

Tahkodah Lake District Annual Meeting Minutes

Meeting Held July 26, 2025 at the Cable Community Center

For Approval at 2026 Annual Meeting

Board Members present: Dean Hambrecht (Chair), Mary Jean Fenske (Secretary and Town of Drummond Representative), Steve Hinze (Treasurer), J Felsenthal (at large), Elizabeth Donohue (at large), Jim Crandall (Bayfield County representative)

1. **Call to order** - Dean Hambrecht, presiding as Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:11am. Approximately 45 people were in attendance.
2. **Speaker on Fishing in Lake Tahkodah**
aMax Wolter, WI DNR Senior Fisheries Biologist, spoke about the fishing on Tahkodah, how it has changed over time, and what residents can do that will support fish populations.
3. **Approval of minutes of 2024 annual meeting.**
Minutes of the 2024 annual meeting were approved as circulated and placed on file.
4. **Town of Drummond's Appointment of Representative to the Lake District**
Dean Hambrecht stated that last March the Town of Drummond appointed Mary Jean Fenske to represent the District. Previously the Town of Cable appointed the representative but, in recent years, the Town of Drummond now has a greater share of property value on the lake. WI Statute requires the Town with the greater share of property value to appoint a representative to the Lake District.
5. **DNR Grant Application Update**
John Felsenthal shared that the Lake District's application to receive a WI DNR Surface Water Grant to conduct a thorough baseline assessment was not successful. The point total was just under what lakes selected received. The Board does not support applying again this year as conditions appear to have stabilized but supports continued monitoring of the lake.
6. **Installation of Staff Gauge to Monitor Lake Level Water/ Boat landing Monitoring Update/ Water Quality Update**
MJ Fenske reported that the Lake District Board provided the Town of Cable \$1500 this year to maintain watercraft inspection staff and increase wages to be competitive at the boat landing. MJ Fenske shared the highlights of the watercraft inspection report provided by Sue Thurne.
MJ Fenske reported that a staff gauge to measure the lake level was installed by EcoIntegrity on May 19 at a site in front of public property on the north end of the lake. The level was 1.9 feet from the bottom of the lake. The location of the gauge will remain the same so that relative change in lake levels can be

measured. Measurements will be taken approximately weekly and reported to the DNR's SWIMS database.

Finally, MJ Fenske reported that there is no trend over time in lake nutrient levels and water clarity is slightly decreasing over the last few decades.

7. Presentation and Discussion of District Contact List

John Felsenthal presented a district contact list that shows the location of the properties that make up the Lake District along with the names of the owners. Dean Hambrecht asked all of those present to introduce themselves and share where they lived on the lake.

8. Presentation of Financial Report and Discussion and Adoption of the Proposed Budget

Steve Hinze presented the 2024 financial report and noted that it had been reviewed by Natalie Smith acting in the capacity of an audit committee. He also presented the proposed 2026 budget. The proposed budget included a proposal to lower the tax levy for the district from \$3000/ year to \$2000/year with the goal to gradually lower the amount the District budgets to address environmental emergencies. A number of members present spoke in favor of keeping the modest levy the same and to let the fund grow citing concerns about the possible need for its use in the future for addressing invasive species given the spread in nearby lakes. Dave Bellis mentioned to retain the levy at the current amount of \$3000 in the proposed budget and revise the proposed budget accordingly. Rick Martens seconded. The motion for the 2026 budget was approved by a voice vote by members.

9. Discussion and Possible Action to Amend the District By-Laws

Dean Hambrecht described the Board's proposal to amend the By-Laws as shown below to allow flexibility in setting the Annual Meeting date and still provide adequate notice to all members,

Section 1--- Date, Time and Place

The annual meeting and budget hearing of the Lake District shall be held on the ~~last~~ third Saturday of July at a time and place selected by the board unless the board selects an alternative date at the previous annual meeting.

Roger Nelson motioned to approve the amendment as proposed. D Bellis seconded. Motion approved by a voice vote. Next year's annual meeting will be held on July 18, 2026.

10. Resignation of Board Member and Board Appointment of a Replacement.

Elizabeth Donohue is resigning from her term that expires in July 2027. The Board will appoint a replacement for the remainder of her term as per the District By-Law at the next Board meeting. Rick Martens has expressed interest in serving the remainder of E Donohue's term. The Board and District members expressed their gratitude to Elizabeth for her leadership and service.

11. Election of 2 board member open positions

Mary Jean Fenske's and John Felsenthal's 3-year terms on the Board expire in July 2025.

Both expressed interest in serving another three year term.

Nominations were opened for the open Board position. No other persons volunteered to be nominated this year for a three year term. Separate motions were made to appoint MJ Fenske and J Felsenthal to another term and each was approved by a voice vote.

**12. Website Update Plus New Email Address for Tahkodah Lake District
(tahkodahlake@gmail.com)**

J Felsenthal and MJ Fenske described the need for an independent District email account (tahkodahlake@gmail.com) and file storage for the District's records that support the District's website. Because the District is not a non-profit, it is not eligible for free Google accounts. The Board will continue to investigate options and move to an independent account.

13. Other Business

A District member not able to be present asked the Board to present the idea of improving the aesthetics to the Tahkodah sign on South Lake Owen Road by adding a map graphic or something similar. A majority of members expressed they were not in support of this suggestion at this time. A more definitive proposal could be brought by the member to a future annual meeting.

14. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 am. A potluck followed the meeting.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Jean Fenske, Secretary.