



# Higgins Lake Property Owners Association<sup>SM</sup>

PO Box 55 211 N. Main Street Roscommon, MI 48653

Website: [hlpoa.org](http://hlpoa.org) email: [hlpoa0@gmail.com](mailto:hlpoa0@gmail.com)

Ph.: (989) 275-9181 Fax: (989) 275-9182

Higgins Lake Property Owners Association

Annual Meeting – July 17, 2021

ZOOM Virtual Meeting

**Call to Order and President's Opening Remarks:** The meeting was called to order by President Charlene Cornell at 8:45 A.M. President Cornell thanked everyone for registering for this ZOOM meeting and gave instructions for HLPOA members to adhere to during the meeting.

Mrs. Cornell introduced the HLPOA Board members: Greg Semack – Vice-President and HLSIO Chair, Bruce Carleton – Treasurer, Herb Weatherly – Secretary and Elections Co-Chair, John Ogren – Riparian Chair, Fred Swinehart – Environmental Chair, Bob McKellar – Elections Co-Chair, Wayne Brooks – Co-Chair Membership & Communication, Becky Gibson – Co-Chair Membership & Communication, and Jack Cornell – Finance.

President Cornell then gave a brief overview of today's agenda and also reported we have a quorum.

**Approval of 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes:** Secretary Herb Weatherly stated that last years' Annual Minutes had been forwarded to all members and asked if there were any corrections. There being none, the July 18, 2020, Minutes were accepted as written. Mr. Weatherly then introduced Bruce Carleton.

**Treasurer's Report:** Bruce Carleton, Treasurer, stated that financial statements from our 2020 year-end CPA Review were included in the annual packet mailed to members, adding he is pleased with the quality and service of our CPA firm, Croskey Lanni PC., who specializes in non-profit accounting. Mr. Carleton outlined our internal accounting process, addressed a number of topics included in our Annual CPA Review, and concluded that the HLPOA continues to show an overall positive financial picture. The complete 11-page Croskey Lanni 2020 Financial Review is posted on our website, [hlpoa.org](http://hlpoa.org)., under the Minutes & Financial tab, together with our direct quarterly financial statements. Mr. Carleton then asked for questions. There being none, Bruce Carleton introduced John Ogren.

**Riparian Report:** John Ogren, Riparian Chair, reported that the committee continues Spring and Fall meetings with local law enforcement. Progress has been made on illegal mooring at road-ends. Mr. Ogren showed pictures of PA 56 signs that are in use at 7 road-ends and boat tags that are in use by local law enforcement officers. He added that members should report illegal mooring activity to the non-emergency number at Central Dispatch, 989-275-0911 along with pictures of the boat with MC number, if it can be taken without confrontation.

Regarding short-term rentals, Mr. Ogren said that progress has been made in Gerrish Township, where Chief Hill made proactive email contact with identified property owners. The committee is encouraging Lyon Township to

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take the same action. Last, Mr. Ogren invited members to call him with Riparian issues at his number in the HLPOA directory.

Member Randy LeBeau asked if the PA 56 signs will be at all road-ends. Mr. Ogren replied that was not the intention. The locations are selected by the local law enforcement agencies, but Mr. Ogren will put forward any road-end for review if there is a recommendation by members. John Ogren then introduced Greg Semack.

**Swimmer's Itch Report:** HLSIO Chair Greg Semack gave an overview of swimmer's itch (SI), noting that we continue to work with Dr. Curt Blankespoor of Swimmer's Itch Solutions. Mr. Semack reported that the trap and relocation program of mergansers is successful, as there were few reports of SI this summer. Mr. Semack also stated that 31 Canada geese were removed on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Greg Semack reminded us of the HLSIO fund-raising dinner on August 12, 2021, at Jim and Laura Witt's barn. There being no questions, Mr. Semack then introduced Fred Swinehart.

**Environmental Report:** Fred Swinehart, Environmental Chair, said that ongoing programs were listed in the 2021 Member Directory and are posted on our website as they are completed and reviewed. Mr. Swinehart suggested that members read the content under the Environmental Committee Tab on our website, to view the most current information about our ongoing data-focused projects. Fred Swinehart noted that the most significant environmental threat to water quality is the influx of nutrients into our near-shore environment from septic system effluents. Further, Mr. Swinehart noted that the solution to this problem is the creation and completion of a modern sewer and treatment system serving the entire watershed. The Gerrish-Lyon Utility Authority Board has been created and is meeting weekly to advance this project, where we strongly urge your support. There being no questions, Fred Swinehart then introduced Bob McKellar.

**Nomination and Election of Directors:** Co-chair Bob McKellar stated we have two elections today, one for a one-year term and three for three-year terms. Mr. McKellar gave a brief bio of HLPOA member Curt DeVoe for a one-year term and opened the floor for nominations. There being none, nominations were closed. Bob McKellar stated that according to our by-laws, when there is only 1 nomination for a position, there is not an election, and it is simply announced that the nominee shall assume that position. Mr. McKellar then stated that John Ogren, Jack Cornell, and Bob McKellar were running for three-year terms and opened the floor for nominations. There being none, nominations were closed. Last, Bob McKellar thanked HLPOA member Mark Lutz for his service over the past few years.

