

TOWN OF LA POINTE
Board of Harbor Commissioners
Year-End Public Briefing
Monday December 8th, 2025
4:30pm at Emergency Services Building and Live via YouTube
Approved Minutes

Commissioners Present: Zach Montagne, Glenn Carlson, Mary Ross, Michael Collins, Susan Widmar, Jay Wiltz, Evan Erickson Jr.

Staff Present: Katie Kisner, Chief Administrative Officer and Interim Harbor Commission Secretary

Public Present: Cal Linehan (via Zoom), 20 townspeople, not including Harbor Commissioners and staff, were present. Please see sign-up sheet for list of present townspeople.

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 4:30pm by Z. Montagne.
2. The purpose of this Public Briefing is to review and respond to the Harbor Commission's year-end 2025 status and 2026 outlook: Zach Montagne gave brief opening remarks thanking the original Harbor Commission formed in 2022 and an overview of the purchase of the ferry line in 2024 and the parties that funded the purchase. He introduced Katie Kisner to provide overview of 2025 Financials and Ridership. Katie Kisner states that all financial information shared at this meeting is now on the Town's website. Ridership in 2025 was down slightly from 2024. Glenn Carlson states that the Harbor Commission along with MIFL LLC has developed a balance 2026 budget. With the increase in 2025 tariffs, traffic was still down minimally and there will be no need to request from the Town to put anything on the tax levy or increase in 2026 tariffs. Glenn then provides an overview of the 2026 Draft Ferry Schedule, pointing out the additional boats that are added to benefit the community. Paul Brummer asks if these changes will affect the special boats for commercial use Monday-Friday. Cal Linehan states that the changes are predicted to have no significant impact on commercial traffic. Tyler Andreas asks why there are no 3pm boats on Saturday and Sundays and if that is planned to change. Cal Linehan states that during the winter season there is less traffic on weekends therefore there is less staffing, and it is not intended to add a 3pm. John Apitz asks if there has been any discussion with Big Top Chautauqua about providing funding for additional trips next year. Mary Ross points out that Big Top Chautauqua posts their schedule so late it is difficult to coordinate with them. Jay Wiltz states that the Harbor Commission has previously communicated with Big Top. In 2024 they were willing to work with the Harbor Commission on funding but were less likely to contribute in 2025 due to financial losses. Michael Collins emphasizes that it is due to Big Top's financial loss. Glenn Carlson states that all future schedule requests go to Katie Kisner to bring before the Commission and not to MIFL LLC. Tyler Andreas asks multiple questions about winter surcharge this year and when it begins. Robin Russell answers that it will begin December 21st and that the ferry line loses money December through April. Glenn Carlson states that the surcharge is dependent on many things but ultimately it

is a tariff line item that the Harbor Commission would like to eventually lower. Jay Wiltz points out the large amount of debt the Town still has from the purchase of the ferry line, but the hope is to reduce prices even more once that is paid down. Paul Brummer states we will always be spending money on something. Tyler Andreas asks why not charge a surcharge to summer people. Jay Wiltz states that the tariffs were increased in a manner that the frequent flyers did not have to shoulder the burden. Tyler Andreas requests a “deal somewhere”. Zach Montagne says there is no answer to please everyone and that the Harbor Commission is balancing a fine line making enough money to run trips requested. Evan Erickson Jr. points out that the Harbor Commission put a lot of thought into raising rates in a manner that did not affect islanders. Glenn Carlson states that the significant raising of the 2025 tariffs was a risk and that MIFL LLC was worried that there would be a significant drop in ridership. It all worked out for 2025, but the Harbor Commission will not be taking that risk again this year. Michael Collins points out that historically Madeline Island has fared well during recessions. Evan Erickson Sr. asks a few questions about a new ice-breaking ferry. Evan Erickson Jr. points out that we are still looking for ways to acquire a new ice-breaking ferry without it coming completely out of our pocket, i.e. grants. Cal Linehan shares that it would cost \$10-\$30M dependent on the type of ferry. Michael Collins point out that we have a new capacity for grant writing. Evan Erickson Sr. thinks it is a good idea to get a ferry that would replace the wind sleds. Jeff Marquardt asks how we plan to pay for the extended schedule in the shoulder seasons. Glenn Carlson states that it is factored into the 2026 budget and hopefully over time those boats will begin to generate a profit. Evan Erickson Sr. asks how much the La Pointe cost to build. Robin Russell answers \$4.5M. Paul Brummer recommends not providing a discount to school kids from other areas.

3. Adjourn: Motion by G. Carlson to adjourn, seconded by M. Collins, all in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:19pm.

Note: It is possible that members of other governmental bodies of the municipality (and possibly a quorum) may be in attendance at this meeting to gather information. No action will be taken by any governmental body at this meeting other than the governmental body specifically referred to in the notice.

Respectfully submitted by Katie Kisner, Interim Harbor Commission Secretary, Monday December 8th, 2025.

Minutes approved as presented Thursday December 18th, 2025. K.Kisner.

Sign-In Sheet
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Name

Physical Address

Alex Smith

613 BRIANS Rd

MICHAEL CHILDRAS

2229 HAGEN ROAD

Ernst Eichen

904 W. Foxfish St

Glenn W. Carlson

2229 Hagen.

Paul Brumm

233 main & 895 middle Rd

Chel Bunn

995 South Shore Rd.

JASON GREDMAN

1246 Middle Rd

Sheri Milburn

551 Miller Farm Rd.

May Juhola

125 BIG BAY

John Apitz

455 Capser Rd.

Wes Brown

402 Big Aris

Jon Berg

617 Miller Farm Rd

Robin Thum

1360 Middle Rd

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Name

Physical Address

LeeAnn Schaub

2407 Hagen Pond

Samantha Dobson

400 Old Fort Rd

CHAS WOLFE

344 Br Adams Rd

Marcia Coleman

1760 Miller Farm Rd

Tyler Andreas

2020 Big Bay Rd

JEFF Mangravet

1406 N Shore Rd

John Cutson

1271 Big Bay Rd

Ally Sheehan (MISA)

631 Middle Rd