Lakes JAC — Meeting Minutes

Date: February 11 2026

Location: Board Room

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

Committee Members: Michael Coughlin, Scott Sborov, Carol Phillips, Ross Gerner, Scott Hawes, Jeff Retey, Rob Montgomery, Kevin Attleson, Matt Champagne.

Meeting Starts

Kevin Attleson called meeting to order: Meeting called to order at 2:00 p.m.; agenda adopted (no changes).

Prior minutes: Approved (motion/second; carried).

Board member comments: Rick provided update on new grass carp funnel trap at Loch Lomond (Tyree cove).

Staff Reports

Lake Management – Rick

- Grass carp funnel trap: Fence installed across Tyree cove (Loch Lomond) to passively aggregate carp for periodic removal via electrofishing. Rye seeded in the enclosure as an attractant; fence designed to allow entry but not exit. Staff will rely on lake rangers and adjacent property owner(s) to notify when fish concentrate; trap can be accessed by opening a corner for removal efforts.

- Site selection/operations: Location chosen for shallow depth (6-ft fence) and minimal impact to ramp and shoreline fishing; flagging/markers to be added as needed. Project to be evaluated at end of the 2026 season (target Oct 2026) and extended only with continued property-owner consent.

- Budget/cost: Posts obtained using Lowe's account rewards; fencing approx. $500; rye seed approx. $50. Fly Tyers assisted with installation on short notice.

- Marina/dock access: ~6 weeks to marina opening (April 1). Valves scheduled to be closed March 2; dock gates will be unlocked once lake level rises approx. 2 ft (no need to wait for full pool). Staff will announce when safe.

- Loch Lomond drawdown: Valves to close March 2. Gravel removed from Granton; courtesy dock ready. Red decking and float replacements completed at Tyree and Stonykirk; waterproofed and ready for season. Fishing lanes at Tyree to be cleared soon.
- Lake Ranger contacts (Jan): 966 contacts; 65 non-members removed; 8 boat contacts; 19.25 hours on the water. Staff reiterated that safe ice is rare in Bella Vista; rangers addressed incidents of children on ice during recent cold spell.
- Winter maintenance: Water shut off to bathrooms to reduce freeze damage; no issues reported as conditions warmed.
- Dams/permits: Continued work in anticipation of permit renewal later this year; three screening structures planned around porta-potties at high-visibility locations.
- Kayak storage: Two additional kayak racks planned (Lake Avalon plus a fourth at Lake Ann Park). Lake Ann Park has a waiting list of ~60; the added capacity (approx. 20) expected to fill quickly.
- Electrofishing boat: Remodeled electrofishing boat expected back by Friday; staff plans immediate use for grass carp removal and spring sampling.
- Carp raffle: Program to continue; approx. 60 carp removed last year as a low-effort, passive removal incentive.
- Trout stocking: Lake Brittany stocked mid-January; scheduled again in early March. Normal stocking size ~500–600 fish (sold by weight).
- Community outreach: Coffee and Cookies event estimated ~50 participants; staff plans to continue the event annually.
- Staffing/volunteers: SEI volunteer help anticipated this season (lake measurements used for fertilization calculations). Summer ranger positions expected to open mid-March for late-April start.
- Forage fish: Threadfin shad stocked last year; fall sampling did not confirm presence. Staff noted BV is near the edge of threadfin range and cold winters may limit survival; will look again in spring.

Old Business

Aquatic vegetation: Off-season; staff continuing to identify sources for native vegetation for spring planting.

Bluegill grow-out ponds: Three ponds below dam remain stocked; fish planned to be moved to lake this fall after two years growth to improve survival and broodstock contribution. Last year's pond harvest produced ~10,000 total fish, including ~2,000 in the 4–6" range; staff indicated up to ~30,000 across ponds may be possible (no current estimate).

Loch Lomond refill: Staff noted lake level rise depends on rainfall and normal inflow; refill timelines vary (weeks to a month).

Boat enforcement: New ranger ticketing/fine authority discussed. Policy requires employee observation; warnings expected initially except for egregious offenses. Members directed to POA policies and Lakes Guide for details.

Event Updates

Non-Member Events – Tom

Kids Fishing Derby: Motion/second to approve May event at Metfield Pond; carried (unanimous).

Kayak Demo Day: Motion/second to approve first Saturday in June; carried (unanimous). Vendor insurance to be provided as proof of coverage.

Public Comments

Lake Windsor fishing: Public commenters reported perceived long-term decline in fishing quality and reduced catch rates. Discussion included small-bass harvest emphasis, habitat/vegetation restoration, and interest in adding crappie/redear. Staff reiterated management focus on removing small bass, restoring vegetation, and stocking bluegill (high reproduction; cost/availability constraints for redear).

Wildlife carcass: Resident asked about a dead deer observed on shoreline; staff directed members to report to lake rangers for removal.

SEI volunteering: Resident expressed interest; staff requested measurements be taken from a deeper section rather than a back cove location.

Fly Tyers kayak launch funding: Fly Tyers treasurer asked timing for contribution; staff will provide receipts and request reimbursement after purchase.

Filming at Pontoon Bay: Staff reported a Duck Dynasty crew filmed under agreement; POA received a fee. Prior local filming also noted.

Announcements

Next meeting: March meeting date TBD. Meeting adjourned.