



Higgins Lake Property Owners AssociationSM

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

Website: hlpoa.org email: hlpoa0@gmail.com

Phone: (989) 275-9181

Higgins Lake Property Owners Association

Board Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2026

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

Agenda: No changes.

President's Comments: Charlene wished everyone a happy President's Day!

January Minutes: The January 19, 2026, Minutes were accepted as written.

Committee Reports:

Secretary/Office: None.

Treasurer's Report: The 2025 direct year-end financials were presented. Bruce reported that we had a good year, resulting in just over \$44,000 in net profit. Bruce reviewed a number of significant positive variances to the budget that contributed to the sizable profit, including a positive income variance in our Legal and General fund contributions, coupled with lower than budgeted expenses in our Legal and Environmental categories. Our Legal expenses for 2025 have been understated as expenses have been incurred but no Legal invoices were submitted during the year. These costs will be paid during 2026 when invoices are received.

Bruce then reviewed the proposed 2026 budget, where he had prior discussions with our committee chairs. Fred moved to accept the proposed 2026 budget, seconded by John. Motion passed. Brief comments were then made on our January 2026 Balance sheet and Income statement, with Bruce noting that the significant Unearned Revenue amount shown at 2025-year end, representing 2026 payments for dues and Directory Advertising, are no longer showing on the January 2026 statement as these funds have now been taken into 2026 revenue. Finally, Bruce mentioned that he was in contact with our CPA and is in the process of providing the necessary information for their completion of our 2025 Annual Compilation statement. The CPA will also be providing a quote to pick up quarterly payroll withholding tax filings currently being done internally. Thank you, Bruce!

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

Membership & Communication: Patty shared that she and Wayne have spent numerous hours updating our website and continue to do so. While they are transferring most information, Patty added that she felt it important to include past historical and legal involvement, which they are working on. Thank you, Patty and Wayne!

Wayne said memberships continue to be strong, as we have 390 members vs 346 1 year ago. We hope to soon meet the 460 budgeted and beyond! Wayne also shared that we have received nearly \$9,000 towards the directory fund and hope to exceed the budgeted \$9,500, with a March 1st due date to advertisers. Lastly, a discussion was held about online payments, and a zoom meeting will be scheduled with the communications committee to address necessary information, including security requirements.

Riparian Committee: John reported the following:

- **Goose Egg and Nest Destruction:** An application for a permit for Goose Nest/Egg Destruction was applied for on January 26 for HLPOA. Chris Compton, the owner and operator of Goose Busters, will make two trips to Higgins Lake as required by the permit in April. HLSIO (Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization) will manage the project and pay Goose Busters for their service. Mike Perkey from the HLSIO board has volunteered to accompany Goose Busters and make any needed follow-up visits to increase the effectiveness of the project.
When dates are finalized, HLPOA will need to do an email blast to inform our members about the nest/egg destruction and invite reports on any known nest locations.
- **Roscommon County Safety Meeting:** The meeting is scheduled for May 14 as a Zoom meeting. Likely agenda items are Marine Patrol update, status of Central Dispatch and planning for July 4th weekend. Suggestions for other agenda items are welcome.
- **AIS Data Collection Project for 2026:** The project will continue into 2026 with HLF (Higgins Lake Foundation) staffing the interview at the South State Park boat wash and HLPOA staffing interview at the West Access and doing the parked trailer surveys. At the West Access the goal is 500 interviews which will probably require 9-12 shifts on ten busy Saturday or Sunday mornings. We will need two or three volunteers for this project, and all suggestions will be appreciated.

Environmental Committee: Fred reported the following:

Mapping of Documented Septic Systems and Wells in Lyon and Gerrish Townships

The mapping of septic tanks and fields for properties with existing permit documentation in Gerrish Township is complete. HLPOA volunteers continue to assist in this work. Ed Panyard has published an augmented version including drinking well locations from the State of Michigan's Welllogic GIS (Geographical Information System) database. It can be seen here: Copy and paste into a chrome browser.

blob:<https://mail3.spectrum.net/64922478-2379-4d63-a263-7d4ae8ac79ba>

To view it, one must click one of the top boxes, then click one of the lower boxes for a selected element view.

Cut River Flow Rates and Water Quality Analyses for 2025

The YTD monthly flow rates and analyses for the Cut River were completed in February. The annual 2025 data record is available upon request. The samples and flow rates were measured about 100' below the CR 100 bridge. This information was sent to board members in an earlier e-mail. Results will eventually be posted and maintained monthly on the HLPOA.Org website.

Underwater Video and Environmental Survey Project

A group of HLF (Higgins Lake Foundation) and HLPOA members is working to organize and produce an underwater video for public outreach concerning the environmental condition of Higgins Lake from the perspective of the “Bottom Up”.

Several organizational meetings have been held, and good progress is being made. The members are Nancy Lamb, John Barta, John Davis, John Ogren, Melanie Brown, Fred Swinehart and Duncan Lawrence. A supporting consultant from the USGS (United States Geological Survey) Great Lakes Water Science Center in Ann Arbor, Greg Kennedy, has offered his services in a limited way to assist us. He has years of experience in this sort of work and has proven very helpful already. We also have a team of depth certified Dive Masters headed by Greg Purkey that have offered their services to assist us. Professional biologists from the Cadillac Office of the DNR have offered to help us with algae, weed, macrophyte and mussel identification as well.

