Lakes JAC — Meeting Minutes

Date: August 12, 2026
Location: Board Room

Chairman: Matt Champagne
Vice Chairman: Kevin Attleson
Secretary: Jeff Retey

Committee Members: Michael Coughlin, Brett Arabie, Carol Phillips, Steve Killian, Scott Hawes, Jeff Retey, Kelly Austin, Kevin Attleson, Matt Champagne.

Meeting Starts

Matt Champagne called the meeting to order. No additions were made to the agenda, other than the late addition of Chris Fuller's spring electrofishing data presentation.

Prior minutes: July meeting minutes approved (motion/second; carried).

Board Member Comments

Tom thanked the committee for its continued work. No additional Board member comments were presented.

Staff Reports

Marina / Operations – Trey

Marina hours: Trey reported that the marina's last operating day will be Sunday, September 27. After Labor Day, fall hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday through Sunday. The closure applies to rentals, bait sales, and fuel; members may still use boats stored at the marina.

Beach hours: The beach is open weekends only through August 30, according to information confirmed during the meeting and posted on the POA website.

Lake Management – Rick

Lake Ann drawdown: The Lake Ann drawdown remains scheduled for November 2, 2026, through March 1, 2027, at about three inches per day to a total of six feet. Planned work includes resurfacing the courtesy docks at the ramp and dam, preferably with composite material where feasible, and cutting more aggressive grooves into the boat ramp.

Lake Ranger contacts (July): 7,929 total contacts; 464 by boat; 123.25 lake hours; 2,021 anglers; 5,895 other recreational users; and 448 non-members removed.

Operations / facilities: Point-of-sale connectivity issues have been resolved, allowing rangers to sell daily-use passes in the field. Thirty additional kayak spaces at Tyrie are

open and leased, bringing the 2026 total to 82 new spaces. The Lake Ann kayak launch is complete, with thanks to the Fly Tyers for financial and labor support. Portable-restroom screening structures are in place at Granton, Lake Brittany, and Lake Norwood, with signage forthcoming.

Dams / staffing / water quality: All dams have been mowed for the third time. Staff continue working with Olsson and Associates on dam permitting. The dam safety workshop for northwest Arkansas is scheduled for October 6 at the city facility and will be an all-day event with lunch provided. All current positions are filled, and lake and stream E. coli samples have been good. A Secchi disk volunteer is still needed for Lake Avalon.

Grass carp / vegetation: The grass carp trap is now working after baiting, with fish observed in the pen and removal planned for Friday. Native Naiad and other aquatic vegetation are growing at Stony Kirk and Tyrie. Mike Colgrove won the July carp raffle; staff plan to recognize his season-long effort at the end of the season.

Signage / follow-up items: Staff presented a mockup for a larger 3-foot by 2-foot private-lake sign, primarily for the Lake Avalon Beach and boat-ramp entrance and potentially a few other POA locations. Questions covered improved fish condition on Loch Lomond, carp-trap baiting, registration compliance for construction boats, and coordination for a sign at the new kayak launch.

Fisheries – Chris Fuller

Spring electrofishing data: Chris presented largemouth bass population results and explained the metrics used: eater-size bass (12–15 inches), preferred bass (15+ inches), memorable/trophy bass (20+ inches), recruitment, growth, and overall lake score. The 2025 data was shown for transparency but excluded from averages due to equipment malfunction.

Lake summaries: Most lakes showed too many small-to-medium bass and too few larger bass. Lake Ann and Avalon had overcrowded eater-size bass with fair overall scores. Brittany showed the healthiest balance, with fair larger bass numbers, good eater-size numbers, poor recruitment, good growth, and a fair overall score.

Additional lake summaries: Loch Lomond and Windsor received good overall scores, while Norwood remained fair despite strong recruitment and growth. Rayburn also scored good overall, though its 2026 point fell into the fair range.

Bass / bluegill balance: Chris reported that bass numbers are generally too high and bluegill numbers are too low. Regional data suggests about 1.85 bluegill per largemouth bass, while Bella Vista lakes are below 0.5 bluegill per bass, indicating an imbalanced predator-prey relationship.

Management direction: Discussion focused on increasing harvest of smaller largemouth bass, reducing bluegill harvest pressure, using marketing to better educate anglers, and supplementing bluegill through hatchery ponds and possible future purchases. Staff noted that POA access control does not override Arkansas Game and Fish harvest regulations.

Public / Committee Discussion

Cub Scout canoe outing: John Esque, aquatics director for Cub Scout Pack 525 in Bentonville, requested a one-time event exemption for an August 29 canoe outing at Lake Norwood involving several non-resident families and non-POA canoes/kayaks. The committee discussed the request but noted that the current policy requires a two-step process with discussion at one meeting and a vote the following month, leaving insufficient time for this year's event.

Event options / future process: The group discussed that a future educational event may be possible with more advance notice, similar to other annual events reviewed early in the year. For the August 29 outing, the group clarified that the event could proceed if all participants have guest passes and boats are either POA-registered, covered by applicable daily boat/kayak passes, or borrowed from residents with already registered boats.

Other public comments: Questions confirmed that the marina's September 27 closure applies to rentals, bait sales, and fuel. Additional discussion covered the Lake Ann kayak-launch sign, the number of grass carp observed in the trap, Chris Fuller potentially giving the fisheries presentation to the Fly Tyers, and whether the committee could bring fisheries research to the city for possible AGFC discussion.

Adjournment

Next meeting: September 9, 2026.

Meeting adjourned.