



Higgins Lake Property Owners AssociationSM

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Higgins Lake Property Owners Association
November 18, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes
Zoom Virtual Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Charlene Cornell at 9:04 A.M.

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

Agenda: No changes.

President's Comments: Charlene informed us that the Roscommon County Commissioners voted Herb "Man of the Year". Congratulations were given to Herb by all! Charlene then welcomed our new Board member, Patty Dennis. Patty said she is delighted to become a Board member, adding she is impressed with all that HLPOA has accomplished over the years.

October Minutes: Fred noted a change under the environmental report. With that revision, Herb accepted the October 21, 2024, Minutes as written, seconded by Fred. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Secretary/Office: Herb reserved the conference room for Monday, November 25th, for our bulk mailing.

Treasurer's Report: Bruce stated the October financial statements are not yet available as Jack continues to work through several issues in converting our information from the expired desktop version to our new online QuickBooks accounting software. Bruce did provide us with a comparison of our HLPOA cash balances as of October 31, 2023, and October 31, 2024. He noted that the cash balance was up \$39,000 in that time frame, primarily due to lower expenses.

John then asked about online payment possibilities. Wayne said that he and Charlene will be meeting at Huntington Bank, to research their electronic transfer program for implementation next year. Zelle and Venmo were also discussed and could be better alternatives to using the fee-based Merchant Services area of Huntington for this service.

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

90 Years dedicated to preserving the quality and beauty of Higgins Lake

Membership & Communication: Wayne asked for volunteers to assist with our annual membership bulk mailing next Monday at 9:00 A.M. Wayne, Charlene, Herb, and Fred volunteered. Becky then nominated Patty Dennis to join the Membership & Communications Committee. After discussion, the motion was seconded by Fred. Motion passed.

Riparian Committee: John reported the following:

DNR Meeting, November 7, 2024: The meeting was attended by Charlene, Greg and John; Vicki Springstead and Nancy Lamb for HLF (Higgins Lake Foundation) and for the DNR, Josh Pellow, Regional Manager; Rachel Roberts, South State Park Manager; Logan Graff, North State Park and West Access Manager and Christina Baugher, AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) Specialist.

John presented the report on AIS Data Collection that was reviewed by the HLPOA Board at the October 21 Board Meeting and included recommendations from HLPOA and HLF on page 5. The DNR expressed no objection to the continuation of AIS data collection at the South State Park. However, they seem to believe that as a result of their chemical treatment and DASH (Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting) harvesting of the lagoon that most of the remaining weeds are native species. They did not support our recommendation on experimenting with a second DASH harvest session in the lagoon. Nor did they offer any encouragement for our recommendation to replace the lagoon with direct access launching like at the North and West accesses.

In response to our recommendation to improve supervision at the West Access, Josh talked about their difficulty in finding someone to replace the employee that retired at the end of 2022. In response to our recommendation to modernize the facilities at the West Access, they explained that funding for boat accesses is even more limited than for State Parkes. Instead, Josh suggested that we approach the Lyon Township Board about leasing the West Access to further development there. (As an example, Josh provided a copy of a lease by Richfield Township for a boat access on Lake St. Helen.)

Overall, the meeting with the DNR at this level left no expectation for progress on the issues raised, but only that operation of the DNR sites will continue as in the past.

Environmental Committee: Fred reported the following:

Flow Rate Measurements in the Cut River

Fred Swinehart and John Davis measured the Cut River's water flow rate just below the County Road 100 Bridge on November 13th. The flow rate was about 24 cubic feet per second. This is the lowest flow rate recorded so far this year. All of this information is on the hlpoa.org website under the Lake Level History tab.

A graphical reporting format is being developed that will make following trends more easily done.

Fred then said he had an interested member that would like to be on our Environmental Committee. After discussion, Fred nominated John Davis to join the Environmental Committee, seconded by Charlene. Motion passed.

HLSIO: Greg reported the following:

Greg gave a review of the HLSIO program's activities during the summer of 2024 including the continuing low case reports and the relocation of 10 ducks (1 Hen and 9 ducklings) in June. Snail infection rates were also checked and continue to be very low. Research projects were conducted in order to learn more about the time it takes for recently infected duckling to produce parasites and also HLSIO continues to do research on cases and

location of cases at Higgins Lake during the summer months. HLSIO plans to continue using our duck relocation program in 2025 although the goose relocation program that we had used for years has been altered starting next year. The state will operate a new program that is not likely to help us in a meaningful way. We will continue to seek solutions throughout the winter months.

PAC: Greg reported the following:

The HLPAC contacted candidates running on the November ballot against August Primary winners and asked them questions similar to those asked of candidates in the August Primary. The summaries of these responses were published in an email to HLPOA members prior to the November election. The winning candidates in both Lyon Township and Gerrish Township will be installed to their positions on November 20th.

Petitioners at Houghton Lake have filed what they believed to be the requisite number of petitions to have the county change the lake level there. It has been suggested that the county board move toward review of the Houghton Lake level on their own motion in order not to need to verify the petitions for which the entire process has no precedent.

There is nothing further to report about the SAD (Special Assessment District) appeal as no date has yet been set for that case to be heard.

The lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of PA 112 has been accepted to be heard by the federal court. No hearing date has yet been established.

The County has settled the CHLL (Citizens for Higgins Lake Legal Levels) case and are now seriously considering what they can do to better operate the dam to maintain the court ordered level. This may entail modifying the current dam and eventually building a new dam better suited to maintain the lake level.

HLPAC Board member Mark Lutz has sold his lakefront home on Higgins Lake and will no longer be eligible to be a member of the HLPAC, creating a board opening. We would like to thank Mark for all his time and effort on behalf of the HLPOA and the HLPAC. Brice Carleton had expressed interest in joining the PAC and was nominated by Greg, seconded by Wayne, and appointed to replace Mark on the HLPAC board. Motion passed.

Ongoing Business:

Sewer Project: Greg stated that GLUA (Gerrish Lyon Utility Authority) representative, Dave Hall, gave his letter of resignation for March of 2025. GLUA has asked both townships to name Jim Kaufman to be his successor.

GLUA is using grant money as anticipated and has received reimbursement for submissions from each of the MDARD grants and the EGLE (MI Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy) grant. Currently GLUA is conducting Request for Qualifications interviews for companies who may be able to help with planning and execution as required by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) grant.

Current work in progress by Fleis and VandenBrink is in preparation of the WWTP (Wastewater Treatment Plants) Discharge Permit Application.

A committee was formed consisting of Fred, Bob, Curt and Wayne, later to be named the "Wells & Septic Isolation Study Group". They will look into local and state-wide issues of drinking wells and septic system geographic separation codes.

Mackinac Bridge Tower Tour Raffle: Charlene reminded everyone to mail ticket sales to the office monthly.

New Business: Charlene said there is a new Conflict of Interest Policy form which needs our signatures. Please stop by the office to sign this when you are in town.

Adjournment: Curt moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Bruce. The meeting adjourned at 10:57 A.M.

The next meeting will be December 16, 2024, at 9:00 A.M.