

MINUTES

Apple River Protection and Rehabilitation District (ARPRD)

Board of Commissioners' Meeting

Saturday, July 18, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

Amery City Hall Council Meeting Room

1. Chairman Roland Peterson called the meeting to order and set the agenda.
2. Chairman Roland Peterson, Treasurer Billie Jo Schleusner, Harvesting Operations Manager Dave Schleusner, Polk County Representative Fran Duncanson, City of Amery Representative Sharon Marks, AIS Leader Derrick Carlson and Secretary Kitty Miller were present.
3. The Minutes of the April 18, 2026 Board of Commissioners meeting were moved, seconded and approved with a one correction. Erin not Allie Schleusner assisted with the audit.
4. The Treasurer's Report was approved. The checking account balance as of July 18, 2026 is \$22,165.22. Income for the year to date is \$52,886.16. This figure includes Lake Vincent income. Expenses for the year to date are \$30,720.94. There is one more harvester payment to be made this year for \$7,894.93. It looks like the budget for 2026 will be okay, barring any unforeseen expenses.
5. Reports:
 - a. Dave, Vincent Lake Project: ARPRD has not previously taken a harvester to any other lake. There was a concern about transferring aquatic invasive species. The only invasive species Vincent Lake has is invasive lily pads. It is a small lake with only 26 homes. Last year Vincent Lake residents obtained a permit for removing vegetation by hand, this year they got a permit for mechanical harvesting. They looked into the cost of buying a harvester, and it was way too expensive for the small number of people on the lake. Income from the project was \$6,200 and expenses were \$3,000. Expenses included fuel, labor for harvesting, some transport of the harvested material, and thoroughly cleaning the harvester before and after the project. 27 hours of harvesting were done in two long days, and then Dave spent all day Sunday washing the harvester. The \$3,200 profit helps to cover the increase in fuel costs this year. It is entered on the budget as a one-time project since Vincent Lake residents may or may not request harvesting in the future.
 - b. Dave, Harvesting: The river looks really good today. The harvesting crew pushed hard to prepare for Music on the River yesterday. There have been no major mechanical problems this season. A hose blew on one harvester and some oil spilled. That special oil is very expensive, \$1,700 for five gallons. The new harvesting crew is working out very well. Curly-leaf is done with and the coontail is coming out now. The weeds really grew with the hot, dry weather we had, especially when the water level was low. The river is up now though. It took four days for it to come up. The city crew is having a

hard time keeping it in the same spot. When we had a really heavy rain a month ago at the time of the last Music on the River event, it sent all the weeds from the shoreline into the river. Dave received many phone calls. Rice Lake just got a new harvester 60% paid for by a grant. There are many features on the new harvesters that were not available on the old ones. Dave and Dale originally had to lift the wheels of the first harvester by hand, then added a crank. It is hard work. Now they are hydraulic, lifting up like the wheels on an airplane. Harvesters eventually wear out. Last year Dave bought a used harvester for parts, which he sells to ARPRD for a quarter of the price we would have to pay elsewhere. Dave also bought a used elevator. There have been a couple of flat tires. Dave severely injured his thumb. The harvesting was difficult when the river was low. Harvesting will most likely go into the first week of September.

c. Dave, CBCW update: Allie told Dave she only needs twenty hours more for the required 200 hours. She is going to work the other twenty soon. The SWIMS website is really hard to use. All the hours for WI CBCW go to one lady. The grant comes partially as an advance and then a final payment. It takes about three or four times of entering information into SWIMS to get the grant payments. Isaac, who is a teacher, says it is the worst website he ever works with. We have been doing inspections since 2013 and did not at first get the CBCW grant. Allie had one day where she sat for eight hours and only had one boat come by. The biggest thing to keep the invasive species out may be the CBCW sign and decontamination station. Derrick recently sat in on a different lake association meeting. Some people would use their decontamination station, some not. The people coming to the Apple River tend to be fisher people, not so much weekend recreational users like skiers and wake-boaters. The people who come for fishing are more likely to follow CBCW rules without prompting. Dave asked Allie to boat watch at one tournament, and some fisher people became testy with her, telling her they already power washed their boats at home.

d. Dave, Decontamination Stations: People are using them. Dave carries supplies and frequently refills the bleach solution. There are fewer boats at the Birch Street Landing so that station is used less.

