DRAFT – not reviewed or approved

PIPE & NORTH PIPE LAKES PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION DISTRICT
Commission Meeting (Zoom)
Wednesday, August 5, 2026, 2:30 p.m.

Meeting Note:
The purpose of this meeting is to confirm the 2027 budget and levy recommendation ahead of the 2026 annual meeting. The budget and levy recommendation needs to be sent out

Commissioners Attending:

Jim Ladner, James McCarthy, Gene Schultz, and Carla Gillespie. Tom McIntee joined by phone about an hour into the meeting. Gene Schultz lost his connection and rejoined by phone before the vote.

Public: Marc Schulte

Meeting Convenes: 2:30 p.m.

Move Forward Now with AIS Initiatives or Wait to See if Grants Can be Secured?

A key element of this meeting was to determine if the District should move forward with projects even if WNDR grants were not secured, and to settle the related levy recommendation.

As background, Jim Ladner noted that Balsam Lake's iLIDS grant application was denied last year and that the District's two 2024 education grant applications were denied that year. In the past the District has generally proceeded with projects only after a grant was awarded. Jim McCarthy said state grants are tightening and that AIS prevention is important enough to fund regardless.

The projects/proposals at issue are:

1. A new or redesigned website that can more efficiently store and present water quality data and documents related to grant procurement, ongoing projects, local government regulations etc. Estimated cost $10,000 - $15,000

2. iLids audio and video AIS monitoring system that would be installed at the landing to expand our AIS lake monitoring efforts. Estimated costs about $17,650 to purchase and install, plus a service fee of $450 a month for five to six months (about $2,500 a year), which grants do not cover. Grants cover only a depreciated share of the purchase.

3. Creating a Plan for Addressing AIS, which the DNR requires before a district may apply for AIS treatment grants or treatment permits. The District only has a rapid response plan and most nearby districts have more A DNR grant of $10,000 with a $5,000 District share is available; budget up to $15,000 for a consultant to write the plan, pending bids.

4. Increasing the Rapid Response Fund by $10,000, from $25,000 to $35,000, using the District's accumulated balance rather than the levy. Gene Schultz's quote from the dive contractor is two divers at $400 an hour for a 40-hour week, for removal only — which is $16k for only one week.

After some discussion of the increasing difficulty in securing grants, current water quality issues, and the threat of AIS from other lakes in this area, the District decided to proceed to draft a more robust AIS plan and to also install an LIDS system whether or not grants are awarded, and also to add $10,000 to the Rapid Response Fund. The website upgrade work in 2027 would be contingent:on obtaining grants - the District will apply for the two education grants but proceed only on website work in 2027 only if they are awarded (or if there are no other funds available). Grants received for iLIDS or the plan could allow a lower levy in 2028; the 2027 levy cannot be changed after the annual meeting vote.

Gene Schultz noted that the landing monitors each earn more than the $2,000 independent-contractor (1099) reporting threshold, so hours may need to be trimmed or a monitor added. Carla Gillespie said iLIDS should not replace the human monitors; an active monitor program is in any case required for the iLIDS grant. Commissioners expect 30–45 minutes of discussion of the levy at the annual meeting, and the budget will show each project as its own line.

Motion to Adjust the Proposed Levy Amount

Motion by Jim Ladner, second by Carla Gillespie, that the Commission recommend increasing the annual levy from $17,000 to $45,000 to fund the development of an AIS Plan and the purchase, installation and first-year service of iLIDS. Approved with no opposition. This replaces the $25,000 recommendation of July 18.

Jim Ladner will send the budget and levy recommendation to members within two days, after he and Gene review it. This year's mailing will also request representative of trusts and corporations that own District property to name authorized voting representatives.

Meeting Adjourns: 3:45 p.m.