The key areas for visualization and baseline quantitative documentation are stagnicola snail, zebra and quagga mussel, macroinvertebrate speciation, and algae and weed distributions from shallow to deep water environments. Detailed plans will be shared with stakeholders in March, with field activities expected to commence in May of 2026.

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

Status as of February 16, 2026

We remain optimistic we can remove Mergansers in 2026. Unfortunately, we won't know definitively till early Spring, as we remain in a holding status as the DNR/FWS begin considering plans for 2026.

- New Member – Marty Barta has joined the HLSIO team as Treasurer, as well as Communications support. She appears talented and interested in contributing. We are excited to have her join our group. Phil Czech has resigned. We thank him for his excellent support as Treasurer and advocate during his tenure
- Merganser Relocation Status — Duncan was contacted by Joelle Gehring, Acting Assistant Regional Director, Migratory Bird Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Midwest Region 3. She is looking for options that will allow us to remove Mergansers from Higgins and was going to provide details soon (they are running behind as she said 2/13/26 at latest).
 - On 1/27/26 Kali Rush, Waterfowl Specialist MI DNR, wildlife division confirmed that they are looking into things but won't have confirmation till Spring. He said if others wanted to complain/add their 2 cents to send it to him (RushK2@michigan.gov). Duncan forwarded information on Swimmer's Itch Solutions (SIS) proposal to test using Praziquantil in areas where/if relocation is not permitted. Approach would be to test this project in several Northern lakes (both test and control). Details available upon request.
 - Previously, Greg Semack met with Shannon Lott, Natural Resource Deputy at Michigan DNR on January 15, 2026, as a follow-up to our September meeting. She seems willing to help and is optimistic.
- Goose Nest and Egg Destruction: John Ogren applied for a permit on January 26 for HLPOA. Goose Busters will make two trips to Higgins Lake as required by the permit in April. HLSIO will manage the project. Mike Purkey has agreed to work with Goose Busters and follow up after their visits if more nest locations are located. We plan to reach out to HLSIO members and the HLSIO contact list in the spring (or as part of a newsletter) to report any nests they would like removed.

- Communications – We are in process of gaining control of our website, which appears to be a challenge (Desiree Marshall) needs to share codes, etc. to facilitate transfer). We have also received a bid for services from Elevate, Alma Blackburn. More information to follow.
- Fundraising Dinner, set for Thursday August 13, 2026 – No Change since November. Witt's Barn with music by Derek Boik.

PAC: Greg reported the following:

Lyon Township

1) Winterfest was last weekend at several locations around the lake. The majority of events will be held at the Lyon Twp Park 27. The outdoor ice rink will have a "grand opening" at the Winterfest. Also, the unveiling of a fish sculpture will be presented. The sculpture will be permanently placed at Phoenix Park in Lyon Township. The HOHL (Health of Higgins Lake) had asked to have an information table at Winterfest, but Supervisor Bertrand put a stop to that by saying he did not want political groups or controversial groups at the Winterfest.

2) 2026-2027 preliminary budget discussions will begin

3) The Board needs to figure out where the money is going to come from to pay the SAD tax on the township parks

4) A short discussion was held on STRs. Monet said the Michigan Supreme Court has ruled that STRs are a business and therefore, zoning would need to change to permit STRs in residential zones.

5) The discussion on the Animal Ordinance to include owning chickens in a residential area continues. Now the ordinance has to go to the county.

Gerrish Township

Gerrish Township passed a STR (short-term rental) ordinance in their meeting of February 10th. It will be in effect at once. Applications will start to be taken May 1st for 2027. There will be no ordinance to enforce until then. After 2029, there will be no more licenses given. Deed restricted properties will be protected at once.

\$100 app fee, \$500 license for the year. Anything can be changed by vote of future boards.

County

The first meeting of the Higgins Lake advisory Board is to be held this Friday, 2-20. At least three people, including Bill Carey and Greg Semack, have advised Darlene that we cannot attend in person and would like to attend via Zoom. Darlene said that Chase is working on something to accommodate that. Dave Russo is suspended without pay from Marley Township fire chief job but is still being paid by Roscommon County. John Barta has asked the County to Waive the \$17,000 they are asking the Health Depart to pay for Roscommon data. No other county in the 6 where the department operates is charging the department.

Phil Ellison will be practicing before the US Supreme Court next Wednesday about a case from Isabella Count. Nothing new about either of our cases challenging the Higgins Lake SAD (Special Assessment District).

New Business: Charlene noted that our reservation at the RAM (Ralph A. MacMullan) Center has been confirmed for our annual meeting on July 18th and asked for volunteers to assist on that day, along with set-up on the day prior.

Charlene stated that CMDHD (Central MI District Health Department) asked that our logo be included on a flyer they are preparing and we will wait to review it for approval.

Adjournment: Herb moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Bruce. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 10:32 A.M.

The next meeting will be March 16, 2026, at 9:00 A.M.