

GENEVA LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY (GLEA)

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Monthly Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, August 20, 2026 – 4:00 PM.

In Person: GLEA Office, 105 N Elkhorn Rd., Williams Bay, WI 53191.

Or Virtual: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84014525458?pwd=clXxmyR2u8Gt8BbGwuswWahx13Y2Im.1>

Meeting ID: 840 1452 5458

Passcode: 480244

MINUTES

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 3:59 pm by President P. Kenny. Roll Call was taken.

Members:

Attending: Vice Chairperson Mary Jo Fesenmaier (Lake Geneva), Carol McAdam (Linn), Rob Umans (Williams Bay), LaMarr Lundberg (Williams Bay), Alex Rasch (Walworth), Pat Kenny (Fontana), Rick Pappas (Fontana)

Non-Voting: Logan Madison (Lake Manager), Brilie Esser (Intern), Joanna Gerard (Communications Coordinator), Holly Baseman (Director)

Not in Attendance: Jim Weiss (Linn)

Additional Business: Open Records request received from Jake Schmidt on Tuesday 8/17 regarding fish crib permit from DNR and placement location. GLEA attorney provided initial guidance directing the Board to not share coordinates of the cribs to protect resident privacy. GLEA has 30-60 days to respond.

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes: R. Umans motion to approve the July 16, 2026 minutes. M. Fesenmaier seconded the motion to approve. Vote was unanimous.

1. Finances & Donations

- P. Kenny made a motion to approve the budget; C. McAdam seconded. Vote was approved unanimously.
- H. Baseman reported a QuickBooks discrepancy and received a quote of \$150 for two hours of accountant assistance. P. Kenny made a motion to authorize the expense; R. Umans seconded. Vote was approved unanimously.
- The June 2026 Balance Sheet and Income Statement were reviewed. M. Fesenmaier made a motion to approve; P. Kenny seconded. Vote was approved unanimously.
- The Board discussed planting a memorial tree for the 7/3 incident. P. Kenny noted that Fontana is exploring a memorial near Reed Park.

2. E. Coli

- H. Baseman reported significant spikes in beach E.coli results following heavy rain, providing an opportunity for public education regarding E. coli and post-rain conditions.
- DNR had been posting only one sampling result rather than an average or highest result. DNR and Walworth County Public Health have authorized GLEA to manually update results on the DNR beach website.
- Several instances of beach signage not being changed appropriately reinforced the need for the new sign box project. H. Baseman continues discussions with the original manufacturer regarding reimbursement/return and is obtaining a quote from a local Walworth company. Municipalities have been advised that new boxes are delayed to the 2027 season.
- Second round of beach testing data from Milwaukee lab show occasional spikes. Because testing represents a snapshot in time, GLEA will continue recommending yellow advisory signs following heavy rainfall.

3. Stream Testing

- **Buena Vista:** Intermittent source-point testing continues. Human, animal (cow or deer), and dog markers have been detected, but not as definitive source. GLEA is awaiting the latest Milwaukee lab results.
- GLEA is researching a scientific probe which would allow for more frequent stream testing and identification, with more immediate results and over time, lower cost. The estimated cost of the probe is \$8,400. P. Kenny suggested seeking a donation to cover half the cost. GLEA will also investigate the cost of conducting in-house E.

coli testing using approximately 100 test kits to provide faster results. The Board expressed interest in both options.

- **Hillside:** Linn Sanitary District does not wish to pursue dye testing at this time and prefers continued stream and groundwater testing, funded by Linn Sanitary District. GLEA will explore whether Linn may also contribute toward the probe or in-house testing.
- **Potawatomi, Birches & Harris:** Evidence of human E. coli warrants additional investigation. Because the current budget has been concentrated on Buena Vista, additional testing will likely need to be considered in the 2027 budget.

4. Permanent Piers

- GLEA received a complaint regarding white plastic material in the lake, believed to be from pier decking of new permanent pier installations. The company was notified and is addressing the issue.
- Discussion on the benefits of translucent decking when pier boards are replaced to allow greater light penetration; plastic materials should only be used after evaluating potential environmental concerns.
- Fontana is consulting their Village attorney regarding potential action related to safety concerns with permanent, year-round piers.

5. Homeowner Construction Runoff

GLEA has received several recent complaints regarding construction runoff and shoreline protection. M. Fesenmaier is working with the City of Lake Geneva to strengthen shoreline ordinances. The updated ordinances are requested for sharing with other municipalities once completed.

6. Abbey Marina Update

Abbey Marina conducted a copper treatment on 7/22 for Starry Stonewort. GLEA would like to discuss harvesting Starry Stonewort rather than chemical treatment with harbor management. DNR has approved Abbey Harbor for up to two copper treatments annually to maintain navigable waters. Trinke Estates is treating Starry Stonewort with herbicide. Both approaches manage navigability rather than eliminate Starry.

