



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, Patty Dennis, Curt DeVoe, Becky Gibson, Bob McKellar, John Ogren, Fred Swinehart

Higgins Lake Property Owners Association
October 21, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes
Zoom Virtual Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Charlene Cornell at 9:03 A.M.

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

Agenda: No changes.

President's Comments: Charlene informed us that we will have a recommendation to fill our open Board position, and this will be discussed under ongoing business.

September Minutes: The September 16, 2024, Minutes were accepted as written.

Committee Reports:

Secretary/Office: Herb asked to advise him of the date for stuffing envelopes for the annual bulk membership mailing, and he will reserve the conference room.

Treasurer's Report: The September 30, 2024, financials were presented. Bruce stated that the only thing out of the ordinary for this statement period was that we recently received an invoice from Outside Legal Counsel for \$13,500 covering services from August 2023 through April 2024. Unfortunately, the invoice shows that \$10,000 of this expense belongs in the 2023 fiscal period, but because of the late invoice submission, the entire amount will need to be included in our 2024 statement. This will result in an understatement of expenses by \$10,000 for last year and an overstatement of this year's expenses by a similar amount.

Bruce then reported that the new QuickBooks online accounting software had been purchased, and that he and member Jack Cornell were able to move the information on the existing desktop version to the online version, allowing Jack to produce the September financials. Bruce thanked Jack for all of his work in uploading information to bring us up-to-date and reported that Jack has agreed to continue to produce the QuickBooks statements for us. Thank you, Jack!

Membership & Communication: Wayne led a discussion about the survey Board members conducted with the 2023 HLPOA members who did not re-new their memberships in 2024. Reasons varied, but did include that some preferred to join electronically. A variety of electronic payment options was discussed. Herb will contact Huntington Bank for accepted ways and suggestions to process our memberships with all the needed

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information, such as parcel ID numbers. In addition, Wayne spoke of ways to enhance our email communications and website.

Becky shared that the Fall newsletter was sent recently. Thank you, Becky! Becky added that Chuck Brick will continue to provide us with lake level charts, that will be posted on our website.

Riparian Committee: John reported the following:

John made comments and took questions on the Roscommon County Safety Meeting held on September 18, 2024. He noted that Lyon Township recently approved an ordinance on short-term rentals. The ordinance will be effective after the new year when a related resolution on application fees and other aspects is considered. The Planning Committee at Gerrish Township is also considering a short-term rental ordinance. The spring Safety Meeting is scheduled for May 14.

John also reported on the 2024 Data collection Project at the DNR boat accesses conducted jointly with HLF (Higgins Lake Foundation). He noted the effectiveness of the HLF students working at the South State Park on busy weekend mornings to inspect arriving boats for visible weeds. About 90% of boats with weeds were cleaned before launching while they were on duty. An expanded schedule is planned for next summer. A meeting with the DNR to discuss results and recommendation is scheduled tentatively for November 7.

Environmental Committee: Fred was absent, but sent the following report prior to the meeting:

High School Sampling and Analysis of Higgins Lake Waters

The September near shore water Sampling and Analysis project by the Roscommon Area High students was completed on September 27. Predictably, the phosphorous levels were quite high, particularly near shore at Sam-o-Set Beach (0.75 mg/l), the Gold Coast (0.85 mg/l) and the Cut River (0.48 mg/l). There is substantial algae growth on the small rocks and pebbles in these areas. The average value for all the September sampling points on this date is 0.19 mg./liter. Overall, this is a very high level of nutrients. This was the final cycle of testing for the year. All the 2024 year's data is in this report which is on the HLPOA.org website.

Flow Rate Measurements in the Cut River

The Cut River's water flow rate just below the County Road 100 Bridge was measured on October 11th. Unusual amounts of algae were noted as still growing on the bottom.

HLPAC: Greg reported the following:

- The Gerrish Township Board will likely address the short-term rental ordinance and possibly a septic ordinance after November 20, 2024, when the new township Board members are seated. The short-term rental ordinance is expected to be similar to others in the county and Greg agreed to send the current draft being considered by Gerrish to the Board members for review.
- Mark Constance is running as an independent on the Gerrish Township Ballot for a Trustee spot and a Megan Haertel is running as a Democrat on the Gerrish Ballot for Treasurer. Greg has made contact with each and plans to send information to HLPOA members giving background information about all candidates in contested races in Gerrish Township.
- Attorney Phil Ellison will now be representing GLUA (Gerrish Lyon Utility Authority) (as of 9-27)
- Attorney Phil Ellison also will be opening an office in the Higgins Lake area and has recently acquired a building on the West side of the lake across from the hardware store.
- The county has agreed to a settlement with the CHLL (Citizens for Higgins Lake Legal Levels) lake level case and will now be discussing what they can do to improve their handling of the Higgins Lake dam.

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- The case involving PA 112 has been accepted by the federal judge. Notice has been sent to the state Attorney General advising them should they want to be involved.
- There is as yet no date for the federal case or the Appeal about the dam SAD (Special Assessment District).
- Higgins Lake is now 10.5 inches below the court ordered level. That level is to be switched to the winter level as of November 1 and would then be 4.5 inches below the minimum winter level.
- There is a very important County Commissioner meeting Wednesday, about the Higgins Lake dam.

HLSIO: Greg reported the following:

- Now that the summer season is over, we can report that although we could not relocate Merganser Ducks in 2023, we had only a mild uptick in reported case in 2024.
- Fall migration is well underway and many ducks are now seen regularly stopping off at Higgins Lake, although he has personally seen no mergansers. There was one unsubstantiated report of migrating merganser on the lake 2 weeks ago. Any infected mergansers could contribute to SI (Swimmer's Itch) for 2025, although it seems as though the migration period has not been a substantial contributor to SI on Higgins Lake in the past.
- A research paper for work done in 2024 is being completed by SIS and we should have it as early as later this week
- SIS (Swimmer's Itch Solutions) intends to publish another peer reviewed paper this winter. Subject matter will be the conclusions of HLSIO research studies involving the gestation period of the parasites in merganser ducklings once infected.
- Next HLSIO meeting will be this Wednesday, we expect to have reports of 2024 from SIS to review and will discuss 2025 and how we can improve our approach for the upcoming season.

Ongoing Business: Greg shared that he had received a resume from Patty Dennis, for the Board member vacancy. After discussion, Greg moved to appoint Patty Dennis to fill the open Board member vacancy, seconded by Bruce. Motion passed.

Greg shared that the GLUA MDARD (MI Department of Agriculture and Rural Development) and Federal EPA Community Grants were becoming operable, stating that receipts have been submitted and paid back to GLUA.

Charlene said Phil Czech received IRS approval for a 501(c)(3) for "Higgins Lake Friends for Clean Water".

Charlene stated that the next GLUA Board meeting is November 11, 2024.

The Mackinac Bridge Tower Tour raffle was discussed, and Charlene reminded everyone to sell tickets!

Adjournment: Bruce moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Curt. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:03 A.M.

The next meeting will be November 18, 2024, at 9:00 A.M.

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