



Higgins Lake Property Owners AssociationSM

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Higgins Lake Property Owners Association

Board Meeting Minutes

December 15, 2025

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, Wayne Brooks, Dennis Corte, Patty Dennis, Curt DeVoe, Becky Gibson, John Ogren, and Fred Swinehart.

Agenda: Two items were added to the agenda:

1. Becky asked to add a procedure for email blasts to the membership/communication section.
2. Charlene asked to add the annual meeting to new business.

President's Comments: Charlene initiated a discussion regarding a 501 (c)(3) and 501(c)(4) summary provided by our attorney briefing us on the definitions, differences, and purpose of both.

We were reminded that the bylaws require that our dues are due by January 31st.

November Minutes: The November 17, 2025, Minutes were accepted as written.

Committee Reports:

Secretary/Office: None.

Treasurer's Report: The November financials were presented. Bruce stated that our 2025 income was very close to what was budgeted. Bruce added that with the year nearly over, we will soon have actual numbers to finalize the 2026 budget, which will include input from the committee chairs. The 2026 budget will be presented at the January meeting.

Membership & Communication: Charlene shared that 112 people joined last week, which includes 34 new memberships and some renewing as far back as 2016! We now have 155- 2026 memberships. Kudos to Wayne, Becky, and Patty for compiling such an impactful solicitation letter and for Greg's contribution! Wayne and Patty continue expanding the database for our new website with several revisions, which is a long process. Patty shared there will be a new section entitled "Responsible Lake Front Owners".

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

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

Wayne then explained that we have an issue with our online payment method, PayPal, and our account has been temporarily deactivated. Patty suggested we advise our members and utilize Facebook to inform the public and update people when the issue has been resolved or another option is implemented.

Becky asked that articles be sent to her by January 9th for the Winter newsletter.

To better stay informed and avoid misrepresentation, Becky suggested that more Board members review email blasts prior to them being sent to our membership. After discussion, Fred moved to have Executive Committee approval prior to sending email blasts to the HLPOA members, seconded by Dennis. Motion passed.

Riparian Committee: John reported the following:

Health of Higgins Lake (HOHL) work continues at the Science Subcommittee level. John is serving on the AIS and Recreation subcommittees and got approval from HLPOA and HLF to share documents submitted to the DNR at our November 4 meeting. These documents are starting points for both subcommittees.

The issues being considered in both subcommittees are not controversial and likely to embrace and support our ongoing efforts.

Environmental Committee: Fred reported the following:

Health of Higgins Lake Initiative – HOHL

This effort continues with essentially all members of the Environmental Committee taking an active part.

GIS (Geological Information System) Layered Mapping of Septic Systems and Wells

We received this communication from Taylor Irwin of the CMDHD (Central MI District Health Department) last week:

“I think we have completed mapping in Gerrish, Mark and I are just working on some QA and finishing touches to make sure the entries are accurate. I am anticipating having this completely done before the 19th.”

Much more remains to be done on this project, but the results to date are very impressive. After the first of the year, several of us will be meeting with the CMDHD to develop a public outreach video that will assist in developing a better understanding by local residents of the waste treatment and drinking water environment surrounding our lake.

Biological and Chemical Analysis and Flow Rate in The Cut River

The flow rate was measured by John Davis and Eric Carlson in the Cut River on December 10, and was only 10.8 cfs, which is the lowest we have seen since recording this data. The water was sampled on the 11th and was taken to Raven Laboratories that same day.

A full report for each month of the year 2025 will be prepared and presented at the next HLPOA Board meeting.

Deep Water Photographic and Biological Sampling Survey Project

Work continues on developing a work plan, cost estimates, and logistical details with a group from HLF and HLPOA. In the near future project details for consideration by interested supporters will be presented.

HLSIO: Greg presented the following from HLSIO President Duncan Lawrence:

Status as of December 13, 2025

Currently, we remain in a holding status as the DNR/USFW begin considering plans for 2026. We are still optimistic that something can be done. However, if no action is taken next year, we expect higher Swimmers Itch cases. We are taking actions to keep communications open and considering alternative plans, as needed. Little has changed since November other than the scheduling of a meeting with the DNR and receiving the SIS 2025 report.