e. Derrick, Aquatic Invasive Species: Polk County is working on updating their Aquatic Invasive Species Strategic Plan. It is like us updating the ARPRD Aquatic Plant Management Plan. Derrick was at the meeting. They took some outdated verbiage out. Some lakes are in really bad shape with respect to zebra mussels, including Deer Lake, Wapogasset and Bone Lake. Zebra mussels eat everything, the fish die out, then it takes about ten years for the lake to recover. We don't have zebra mussels so far. We do have a few more snails than normal this year. They are not the invasive ones though. Dave had taken some to Katelin at the DNR in the past to verify the type of snail. Katelin also confirmed that some white sucker fish Dave saw were not carp. Rice Lake has a huge number of invasive snails. They really stink when they die off on the shoreline. There is a lot of native milfoil this year but Derrick said that is not a bad thing. There is also more cabbage weed, but it is noninvasive. Muskie love to eat it. The curly-leaf

pondweed was a little worse than average. We do have a little purple loosestrife on the northeast side of the river. Derrick spoke with Katelin about it. Because is just a little patch, and hard to access, as long as it does not spread we can just leave it.

f. Fran, 2028 Dam Reconstruction: Fran had arranged for Alex at the city to discuss the upcoming work on the dam, but he was unable to make the meeting. Divers went down and inspected and confirmed the reconstruction was needed. We do not know if it is repair or replacement. The Town of Lincoln and the city of Amery share ownership. We have been told the planned start of the drawdown to make the repairs will be on September 8, 2028. Fran will speak with the county administrator to get more information. Residents will need to be informed before work begins. It is not known if the grant application process has been started. Fran's family owned a dam, and when it needed repair, she had to have it removed since other residents on the lake would not help pay the cost. The lake dropped from 15 feet deep and 80 acres to 6 feet deep and 60 acres. Not having the Apple River dam would be very detrimental. The need for dam repair has been on the radar for quite a while.

6. There was no old business.

7. New Business:

a. It was moved, seconded and approved to nominate Kitty for position of Secretary for 2027 through 2029.

b. Audit Committee of Derrick, Tom Sheffel, and Erin Schleusner moved, seconded and approved.

c. The 2026 actual and 2027 proposed budgets were moved, seconded and approved after discussion. The amount shown for the CBCW grant should be changed to \$1,950, 75% of the estimated \$2,600 payment for boat inspections labor. There may be other changes before the annual meeting if additional grant funds are received or there are unplanned expenses. Estimated \$2,300 at the end of 2027 will drop with the \$2,600 shown for the CBCW grant corrected to \$1,950. Anything can change. Dave did not turn in his hours for the last two weeks, instead donating his time. The year the first harvester was purchased Dale had not taken any pay for a season, and Dave took minimal pay. They instead put the pay into a capital fund for the initial harvester payment. A new harvester will be a want some time in the future. There are four payments remaining for the Inland harvester, one this year, two next year, and a smaller payment in 2028. We should let the dam repair play out before bringing it up at an annual meeting. Dave will shop around to see if he can find insurance savings. We are insuring for a loss of about \$1,000,000 of equipment.

d. Recommendation to apply for a harvesting permit for 2027 was moved, seconded and approved.

e. Recommendation to apply for a grant for 2027 CBCW moved, seconded and approved.

f. Agenda for the August 22, 2026 annual meeting was moved, seconded and approved after discussion. Maybe Alex can attend the meeting to discuss the dam reconstruction/repair. The position of board secretary is open for additional nominations. Propose continuing the \$70,000 tax rate with no increase requested. Tom Sheffel has some information to present at the meeting. Dave said Tom checks clarity every two weeks, when the satellite comes over.

8. Concerns: The Polk County Board will meet at Unity High School on Tuesday to discuss a request to change shoreland ordinance options and a temporary moratorium on data centers among other things. Many people are expected to show up. The County Board has been getting comments from the public in general and from lake districts. Not everyone in Polk County falls under the county zoning; some towns including City of Amery have their own or no zoning. Realtors and construction are in favor of the current ordinances being changed. Some people feel that when they own a property, they should be able to do whatever they want to do. Fran is not on the Polk County environmental committee. They had a four-hour meeting earlier in the week. Dairyland Power is looking to open a data center in Polk County. Wisconsin has favorable tax breaks for data centers. Data centers use a lot of water and power and can negatively impact the environment. Many residents want the moratorium. The moratorium would allow time to research the impact. The Village of Hammond denied a conditional permit for a bitcoin data center, and then the Hammond appeals board approved it. The Village is now seeking a court injunction saying the appeals decision was made under duress.

9. Positives: The Vincent Lake project really helped the budget. Fran shared information about the Merlin app. From Cornell University, it can listen to bird song and tell you the type of bird. You can also take a picture and it will identify the bird. It is really a nice app.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kitty Miller, Secretary

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