7. Clean Boats, Clean Waters

A job description was developed for launch staff and will be incorporated into seasonal training with Walworth County. The material may also be used to train volunteers. R. Umans made a motion to approve implementation of the job description; A. Rasch seconded. Vote was approved unanimously.

8. Boat Repair & Future Use

- A minor incident involving the boat GLEA has been using to conduct survey(s) on the water resulted in fiberglass scratches and a broken navigation light while fueling at Gage Marine. Because the incident was partially related to the absence of dock staff, Gage Marine reduced the repair bill by \$1,300, leaving \$546 due. P. Kenny made a motion to approve payment of \$546; A. Rasch seconded. Vote was approved unanimously. Then, following a mechanical issue, the owner requested that GLEA discontinue use of the boat.
- Options for 2027 were discussed. P. Kenny may have a lead on a boat for sale, while H. Baseman noted favorable pontoon rental rates from Elmer's Boat Rentals.
- To support continued on-water surveys through boat ownership or rental, GLEA anticipates requesting an additional \$1,500 annually from each municipality. H. Baseman will include this in upcoming budget requests.

9. Intern Report

- L. Madison reported results of intern dive surveys at known Starry Stonewort locations. Big Foot Beach shows limited spreading; Lake Geneva remains limited to one known location; and areas outside Trinke Harbor show slight spreading in pockets but no increase in depth. Native plants continue to outcompete Starry Stonewort in the lake. R. Umans suggested researching Spring Lake, Wisconsin's monitoring-only approach to Starry Stonewort management.
- GLEA interns and Gage Marine installed five additional fish cribs in Fontana, bringing the total installed cribs to 16. During dive surveys, interns located and inspected 10 of the 11 original 2025 cribs. Interns attempted to locate the Walleye's of Tomorrow fish plots but were unable to see them while snorkeling; coordinates indicate they are approximately 30–40 feet deep. A. Rasch suggested contacting Fontana Fire & Police regarding use of their underwater drone to locate and evaluate the plots.
- Logan reported that GLEA interns, two volunteers, and H. Baseman completed the annual boat count. Preliminary numbers appeared similar to 2025. C. McAdam suggested exploring whether GLEA staff and volunteers could conduct the count on foot next year rather than renting a boat.
- AIS Signage - Abbey Marina AIS signage has been installed, completing the project for the season.

- Farmers Markets - L. Madison reported moderate success at both farmers markets, with visitors stopping to speak with GLEA, collect educational materials, and purchase items. The Lake Geneva market location was less effective than the 2025 location. GLEA missed two July markets due to weather/smoke and one August market due to the Boat Count Survey. Overall participation and sales were somewhat lower than the previous summer.

10. Grants and Fundraising:

- \$2000 received from GLC for extra lake testing; \$2000 from Holiday Home Camp. Need to submit City proposals.
- Intern M. Gerard created a children's book. Looking into publishing. Would like to have local stores display and sell. Book is the property of GLEA.
- Necklace Fundraiser: J. Gerard is working on a possible pendant similar to one that WSP created in 2015; would like to use a photo from intern B. Esser and have M. Gerard design it. J. Gerard will talk with Fontana Jeweler about cost to create.
- H. Baseman has asked if L. Madison would be interested in continuing a part-time internship this fall; he attends UW-Milwaukee and will speak with his advisor about using the opportunity as a class credit. He would be available to continue helping with testing on Fridays throughout the semester.

11. Events:

- Corn and Brat Fest was successful; GLEA interns L. Madison and B. Esser worked the event.
- Healthy Lakes Conference: GLEA speaking on 9/24. H. Baseman was asked to speak on water quality as well as safety, including Lake Geneva's incident on July 3rd. A. Rasch stated that the investigation is not complete and advised that GLEA should not speak on safety as an environmental agency. Suggested GLEA reach out to WSP to speak instead at the conference about lake safety.
- Mussel Survey: volunteers will be doing final 2026 quagga and zebra mussel survey on September 25, 2026.
- Williams Bay Homecoming Parade, carrying banner, September 25, 2026.
- Milwaukee Lifelong Learning Group: H. Baseman asked to do a 75-minute presentation in 2027.

12. Municipal Reports and Updates:

- L. Lundberg reported that he conducted his own boat count at Big Foot Beach and voiced concern of potential excess urine contributing to bacteria in that part of the lake. He did a personal count between 7/21 – 8/2 - 3134 people counted off of Big Foot Beach in boats during that window. H. Baseman talked with SEWRPC about doing testing and they did it for Big Cedar Lake and advised against it, as results are minimal.
- Village of Williams Bay – R. Umans – Williams Bay has an ordinance for fishing tournaments; weigh station; GLEA has no control over the tournaments.
- Village of Fontana – R. Pappas - pier permits on hold until regulation is decided upon.
- Town of Walworth – A. Rasch noted Walworth County and DNR have proposed to increase shoreland zoning to 1000 feet. H. Baseman to follow up on exactly what is changing.

13. Next Meeting Date: September 17, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

- Motion to adjourn by R. Umans, C. McAdam seconded. Meeting concluded at 5:30 pm.