



THE HEALTH OF  
HIGGINS LAKE

PROTECTING OUR WATERS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

# COMMITTEE REFLECTIONS

## NOVEMBER 2025

EXPLORING EVERY IMPACT

EMPOWERING EVERY VOICE

ENSURING A HEALTHIER HIGGINS LAKE



## STEERING COMMITTEE

- The Steering Committee met on September 16. The Township approved adding Jennie Walker and expanding from five to seven members.
- The Steering Committee continues to operate under the Open Meetings Act on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM.
- The 2007 Watershed Management Plan was reviewed; a new grant cycle is expected next year.
- Invasive species grant opportunities are being discussed with the Higgins Lake Foundation.
- Transparency to the public will continue through newsletters, social media, public meetings, reporting, and presentations to the Township board.
- A new Monthly Committee Activity Report consolidates all subcommittee updates.

## SCIENCE

- The Science Committee met on September 10 and 24.
- A Nextcloud database was created for storing reports and studies. Over 30 studies have been uploaded and curated, with Zotero used to make all reports searchable.
- Eight study categories were confirmed:
  - Near Shore Water Quality
  - Invasive Species
  - Groundwater & Drinking Water Contamination
  - Watershed Quality
  - Changing Fisheries
  - Deep Water Quality
  - Increased Recreational Activity
  - PFAS/other non- nutrient contaminants.
- Subcommittees will form in mid-October to begin data review and reporting.



*empowering every voice*



## SEPTIC

- The Septic Committee met on September 3 and 17.
- Reviewed certified inspectors and inspection checklists.
- Guest experts provided insight into system failures and inspection improvements.
- Additional considerations are: well-septic separation, undersized systems and properties off the lake.
- Research continues on regional ordinances.
- Monthly septic maintenance tips continue to be published on the website.

## COMMUNICATIONS

- Email outreach continued with Ripple Effects and monthly Committee Reflections. The email list includes 167 subscribers plus 48 committee members.
- Social media activity included seven posts across local groups and a video featuring Jim Osling describing HOHL's mission.
- A new banner was displayed at Gerrish Township Hall.
- HOHL business cards remain visible throughout the community.
- Work continues with Professor Amanda Buday (GVSU) on a possible spring 2026 community survey.

## IT/FUNDRAISING

- Onboarding and training continued for all committees on the centralized file storage NEXTCloud.
- Partnered with the Science subcommittee to load studies and references, organizing libraries and metadata for easier retrieval and citation.
- The Funding subcommittee initiated contact with Higgins Lake Foundation to align funding pathways around two priorities: (1) development and implementation of a watershed management plan and (2) aquatic invasive species (AIS) mitigation.

## ROAD ENDS

- GPS data collection for all road ends is nearly complete and has been shared with the Higgins Lake Foundation. Lyon Township assessments are ongoing, with full consolidation expected by mid-November.
- A summary report will be forwarded to the Road Commission to determine next steps.

Health of Higgins Lake

