



Minutes of the July 25, 2026 McKenzie Lakes Association Annual Meeting

Call to Order by MLA President, Mike Pederson, at 9:03 am

Determination of quorum: There were 24 members present and a quorum was established to conduct association business. Five board members were present, including Mike Pederson, Sandy Swanson, Lisa Kiener-Barnett, George Kuechle, Jan Caldwell. Dave Pederson and Jeff Larson were absent and excused.

Welcome and thanks to all members and visitors in attendance. Welcome to the new members!

Secretary Report:

Minutes from the June 2026 meeting were emailed to members and posted on the McKenzie Lakes Association website. As a reminder, if you are a member and haven't received the emailed newsletters, please contact Jan Caldwell to update your information. Jan's email is jancaldwell41@gmail.com. **A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to approve the minutes from June 2026.**

Treasurer's Report & Proposed 2026 Budget:

Lisa provided the financial report from Jeff Larson, and a handout was available for review at the meeting.

Treasurer's report was provided to members in attendance. Profit/Loss, Balance Sheet reviewed and presented to members who were present.

Treasurer's report filed.

MLA Board Member Voting:

Board Members convened after the June meeting to elect officers. The officers remained the same: Mike Pederson, President, Sandy Swanson, Vice-President and Jeff Larson, Treasurer

Mike Pederson reported that there is a vacancy on the board. Regretfully, Julianne Farrell has stepped away from the Board. Mike, with additional input from Sandy, explained the duties of the position of Secretary and asked that anyone interested please contact him.

Old Business & Ongoing MLA Programs:

Booya Report: Everything is ready for Booya. Lisa thanked everyone who has donated and is looking forward to a great day.

*The Booya is the MLA major yearly fundraiser and includes all-you-can-eat Booya as well as additional food/drinks, games, raffles, and prizes. It is a way to support the MLA missions of outreach and community and raises funds to help with education and preservation of the health of our lakes. The coordinator of the Booya is Lisa Kiener-Barnett. For more information see the website page. <https://mckenzielakes.com/booya/>

Merchandise:

Lisa provided an update. There is a wide variety of new apparel items for sale. They will be available at the Booya.

*Merchandise including shirts, mugs, and other items are available for purchase at meetings. Lisa Kiener-Barnett is the current contact.

Membership:

Lisa informed that Member Forms were sent in the Booya mailing and responses have been coming in at a rate ahead of last year. Forms are also available today at the meeting. Minutes were emailed, and if members did not receive the meeting minutes via email, contact Jan Caldwell by talking to her after the meeting or by emailing her.

*Fiscal and membership year is July 1. Dues go from July 1 - June 30. Membership dues are only \$25 per household and can either be paid in person or online. If you have changes to your contact information, please reach out to the membership coordinator, Jan Caldwell, by emailing cald1988@gmail.com.

DNR CB/CW Clean Boat Clean Water Initiative (DNR shared grant):

Sandy provided an update. Three CBCW workers have been at the landings. So far there are 343 paid hours with 951 boaters recorded.

*The CBCW grant is provided through the State of WI and it is a seasonal grant. The intent is to stop the spread of zebra mussels by having landings on each lake staffed to stop boats and monitor to ensure that they use the decontamination stations to clean off boats properly. The grant application is due by Nov 1 and has been written by Sandy Swanson each year. Funds must be matched as it's a 75/25 grant: 75% paid employees, 25% volunteers. This is a grant for all 3 lakes. Each landing has to have 200 hours of volunteer work. You do not need to be a member or live on the lakes to volunteer. The Town of Scott volunteers to do payroll.

At State and Regional meetings. McKenzie Lakes is an example that they put forward to all associations for having the program since it also educates not only people living on our lakes,

but anyone who visits our landings. Our association was instrumental for both counties' (Washburn/Burnett) language when they made the law.

Decontamination Station:

Sandy updated. Thanks for all of the volunteers who have worked hard to maintain the stations. Everything has been kept full.

*The decontamination stations are separate from Clean Boat Clean Water and they are not grant-approved; it's committee initiated. There is a county LAW that states that boaters must wash their boats and we have decided as an associate to provide the stations. The stations are monitored and replenished on a weekly basis by volunteers.

Website:

Sandy provided an update on the work she has been requesting of our website management service, North of Eight. It was noted that we will continue to use their services as needed.

*<https://mckenzielakes.com> is the official MLA Website which is sponsored in part by LakeKit, which makes websites available to Wisconsin lake associations. For information on the website or to request changes, contact Julianne Farrell, website coordinator. The Facebook group is private, and you or a family member must be a member or MLA and be able to answer the questions required to join (address, etc). Administrators of the Facebook group are Julianne Farrell, Sandy Swanson, and Missy Isabella. The website is not private and you do not need to be a member to review all information provided.

Invasive Species - Purple Loosestrife/Yellow Iris (square stem):

Update: no update at this time

*Purple Loosestrife blooms in the summer and has a square stem. If you see Purple Loosestrife on your property, cut it (don't pull) at the base and apply Round Up (or herbicide) to the stem. Bag it tightly (**DON'T BURN IT or the seeds will spread!**), tie it, and throw it out. Beetles which only eat this plant have been used on our lakes are still working but there is still an abundance of purple loosestrife. New Beetles have not been available recently. We used to have someone from MLA grow them as a project, but we no longer have that. However, we were ahead of the curve by starting beetles years ago.



