

Minutes

Rice Lake, Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District

Posted: Town of Rice Lake Municipal Building,
City Hall of Rice Lake, Rice Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

Place: United Presbyterian Church, 20 W. Messenger St., Rice Lake, WI
54868 (Handicap Accessible)

Time: 8:30 AM

Date: January 21, 2026

Josh Estreen: Chair	x	Don Putnam: Treasurer/Commissioner	x
Chris Olsen (Secretary)	x	Doug Edwardsen/Commissioner	x
City Rep - Open		Bob Anderson/County Rep	x
Randy Bina/Commissioner	x	Dave Blumer (LEAPS) Consultant	x
Christina Solie (LD Coordinator)	x	Carol Kettner /WQ&LP Committee	x
Guests: Loni Graf		Nate Emerson: Operations	x

Notice: A quorum for the City or Town of Rice Lake, or other municipal bodies may be present but, no actions will be taken.

Agenda Item:	Notes:
1. Call to order by Chair: Acknowledge posting of meeting minutes and agenda.	Call to order 8:30 am
2. Roll Call & Introductions:	
3. Pledge of Allegiance:	
4. Public Input: (limited to five minutes) No Board action will be taken	a) Guest Loni Graf attended to learn more about commission and how it works with residents
5. Consent Agenda: a) Secretary's Report Approval of minutes of 11/19/25 b) Treasurer's Report Approve as presented 01/21/26 c) Approve the payment of bills as presented	
6. Motion to approve Consent Agenda	a) Anderson/Edwardsen - approved
7. Consent Agenda Items pulled for further discussion and/or action:	
8. Old Business:	a) None
9. New Business: a) Council rep Putoff resigned from City Council. Position open until seat is filled at City of Rice Lake. b) Barron County Lake Association meeting: Estreen/Solie c) DNR response to proposed chemical treatment in Clearwater Bay. See addendum A	a) No action needed, informational only. b) 20 people attended from lake district and associations around Barron County. Concerns about AIS, payroll for CBCW, hiring PT help, consultants, wake boats.

	<p>Overall good meeting and informative.</p> <p>c) Discussion on pursuing chemical permit with additional information. Asked LEAPS for a proposal to do a study on water flow through the entire lake.</p>
<p>10. Standing Committees:</p> <p>a) Finance-Putnam</p> <p>b) Lake operations-Bina</p> <p>c) Consultant/Grants-Blumer</p> <p>d) Lake Protection/Water Quality-Solie/Kettner</p> <p>e) Inter-governmental – Anderson, City or RL</p> <p>f) Lake District Coordinator-Solie</p>	<p>a) MM/MS Edwardsen/Anderson Approve borrowing \$250,000 of term debt over 4 years and it will include the remaining balance due of the current loan. from Dairy State Bank. Roll call vote: Estreen-yes, Olsen-yes, Edwardsen-yes, Putnam-yes, Anderson-yes, Bina-yes. Transfer of \$10000 from money market to checking until first levy</p> <p>b) No cutting being done. Harvester is being built and electronics being installed. Delivery in April.</p> <p>c) Three grants submitted end of 2025. Yellow Iris should be awarded in February. Submitted 2 - \$10000 grants for continued studies. LEAPS now out of yearlong contracts.</p> <p>d) Tamarack Wetland advised on fairgrounds rain garden. Working with Skye Odel to build website. Will transfer to new platform in June along with emails. Upcoming conferences: Red Cedar Watershed (Christina to present), Wisconsin Lakes in Stevens Point, NW WI Lake Conference. CBCW reimbursement arrived for 2025, awarded again for 2026. Salt awareness week next week.</p> <p>e) Waiting on City of RL to appoint rep. Question on who controls dam with retirement of community services director.</p> <p>f) Covered under water quality report.</p>

<p>11. Closed Session – Motion to convene into Closed Session pursuant to WI ss19.85(1)(c) considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility and WI ss19.85(1)(f) considering financial, medical, social or personal histories or disciplinary data of specific persons, preliminary consideration of specific personnel problems or the investigation of charges against specific persons except where par.(b) applies which, if discussed in public, would likely to have a substantial adverse effect upon the reputation of any person referred to in such histories or data, or involved in such problems or investigations.</p>	<p>a) Lake District Coordinator job description, responsibilities, hours. Motion to move to closed session: Putnam/Edwardsen - approved</p> <p>b) Putnam/Edwardsen - Move to open session - approved</p>
<p>12. Open Session – Motion to reconvene into open session to take any action resulting from the closed session.</p>	<p>a) Lake District Coordinator job description, responsibilities, hours.</p> <p>b) Lake Coordinator Position: 5% COLA increase beginning January 26, 2026, increase to 32 per week March 1, 2026.</p>
<p>13. Future Agenda Items:</p>	<p>Grant Update – Leaps/Solie, Closed Session: Employment</p>
<p>14. Set next meeting date/time:</p>	<p>Monthly Meeting: February 18, 2026</p>
<p>15. Consideration of Adjournment:</p>	<p>a) Putnam/Anderson - Approved</p>

Submitted January 21, 2026
Chris Olsen - Secretary

Addendum A

From: "Thill, Brandon T - DNR" <brandon.thill@wisconsin.gov>

Date: January 12, 2026 at 9:49:23 AM CST

To: jjestreen@hotmail.com

Cc: "Mesalk, Tyler J - DNR" <tyler.mesalk@wisconsin.gov>, "Smith, Alex R - DNR"

<Alex.Smith@wisconsin.gov>

Subject: Rice Lake HWM 2026 Chemical Permit Proposal

Good morning, Josh,

DNR has reviewed the permit proposing a chemical application on Rice Lake, Barron County. DNR recommends a withdrawal of the permit application and to reapply for a mechanical harvesting permit on this waterbody. EWM/HWM was first documented in Rice Lake in 2018 and has become established throughout Rice Lake despite active chemical application efforts (2018-2024). Mechanical harvesting in Rice Lake should be the management focus of EWM/HWM and chemical application should only be considered in areas where depths are not conducive to be managed mechanically and there is an active navigational impairment (see attached email). The Rice Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District owns multiple mechanical harvesters which have the ability to reduce seasonal navigational impairment from EWM/HWM while minimizing potential adverse effects from chemical applications. The Department asks what the concentration of the entire south basin of Rice Lake would be following the proposed treatment of ProcettaCOR EC.

Wild Rice is also present within Rice Lake, near the mouth of the Red Cedar River. In areas with wild rice, no chemical management should be considered regardless of depth or navigational impairment. Herbicide drift has been documented within Rice Lake during the 2024 HWM treatment and raises concern for potential impact to the small wild rice population in Rice Lake.

Thank you,

Brandon Thill

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