- Merganser Relocation Status — We have our second meeting scheduled Shannon Lott, Natural Resource Deputy at Michigan DNR on January 15, 2026, as a follow-up to our September meeting. Our recommendation for relocation was sent to her “Wildlife staff” for review. She expects to meet with them for review now that budgets have been finalized. We reached out to our contacts at USFW (where we also offered our concerns and suggestions). They remain quiet.
 - Our emphasis will be that...*relocating a few migratory birds, pretested for Avian Flu, to a location that already has mergansers will not contribute to the avian flu problem.*
 - We will also share a report prepared by Mark Johnson, *Environmental Assessment on the Use of Praziquantil (PZQ) in Common Mergansers*. This report in effect demonstrates there is no effect lasting impact on the birds or environment by its use.
- Communications – No Change since November. As we plan for 2026, enhancing our communication efforts is being discussed. This may include more social media presence and revamping the website for easier information access, etc. This is in the preliminary stages. Identifying someone with these skills to join the Board or provide low-cost solutions (with quality) is being pursued.
- Fundraising Dinner, confirmed for August 13, 2026 – No Change since November. We have secured the Witt’s venue availability and music by Derek Boik. We want to maintain our high standards for the dinner experience.
- 2025 Swimmer’s Itch Solutions Report – We just received the 2025 Swimmer’s Itch report from SIS. This will be posted on our website soon. It is also attached for your review.
 - The conclusion: *Some of our Standard SI assessment metrics in 2025, the summer snail infection levels and the case rate study, were consistent with the fact that no relocation of broods occurred last year. However, additional late summer and fall snail infection levels and SI case reports – both anecdotal and website reported, suggest that the SI parasite population in Higgins Lake in “on the rise” due to the presence of four Common Merganser broods on the lake. Plotting the website-reported cases by date suggests that this increase was beginning to be felt in late July.*
- Snail Measurement – No Change since November. We are considering attempting to measure the number of stagnicola snails in Higgins Lake. As the increase/decrease in snail prevalence is also likely to impact the level of Swimmer’s Itch in the lake. This is at a preliminary stage. It would entail identifying a random number of sites, where stagnicola are likely to be present, each about 2-3’ in diameter and projecting quantities from this. It would need to be done annually to provide any forecasting ability. We are reaching out to the local schools to see if we can leverage some of our High School talent for part of this ever.
- Board changes – Our current Treasurer, Phil Czech, has resigned (effective 12/31/2025). He will be missed, but this offers an opportunity to find someone else, possibly with other skills of interest (e.g., social media, website experience/interest). In the interim, Greg Semack will be acting Treasurer. Duncan Lawrence will be added to the bank account and support Greg as needed.

PAC: Greg reported the following:

County

Dave Russo was arrested on November 21st and arraigned on December 10th. The charges were 3 counts of Criminal Sexual Conduct (incapacitate victim, mentally disabled) (from 2021 to 2024) and 1 count of Contributing to the Delinquency of a minor. He has not attended any meetings or been in the county building since he was arrested and has been removed from certain committees. He is suspended from his job in Markey Township as Fire Chief.

Lyon township

There has been nothing new to report about Lyon Township as they cancelled their work session of December 10th and their next board meeting is this Wednesday, 12-17 at 7 PM

Gerrish Township

Gerrish Township has prepared a draft of its potential Short-Term Rental ordinance. It can be found on the Gerrish Township website. They will hold a public hearing on January 6th at 6 PM and then hold a Special Board meeting to discuss modification of the draft on January 16th at 7 PM.

DNR

Our next meeting is now set up with Shannon Lott for January 15th. We will be discussing problems we have had with Swimmers Itch permitting and problems we have had with fighting invasive species at the DNR boat launch sites.

Ongoing Business: Charlene stated that a funding request form had been created by Wayne and Greg. Greg stated this was to assist us going forward to make decisions about outside projects. Some adjustments will be made to the form, such as electronic completion capabilities. Dennis moved to approve utilizing this HLPOA Funding Request Form presented at today's meeting for outside projects, seconded by Bruce. Motion passed.

