (WASCOB)**

The District is partnering with the County to put a retention basin on land owned by the the Danniger family. All the paperwork has been signed and construction should start this spring.

### **Bill James Work on NPL in Summer of 2025**

Bill James conducted a study on North Pipe Lake (NPL) in the summer of 2025 to determine if some parts of NPL were candidates for selectively applied alum treatment. The findings reported by Bill James and his team indicated there may well be a benefit to apply alum in the northern portion of NPL, but the DNR has advised the District that there are additional steps the District needs to take before it would be prudent to applying for a grant to support alum treatment.

### **Flow Meter Maintenance (24th Street stream); possible addition of flow meter at retention pond**

A few years ago, Lake District members added a flow meter to a stream on the northwest side of North Pipe Lake.

Based on the experience with this meter, based on input from external consultants, the District plans to add a flow meter near the retention pond in the northeast corner of North Pipe Lake — on the stream that flows from the retention pond to North Pipe Lake.

For a good number of years Lake District member Doug Stevens has conducted water sample collections from certain streams on Pipe and North Pipe Lake, but he has asked the district to see if it can recruit some new volunteers to take over. The District has lined up volunteers to do the stream sample collection on North Pipe Lake, but is still in need of locating one or more volunteers to do the collections from certain streams on Pipe Lake.

### **Overview/Discussion re: Pipe & N. Pipe Toolkit: An Integrated Synthesis of Watershed, Hydrologic, Limnological & Sediment Studies And Lake/Stream Monitoring (2002–2025)**

Jim Ladner has compiled a synthesis of the studies and data collected from both lake from 2002 to 2025. Members of the water quality committee and some outside experts are reviewing this compilation. Once these reviews are completed, this synthesis will be uploaded to the District website.

### **Suggestion to Finish the Agenda at Another Meeting**

A suggestion was made to finish the January 28, 2026 agenda at separate, to be scheduled meeting before the next regularly scheduled meeting (which is slated for April 2026). All those Commissioners who were present endorsed that idea, and so it was agreed that a new meeting would be scheduled in late February or early March 2026 to complete the discussion of items on the agenda for the January 18, 2026 meeting.

### **Meeting Adjourns**

The meeting adjourns at 10:52 am.