



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

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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  
August 15, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes  
ZOOM Virtual Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Charlene Cornell at 9:00 A.M.

**Board Members Present:** Charlene Cornell, Greg Semack, Bruce Carleton, Herb Weatherly, Jack Cornell, Bob McKellar, John Ogren, Fred Swinehart, Wayne Brooks, Becky Gibson, and Curt Devoe.

**Agenda:** No Changes.

**President's Comments:** None.

**July Minutes:** Herb noted a change to be made, regarding the hybrid annual meeting. With this change, Herb moved to accept the July 18, 2022, Minutes which was seconded by Bruce. Motion passed.

**Committee Reports:**

**Secretary/Office:** None.

**Treasurer's Report:** The financials through July 31, 2022, were presented. Bruce made comments on the income statement and major budget variances. In particular, Bruce noted that we had collected \$14,500.00 in the environmental fund vs. our budget of \$34,000.00, however some of the budgeted revenue has been paid directly to Restorative Lake Sciences for the lake study. The impact is that we will be under the annual budget in both the Environmental revenue and expense categories by the \$9,000 pledged by the HLLC. For the lobbying expense, our annual budget of \$21,000.00 will be under the expected \$30,000 total expense since at the beginning of the year we were not certain how long the full \$2,500 per month "actively engaged" billing level would be required. Even with these budget variances, Bruce said that it still looks like we should be close to budget by year-end.

Bruce then reported that the credit card donor payment option he has been working on has been abandoned. This decision was made due to numerous major issues experienced with the bank resulting in its inability to set up an account during a five-month period despite the HLPOA delivering all required information in a timely manner. Bruce will explore other options with Jack, who has experience with a variety of payment options.

**Membership/Communication:** Becky said they are preparing the Fall newsletter and she needs articles by September 11<sup>th</sup>. Topics are trash bash, photos of the culvert update, HLSIO fundraiser, sewer project, Macro invertebrate study, annual meeting recap, and PFAS. Becky also noted they are sending numerous email blasts on current topics.

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Wayne asked that a meeting be scheduled with himself, Becky, and Charlene regarding the member directory process.

Charlene added that we need to work on the prospects list for potential 2023 directory advertisers.

**Riparian Committee:** John reported that he was working with the Roscommon County Road Commission on getting posts for three locations in Lyon Township for Jacob's restriction and PA 56 signs. Signs at these locations and six others approved by the Under Sheriff will be installed later in the fall or early spring next year.

The MTT DASH boat is operating in the South State Park lagoon and is finished at the boat access sites at the North State Park and West boat launch. Thirty bags of weeds were removed at the West boat launch and only one and a half at the North State Park. Mike Smith, the MTT manager, said that the South State Park lagoon looked about the same as last year when they removed 400 bags of mostly SSW.

John also reported on illegal overnight anchoring of boats at road ends in Lyon Township at locations 50 yards or more beyond road end docks. Ben Lowe, Under Sheriff, and Chief Hill are aware and working on enforcement methods. Our next Roscommon County Public Safety Meeting is scheduled for September 20 and illegal mooring will certainly be on the agenda.

**Environmental Committee:** Fred reported the following:

**Little Creek Culvert Replacement:** The new culvert was installed 08/11/2022. It will handle the larger flows of the spring melt eliminating road washouts with their consequent pollution of the lake. Furthermore, it is well placed to allow passage of spawning fish for several miles up into the headwaters in the State Forest. The old culvert had been broken into two pieces and crushed to quite a small dimension in several places. However, some fish passage was apparently possible. When the old culvert pieces were removed and raised up, about five or six 7" or 8" rainbow trout came spilling out into the containment pool below the construction area! The workers scooped them up and tossed them over the barrier where they swam out into the lake. They obviously felt good about that!