New Business: Charlene suggested everyone marks their calendars with the July 18, 2026, annual meeting date at the MacMullan Conference Center.

Adjournment: Herb moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Fred. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:23 A.M.

The next meeting will be January 19, 2026, at 9:00 A.M.

Higgins Lake Property Owners Association
December 31 2025
Statement of Income

INCOME:	Members @	Actual	2025 Budget	Variance Fav/(Unfav)
Members' Dues	460	\$ 57,500	\$ 58,500	\$ (1,000)
Directory Advertisements		\$ 10,795	\$ 7,500	\$ 3,295
Map/Stationery Sales		\$ 35	\$ 100	\$ (65)
Legal Fund Contrib's (Restricted)		\$ 9,535	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,535
Environmental Fund Contrib's - (Restricted)		\$ 4,071	\$ 10,000	\$ (5,929)
General/Lobbyist Fund Contrib's (Non-Restricted)		\$ 18,956	\$ 10,500	\$ 8,456
Fundraiser Income		\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ -
Raffle Ticket Sales		\$ 7,835	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,835
Interest/Miscellaneous Income		\$ 3,133	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,133
TOTAL INCOME		\$ 115,860	\$ 102,600	\$ 13,260
 EXPENSES:				
Contract Services				
Accounting Fees		\$ 4,300	\$ 4,500	\$ 200
Legal Expenses		\$ -	\$ 13,000	\$ 13,000
Lobbyist		\$ 20,500	\$ 20,000	\$ (500)
		<u>\$ 24,800</u>	<u>\$ 37,500</u>	<u>\$ 12,700</u>
Facilities and Equipment				
Office Rent		\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ -
		<u>\$ 3,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,000</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Operating Expenses				
Insurance		\$ 1,397	\$ 1,500	\$ 103
Postage, Mailing Service		\$ 2,930	\$ 2,200	\$ (730)
Printing and Copying		\$ 6,450	\$ 9,200	\$ 2,750
Supplies		\$ 603	\$ 1,000	\$ 397
Outside Services		\$ 2,916	\$ 750	\$ (2,166)
Telephone and Internet		\$ 1,840	\$ 2,200	\$ 360
Web Site Maintenance		\$ 200	\$ 700	\$ 500
		<u>\$ 16,336</u>	<u>\$ 17,550</u>	<u>\$ 1,214</u>
Payroll Expenses				
Salaries and Wages		\$ 13,643	\$ 14,500	\$ 857
Payroll Taxes		\$ 1,995	\$ 1,000	\$ (995)
Workers Comp		\$ 23	\$ 50	\$ 27
		<u>\$ 15,661</u>	<u>\$ 15,550</u>	<u>\$ (111)</u>
Travel and Meetings				
Conferences, Meetings		\$ 361	\$ 650	\$ 289
Other				
Environmental Expenses		\$ 4,350	\$ 21,000	\$ 16,650
Marine Patrol & Rosc Foundation		\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -
Central Mi District Health Dept		\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ (4,000)
Memberships		\$ 100	\$ 500	\$ 400
		<u>\$ 10,450</u>	<u>\$ 23,500</u>	<u>\$ 13,050</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE		\$ 70,608	\$ 97,750	\$ 27,142
NET INCOME		\$ 45,252	\$ 4,850	\$ 40,402

HIGGINS LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
September 30, 2025

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 155,636
Accounts Receivable	
Total Current Assets	155,636
Other Assets	
Rent Security Deposit	-
Prepaid Expense	-
Restricted Cash	29,525
Total Other Assets	<u>29,525</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 185,161</u>

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$ -
Accrued Payroll and Withholdings Payable	958
Accrued Expenses	-
Unearned Revenue	-
Total Current Liabilities	<u>958</u>
Total Liabilities	958

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted :	
Unrestricted	154,698
Temporarily Restricted	29,525
Permanently Restricted	-
Total Net Assets	<u>184,223</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 185,161</u>

