

Unified Lower Eagle River Chain of Lakes Commission Meeting Minutes

October 29, 2025

Meeting called to order by Commission Chair, Bill Lochte at 11:04 AM at the Eagle River City Hall.

All in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Verification of posting by Secretary, Marc Groth and verification of a quorum was confirmed by Bill Lochte along with the rest of the Commission representatives.

Motion by Dan Dumas for the agenda to be discussed in any order at the discretion of the Chair. Motion seconded by Carole Linn. All voting ayes. Motion approved.

Chairman Bill Lochte asked for a roll call and introductions. Commission members in attendance are Francine Gough, Cloverland Township; Carole Linn, Washington Township; Bill Lochte, Lincoln Township; and Dan Dumas, City of Eagle River.

Also in attendance:

Dave Mueller, Commission Treasurer, the Commission/ERCLA AIS Coordinator and Otter Lake Captain; Marc Groth, Commission Secretary, ERCLA Shoreline Restoration Chair, and Duck Lake Captain; Steve Skora, Catfish Lake Co-captain; Al Wirt, Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department; Jody Voight, ERCLA President; Michael Queoff, ERCLA Vice President and Cranberry Lake Captain; Scott Peterson, ERCLA Vice President of Finance.

Approval of the May 28, 2025, meeting minutes.

Motion by Carole Linn to approve the May 28, 2025, meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Bill Lochte. All voting ayes. Motion approved.

Note: Prior to approval Carole Linn asked if the list of action items Bill Lochte requested at the last meeting is completed. The commission secretary replied stating it has been completed.

ULERCLC Commission Business:

a. Treasurer report

Dave Mueller provided an update on the treasurer report (**See attachment "Treasurer's Report 2025"**). The beginning cash balance starting January 1, 2025, was \$2300.82.

Receipts this year were on April 11, 2025, we received an advanced payment from the March 2025 control grant of \$25,000.00 and on August 18, 2025 the final payment for the 2020 control grant equaling \$17,542.97. Adding in the checking account interest of \$44.08 results in a balance of \$42,587.05.

Expenditures were \$12,000.00 on 4/28/25 for DASH Aquatic Systems LLC for a 10/18/24 invoice #2024 and \$4,510.00 on 6/02/25 which was the final 2024 Onterra LLC payment for the 5/15/25 invoice #2630 totaling \$16,510.00, resulting in an ending cash balance of \$28,377.77 as of September 30, 2025.

b. Review and Payment of Bills

Payables are \$158.60 for post office materials and \$1,225.00 for BatPig Enterprises for the website re-do and hosting through 2026. Motion by Dave Mueller to approve paying both. Motion seconded by Carol Linn. All voting ayes. Motion approved.

Motion by Carole Linn to approve the ULERCLC 2025 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Francine Gough. All voting ayes. Motion approved.

2025 AIS Program Update

Dave Mueller presented the final AIS project costs (**see attachment "Unified Lower Eagle River Chain of Lakes Commission – 2025 Final Project Cost 10-24-25"**). Final cost for the project is \$62,083.33. Dave noted the additional \$250.00 charge for each of the municipalities to pay for the website re-do.

Dave Mueller then presented the 2026 budget (**see attachment "Unified Lower Eagle River Chain of Lakes Commission – 2026 Project Budget 10-29-25"**) and noted the costs are significantly higher in 2026 due to the upcoming point intercept study of the entire chain which is required every five years for the Commission to continue to receive future WDNR control grants. It is also required for the 2026/2027 Aquatic Plant Management Plan. The point intercept study adds \$23,190.00 to the 2026 costs compared to the 2025 costs. Motion by Carole Linn to accept the 2026 projected budget plan. Motion seconded by Francine Gough. All voting ayes. Motion approved.

Next Dave Mueller spoke to the attachment **"Cash Flow Forecast 10-29-25"** regarding the Commission's cash flow challenges. Starting with a cash balance of \$48,875.73 after paying the Post Office materials and BatPig invoice along with the upcoming receivables from the municipalities and ERCLA. The DASH LLC and Onterra LLC expenditures total \$62,083.33 resulting in a negative cash flow of \$13,207.60. Dave proposed an advance of \$14,000.00 from ERCLA to cover the remaining cost. The advance will be repaid to ERCLA after receiving the final WDNR grant payment of \$15,354.16. ERCLA President Jody Voight and ERCLA VP of Finance, Scott Peterson have agreed to the advance of the requested \$14,000.00 to ULERCLC. Jody Voight suggested a document be developed to show agreement on both sides. Bill Lochte agreed and suggested that ERCLA develop the agreement document for signature by December 15. Motion by Dave Mueller to allow him to pay the DASH LLC and Onterra LLC expenditures. Motion seconded by Dan Dumas. All voting ayes. Motion approved. Motion by Bill Lochte for the Commission to respectfully ask ERCLA to help the Commission cover their negative cash flow by advancing \$14,000.00 by mid-December. Furthermore, the Commission agrees to approve an MOU for the advance and agrees to repay the \$14,000.00 after receiving the next WDNR grant payment. Motion seconded by Francine Gough. All voting ayes. Motion approved. There is also agreement that there will be additional discussions regarding cash flow management between ULERCLC and ERCLA going forward. Dan Dumas suggested the Commission look at ways to obtain tourism dollars since the Eagle River Chain is the economic driver of tourism in the Eagle River area. Marc Groth agreed to follow up with the Chamber to discuss the grant process the chamber offers.

The Commission and ERCLA agreed there needs to be more riparian education regarding our Eurasian Water Milfoil situation and strategies going forward.

Aquatic Plant Management Plan (APMP) Update.

Marc presented an overview of the upcoming APMP grant which included the scope and the costs for the project. The grant is an ERCLA sponsored grant in which the ERCLA board of directors formally agreed to the scope of the project at an earlier ERCLA board meeting this year. The pre-application grant was submitted on September 6, 2025. The WDNR reviewed it and sent back suggestions for the final grant application which is due November 15, 2025. Marc is working closely with Onterra regarding the final grant application and mentioned Onterra is fully engaged and is carrying the heavier load in finalizing the grant application.

Marc pointed out he will need to meet with our WDNR biologists prior to submitting the final grant application due November 15, 2025. He briefly went over the scope, the schedule of events, and costs associated with the project and highlighted the Planning Committee which is represented by all 10 lakes. The Planning Committee will hold two meetings in 2027. The first will be to learn about the study results and assist in creating a framework of the implementation plan and the second meeting will be to review and provide comments on the draft of the plan.

The project deliverable will happen in the fall of 2027. The first draft will be released for a 21-day public comment period and a 45-day WDNR review. Lastly, a wrap up meeting for final review and comments are incorporated and the project is finalized by November 2027. (See attachment “**Update on Eagler River Chain’s Aquatic Plant Management Plan**”) for further details regarding the plan.

Letters and Communication

No other letters and communications received.

Open Forum

Dave Mueller mentioned the Commission and ERCLA are going to need to address how our chain is changing. What was once more of a fishing chain is now a water sport chain. He suggested we need to include the VRBO impact for all our project plans going forward - in other words our messaging needs to change. Bill suggested further discussions with Vilas County and the municipalities regarding long term funding to protect and preserve our chain.

Next Meeting Dates

The annual Onterra progress report presentation to the Commission and guests is Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 7pm in the Washington Township Hall, 2301 Town Hall Rd., Eagle River, WI 54521

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for April 22, 2026, at 11:00am in the City of Eagle River City Hall.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 PM by Carole Linn. Motion seconded by Dan Dumas. All voting ayes. Motion approved.