Yellow iris will flower in June, and by mid-July the plant has leaves and seed pods but no flowers. Seed pods have hundreds in each pod. The seeds can float on the water and along the shoreline and they will sprout and spread quickly. Discussed methods of removal - if in water, can cut below waterline and will suffocate. **Do NOT touch the plant, as it is poisonous and will cause a painful rash. If there is a seed pod, the pods can burst.** Put the plant in a garbage bag and seal it, and **do not burn the plant or it will spread the seeds.**

Yellow Flag Iris was first identified on Big McKenzie Lake in the 2022-2027 5-year plant study but it hadn't been identified in previous studies. It's currently on Big McKenzie only.



Big McKenzie Landing update

Mike and Sandy updated. Sandy reported that the boat landing is owned by Washburn County Forestry. Casey Township will not take it over. Durand will continue working on parking lot and shoreline improvements. Mike reported that there are grants available. He will follow up and report back.

Note on Power Loading at landings: Some will use engine power to get the boat on trailer, where they give it gas, and this creates a hole. Over time these holes get very large and destroy the landing. This is illegal and can be reported if you see it happening.

Fish Sticks -

Mike presented. Reported on the fish sticks process.

*Fish Sticks - the DNR no longer wants fish cribs, which used to be used for fish habitats. Full trees are pulled on ice when the conditions permit and fastened to trees by chains/cables; then, when the ice melts, they will sink and chains are removed. The trees provide a better environment and habitat for birds, frogs, fish, and other wildlife. There is an extensive approval process of where they are allowed to go in and the locations are temporarily marked with signs.

Secchi Reading:

- Big - 20 ft
- Middle 13 ft
- Lower - unreported

Readings can be affected by weather and on the day of reading it was windy and cloudy.

*Secchi readings measure the lake clarity. It's a reflection of lake health, and it's not good to be either too clear or too murky. Member and biologist Scott Ballantyne has explained that it's common to see clearer water if zebra mussels are present since they will act as a filter. There are daily fluctuations, and readings are not all taken on the same day. We do these readings to monitor change over time.

Lake Survey / Water Study -

Mike Pederson presented. Previously, Burnett County (Emily Moore) and USGS reached out and wanted a water quality study on our chain to assess zebra mussels and blue green algae. The surface water grant requires matching funds and volunteer time. The water AIS specialist is Emily Moore who is conducting the study. Emily worked with MLA on our 5-year plan and this goes hand-in-hand with our 5-year plant study. This water quality study will also look at the blue-green algae, which was more prevalent on our lakes this year. MLA approved going forward with the study.

Water will be tested and sent to state lab in Madison to get the results. Testing will be done once/month in deepest part of the lake now through Sept, as well as random testing in areas of algae bloom. Emily Moore, Burnett County, uses a machine to measure 8 different things every meter and gets readings. Went to 35 feet in Middle and 15 feet on Lower. Water temp on middle was 58 degrees pretty consistently. Water stays neutral in temperature from top to bottom in Spring. Lake associate contributed \$2000 to with a goal of monitoring water/lake health and to try to find out if green algae can be prevented. Lake owners are reminded they should not be using fertilizers and pesticides and be aware of run-off.

Member Arnie Dewitt, who does water testing in creeks and lakes, notices that there is a lot of run off and erosion near creek and the sand erodes to black dirt which contributes to issues.

We can't speak of whether all blooms are blue-green algae, but this is part of the testing. A member noted that when a fish went through the algae, they stopped moving. **If you notice a "blob," reach out to Mike Pederson so that the area can be tested.**

*Blue Green Algae was found on the lakes in 2025; subsequently, the water was tested by Burnett County and sent to the health department which confirmed presence of Blue/Green Algae with bacteria present. This blooms in large numbers, usually in the Spring. Bacteria is a toxin and it's best to avoid swimming in that area and prevent your pets from swimming in the area. Toxins from this algae can make people sick but it can be especially toxic to pets. Fertilizer, lawn chemical, and run-off are main contributors, as well as the weather, and the presence of zebra mussels means that our lake chemistry is changing. Blue Green Algae is often seen in spring due to rapid temp growth in the lake as well as pollen in the lake. Dead pan fish are a result of excessive pollen and fertilizers, since the plants take the oxygen needed for the fish. Many on our McKenzie Lakes have noticed an increase in dead pan fish, especially in the Spring.

Boat Parade winners: Big: 1st - Titterud family
2nd - Bob & Diane Hawkins family
3rd - McGrath family

Middle: 1st - Hoffman family
2nd - Schaffer family
3rd - Dave Pederson family

Lower: 1st - Mitchell family
2nd - Witt family

Next Meeting: September 5, 2026: Member meeting

Adjournment – A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 AM.

Minutes submitted by Lisa Kiener-Barnett, Distributed by Jan Caldwell

*Note: Narrative in purple is educational in relation to the topic and not necessarily part of the meeting discussion minutes.