President Cornell then introduced guest speaker, Bill Carey.

**Legal Report:** Bill Carey shared that he is an HLPOA member and has served as our legal counsel for thirty-five years. Mr. Carey first reviewed the pending litigation with the AMVETS lodge about their operation of a marina, where there has not been one in the past. Extensive mediation has not been successful, and the court has moved to the discovery phase. An expected trial date could be in the first half of 2022. Bill Carey then reminded us that there is still a case pending with the Roscommon Board of Commissioners, regarding the lake level. There may be a decision mid-2022. Last, Mr. Carey commented on short-term rentals, stating that this is the single hottest real estate topic in northern Michigan. President Cornell then introduced guest speaker, Dave Udy.

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**Sewer Project:** Dave Udy, Gerrish Township Supervisor, thanked the HLPOA for asking him to attend today's meeting and also thanked HLPOA members for their support over the past three-four years. Mr. Udy stated that both townships approved the Articles of Incorporation and meet every Monday at the Gerrish township hall, where the public is invited. Mr. Udy then introduced two engineers from the engineering firm, Fleis & VandenBrink, Gary Bartow and Scott Hall. They reviewed a power point presentation entitled "Gerrish Lyon Utility Authority", which can be found on our website at hlpoa.org. Click on the Environmental Committee tab, then Higgins Lake Sewer Feasibility Study, then Gerrish Lyon Utility Authority.

The public construction is anticipated for 2023-2024, with connecting customers to the system 2025-2026. The first public hearing is August 27, 2021, at 6:30 at the Roscommon High School.

**"Sewer Project Chat Questions"** - The following questions were asked and addressed:

Kathy Lash asked what is the maximum distance the drilling can be done? Mr. Hall answered 50 – 200 feet, which depends on the diameter and type of soil.

Gary Wales asked how do you get a drill that far to our homes? Mr. Bartow said that drilling rigs can drill up to ½ mile and can go 1,000 – 2,000 feet.

Dave Udy asked how will we treat Treasure Island? Mr. Bartow said with a directional drill from the island to the mainland.

Liz Bretl asked what happens to the septic system that currently exists and is being used on properties around the lake? Do they need to be removed and do homeowners pay for the removal? Mr. Bartow replied yes, they will be removed. Dave Udy said this is part of the project cost, to remove the old tank and install the new one.

Antonia Pascaretta asked if existing tanks need to be replaced or is a pump installed in the existing septic tank? Mr. Bartow said yes, the existing tank will be removed.

Cal Phillips asked what is the cost and to whom? Dave Udy answered that the cost to individuals has not been determined, as they need to identify and secure grants for funding.

Prior to the presentation, James Clarke asked when will a final decision be made on the sewer system and was told this will be answered in the presentation.

Kathy Lash thanked everyone for the great job working on this important project. Ralph and Lindsay Petty thanked everyone and appreciate those who have contributed to this project. Betty Nagel-Cribbins also thanked everyone for the interesting presentation.

Dave Udy emphasized the importance to get the correct information to everyone and thanked both township Boards and the Utility Authority members for their many hours of meetings.

Curt DeVoe then asked Mr. Udy when the cost is determined, will this be a utility cost? Dave Udy replied that the cost has 2 components: capital cost and operation and maintenance. President Cornell thanked everyone for the informative presentation and then introduced guest speaker Dr. Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones.

**Restorative Lake Sciences Study:** Dr. Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones, Water Resources Director of Restorative Lake Sciences, reviewed a 37-page power point presentation of our study conducted in 2019, entitled "Higgins Lake Improvement Plan", which can be found on our website, hlpoa.org. Click on Environmental Committee, then Higgins Lake Water Quality, then RLS, LLC Higgins Lake Improvement Plan July 2021-2022. Dr. Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones spoke of her evaluations of the lake, along with recommendations.

Bill Carey asked if it is recommended that a Lake Improvement Board be formulated? Dr. Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones answered that it is a personal choice, adding she works with both Lake Improvement Boards and lake

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associations, such as HLPOA. President Cornell thanked Dr. Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones for this information, adding that maps and charts can be viewed on our website.

Becky Gibson noted there is one additional chat question from Gary Kowalski of where to send road-end photos? John Ogren said to call 989-275-0911, the non-emergency Central Dispatch number and to send photos to them. Charlene Cornell added that this number is listed in our 2021 Member Directory, along with other contact phone numbers.

President Cornell informed our members that volunteer work is greatly appreciated and could entail work with our website, public relations, and newsletters. Charlene Cornell also thanked our administrative assistant, Kathleen Barger, for all of her help.

Greg Semack moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Herb Weatherly. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 10:39 A.M.

Recording Secretary: Kathleen Barger, HLPOA Administrative Assistant