

# Rock-Koshkonong Lake District Board grills appointee

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By [Jake Magee](#)

TOWN OF MILTON—Justin Shultz's appointment to the Rock-Koshkonong Lake District Board is legal, the board decided Thursday, but that doesn't mean board members are happy about it.

The Rock County Board appointed Shultz to the lake district board because previous appointee Mary Mawhinney couldn't make the district board's meetings, as they overlap with county board meetings.

Lake district board President Brian Christianson told Shultz via email that the board would not accept his appointment. However, Shultz showed up at Thursday's meeting anyway, and board attorney Bill O'Connor determined his appointment is legally sound.

Things got heated as members spent more than an hour questioning Shultz's intentions and discussing emails Shultz sent to the Department of Natural Resources that members said attacked the board.

Board member Ray Lunder said Shultz claimed in an email to the DNR that raising Lake Koshkonong's water level—something the board advocates—would take wetlands and property away from landowners. Lunder said Shultz claimed that raising the water level would make the district vulnerable to more legal action.

Lunder asked how Shultz could make such a statement when he doesn't own land or a home in the district. Shultz's family owns wetlands in the area.

“It's almost threatening,” Lunder said, wondering if the litigation would come from Shultz.

“It is threatening,” member Steve Proud said. “There's a lot of things in here where you're attacking us.”

“I'm not threatening anything,” Shultz replied.

Proud referenced a quote from Shultz in a previous Gazette article in which he claims certain board members stand to gain from higher water. Proud asked what anyone on the board would gain from higher water.

“You all had this lawsuit going for 10 years, and you're going to tell me you have nothing to gain from it?” Shultz asked.

A couple of members took offense to the question, stating they have no personal stake in raising the water level 7.2 inches in the summer. Higher water would bring more tourism dollars to the lake, Proud said.

Shultz asked why he wasn't informed of a recent tour of the lake by board members and DNR officials.

Christianson replied that he posted a notice on the lake district website with a note that a quorum of board members might be present.

Members accused Shultz of representing himself rather than the board or the county.

“It doesn't sound like you're going to be an impartial representative or liaison,” Lunder said. “I just don't think you're going to be a representative of the people or the county or unbiased on our board.”

It's OK if Shultz has differing opinions, but his emails contain “misinformation” and opinions the board tries to keep out of its decision-making, Christianson said.

A couple of people defended Shultz during a public comment period.

“You all might learn something from him because he's a just, honest, good person,” said Shultz's father, Ted Shultz.

Shultz's differing opinions would be fine if he'd been elected instead of appointed, Christianson said. He asked if Shultz would be willing at the district's annual meeting to give up his appointment and instead run for election.

Shultz said he'd consider it.