



Higgins Lake Property Owners AssociationSM

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President: Charlene Cornell, **Vice Pres:** Greg Semack, **Secretary:** Herb Weatherly, **Treasurer:** Bruce Carleton
Directors: Wayne Brooks, Jack Cornell, Curt DeVoe, Becky Gibson, Bob McKellar, John Ogren, Fred Swinehart

Higgins Lake Property Owners Association
Board Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2021

The meeting was called to order by President Charlene Cornell at 9:01 A.M.

Board Members Present: Charlene Cornell, Greg Semack, Bruce Carleton, Herb Weatherly, Becky Gibson, John Ogren, Bob McKellar, and Jack Cornell. Wayne Brooks and Curt DeVoe were absent.

Agenda: No changes.

President's Comments: Charlene thanked Fred for initiating the Dewey Road culvert project and for contacting Huron Pines, HLLC, HLF, The Morley Foundation, Big Creek Lake Association, Walters Family Foundation, and the Roscommon Road Commission, for their involvement with the completed Dewey Road culvert project.

September Minutes: The September 20, 2021 Minutes were accepted as written.

Committee Reports:

Secretary/Office: None.

Treasurer's Report: The September 30, 2021, financials were presented. Bruce said the 3rd quarter financials will be posted on our website. Bruce also brought everyone up to date on the conversion of the HLPOA banking relationship from TCF to Huntington due to the merger. All accounts have now been converted to the Huntington system, web banking and bill pay are open and functioning, with only a few minor issues yet to be resolved.

Membership & Communication: Becky stated that we have 524 members.

Regarding our website, Becky would like to contact our website host about adding a new tab in the environmental section. Fred moved to approve this contact to update our website, where the cost is approximately \$42.00. Bruce seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Becky also noted that she, Wayne, and Charlene met with Sally Voorheis, from Dealers Supply, about the member directory advertiser forms for 2022 and mailing options of the directory.

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Riparian Committee: John stated that as reported at our September 20th Board Meeting, our fall Public Safety Meeting was on September 15th and notes on the meeting have been circulated to the HLPOA board. Feel welcome to contact me to discuss the notes and make any suggestions on Riparian Issues.

John said that the Lyon Township Clerk, Doug Schnell declined his request for a meeting to discuss adopting the linear road end dock specification used in Gerrish Township and recommended by EGLE. Instead, Doug Schnell responded by email that he, as the Lyon Supervisor, discussed my request and invited me to present my proposal at the next Lyon Township work session and to expect that the proposal would likely be referred to the Lyon Township Planning Committee. Unfortunately, John will leave Higgins Lake before the next working session. John plans to follow up on this issue at the first working session after returning in the spring.

Fortunately, John did have an opportunity to talk to Doug Schnell after the GLUA meeting on October 4th. He expressed his regret about missing the September 15th Public Safety Meeting and promised to make every effort to attend the meeting in May 2022. John reminded him the Lyon Township has not yet identified road ends for installation of PA 56 signs and will also follow up on that issue in the spring.

Environmental Committee: Fred reported the following:

Big Creek Dewey Road Culvert Replacement: The replacement of the perched culvert on Dewey Road has been completed. Representatives from the HLF, HLLC, HLPOA and the Morley Family Foundation, whose generousities allowed the work to be done, attended a photo shoot at the culvert on 10/15/2021. Especially satisfying for all was the attendance of the entire Roscommon County Road Commission crew that did the work! They were very pleased with the project and felt they learned a lot about doing these sorts of projects in a good environmental manner. There will be publicity in the Houghton Lake Reporter and in Huron Pines brochures. We will receive copies for use in our own newsletters.

Macro Invertebrate Baseline Survey of Big Creek and The Cut: Melanie Brown lead our 2021 efforts to identify bottom dwelling macro invertebrate species and to assess their populations, which are indicative for the health of these two stream environments. Baseline definitions of designated portions of these streams have been defined, so that each year the same areas can be profiled for species present. Reports for this summer's work are placed on our website under Tributary Creeks, Springs and Drains.

2021 Water Quality Sampling and Analysis of Near Shore Waters: We are in our fourth year of student sampling and analyzing the near shore waters of our lake for chemical and biological contamination. We have received approval for student participation in 2021/2022 school year. The averaged data of near shore testing shows a very troubling rise in both the total and escherichia coliform bacterial populations in the lake. The effects of more and more nutrient loading in the lake from septic system leaching and other pollution sources in our watershed are certainly creating this very serious decrease in Higgins Lake water quality. Please refer to our website for the data and graphs showing these very troubling trends.

Determination of Extent and Nature of Micro-plastic Contamination: In 2020, some preliminary work was done to identify the possibility of micro-plastic contamination in the lake. Some zebra mussels were collected and processed, showing some remaining plastic residues. High School students took some photo-micrographs, using equipment purchased for their use by the HLPOA, and qualitatively proved the existence of micro plastic contamination in the lake. Surprisingly, the presence of fibrous plastic material, such as might arise from dryer lint exhaust, exceeded that of microspheres, which were commonly found in cosmetics before there were declared illegal some years ago. The zebra mussel sample collection will be repeated in the 2022 summer for a more complete student analysis. A report will be posted on the HLPOA website.

Other Possible Project Activity: Some additional programs are being added for consideration next summer.

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1. Health Department Survey of Big Creek
2. In-stream habitat improvements for Big Creek
3. Base line study of algal presence in the lake.
4. A "Trash Bash" MRWA sponsored event in the fall.

PAC: Greg said the committee met on October 14th and discussed John Lindley's resignation. The PAC will research lobbyist options. Other topics discussed were fund-raisers for political candidates and by-law changes, regarding length of terms. New Bylaw changes were adapted, more in line with better organizational abilities. Last, Greg interviewed Francis Fitzgerald for the open position on the PAC Board. Francis has a long history of lobbyist involvement. Greg moved to appoint Francis Fitzgerald as a new PAC Board member, seconded by Bruce. Motion passed.

HLSIO: Greg stated that there has not been any activity since the last meeting, as the season is over. The committee will be looking at the next season and are waiting for season-end reports.

Ongoing Business: A discussion was held about the ongoing AMVETS litigation.

Regarding the sewer project, Charlene shared that there is an article in the Detroit Free Press about the septic system problem in Michigan. Charlene also noted there is a public meeting on October 23rd at the Roscommon High School at 12:00 P.M. The meeting is about the proposed sewer district and system, with a brief presentation from Fleis & VanderBrink, followed with a Q & A period. Fred stated that he was asked to work with GLUA member, Bill Lamb, to research grant opportunities, that they will then share with the GLUA Board for approval.

Adjournment: Greg moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Herb. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 10:29 A.M.

The next meeting will be November 15, 2021, at 9:00 A.M.