**Full Lake Survey by Restorative Lakes Sciences:** The fieldwork for this service has been completed. Emphasis was on the area of AIS infestation and changes observed from their prior survey of 2018. Also, of major importance was testing for dissolved oxygen levels in the deepest places, particularly in the South Basin of the lake where serious problems have been previously reported. The final report will be posted on our website when completed later in the year. Thanks to the support of the Higgins Lake Land Conservancy for funding a portion of the expenses for this survey.

**Macro Invertebrate Survey in Big Creek and the Cut:** Melanie Brown and her crew of HLPOA volunteers are planning to repeat the macro-invertebrate survey of 2021 later this month. They will be following the strict collection and identification protocols established by the Muskegon Watershed Assembly and EGLE's Cooperative Lake Monitoring Program. These surveys provide the most accurate estimates of the health of aquatic environments and would indicate any degradation therein by comparing year over year results.

**Micro-plastics Pollution Study:** After a two-year hiatus due to covid-19, we will attempt to repeat our sampling and evaluation of zebra mussel collected micro-plastic contamination in the waters of Higgins Lake. HLPOA Volunteers, students and teachers at the Roscommon Area Public High School will work together on this project this fall. Results will be presented on our website when complete.

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**PFAS and Human Sourced Pharmaceutical Pollution:** Professor Joan Rose of Michigan State University has responded to our request for assistance in assessing the extent of human sourced pharmaceutical and PFAS contamination in the lake. They have the capability to analyze for these compounds from samples we would be able to collect and send to their laboratories. We will discuss the possibilities of doing such a program at our next meeting.

**Trash Bash Weekend:** The “Trash Bash” event, sponsored by the MRWA, is scheduled to take place on or around August 22, 2022. Our committee has not yet decided on the program and which areas are to be covered this year.

Fred added that Bob will assist him with the pharmaceutical aspects of the planned PFAS study. Also, Fred and Charlene will meet with Dr. Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones this fall regarding the RLS lake study.

**PAC:** Greg spoke of the Lyon Township recall, where Board members will be voted on at the November elections. Also, Gerrish Township may have a recall election, but will likely not vote until the Spring. Greg met with Ken Borton, the current representative in Gaylord and potential state representative for Roscommon after the fall election, and feels he is now on board with the sewer project. Greg also spoke to Michele Hoitenga of the Cadillac district, who is running for our Senate in November. Greg then reported that the state will be involved in the re-count of the votes for County Commissioner in District 2, where Eric Ostergren won by 3 votes over Tim O’Rourke. Last, Greg said that both Lyon and Gerrish Townships are moving forward about details for a septic ordinance, and this will be discussed Wednesday night.

**HLSIO:** Greg reminded everyone of the HLSIO fundraising dinner this Thursday night, August 18<sup>th</sup>. Greg then stated that the swimmer’s tracking project continues, led by Randy DeYoung, to determine if there are any hot spots for SI on the lake. Last, Greg shared that Crystal Lake will continue their study of snail infection rates through the end of the season, in order to determine the negative effect of suspending the relocation program due to avian flu.

**Ongoing Business:** Curt reported on the sewer project setbacks of opposition petitions, along with EGLE determining not to include this project in the state revolving fund for 2022. It will be deferred to 2023. Also, there is a discrepancy in the number of support petitions, which will be researched. Greg added that there is alternative funding that can be pursued through a bill or legislation act. Curt also reported that GLUA cannot apply for a permit until the land for the wastewater treatment plant is purchased. Curt encouraged members to attend the EGLE public hearing in Lansing on September 12<sup>th</sup>, to support the listing of the sewer project. Wayne added he is working with a Sewer Supporters group and is looking for volunteers to knock on doors to obtain support petitions. The goal is to contact those who have not yet sent a petition by Labor Day.

**New Business:** Charlene discussed that we need some clarifications before completing the Annual Minutes and asked Board members to review the draft.

Becky shared that the Michigan Riparian Magazine did a great job on the article about the student water sampling program, headed by the HLPOA.

**Adjournment:** Herb moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Bruce. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 10:33 A.M.

**The next meeting will be September 19, 2022, at 9:00 A.M.**

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