



THE HEALTH OF
HIGGINS LAKE

PROTECTING OUR WATERS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

COMMITTEE REFLECTIONS

FEBRUARY 2026

EXPLORING EVERY IMPACT

EMPOWERING EVERY VOICE

ENSURING A HEALTHIER HIGGINS LAKE



STEERING COMMITTEE

- Met January 20; Jim Ostling recognized for interim service as Chair.
- Finance update provided on EGLE Grant.
- Septic Ordinance Draft (Rev6) submitted to the Steering Committee for review.
- Special Work Session scheduled for February 9 at 9AM to review:
 - Septic Ordinance Draft
 - Funding sources & resources presentation
 - HOHL progress and master timelines

SCIENCE

- Watershed and Groundwater/Drinking Water groups merged; now seven subcommittees.
- Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), Recreational Activities, and Nearshore groups reported progress. More information on AIS in The Ripple Effect.
- Subcommittee reports expected to begin forwarding to Steering Committee this spring.

Health of Higgins Lake





SEPTIC

- Initial draft of potential septic ordinance based on research and collaboration by members of the Septic Committee completed and presented to the Steering Committee and the public for comment and input.
- Maintaining ongoing dialogue with the Health Department to clarify Health Department regulations and procedures and strengthen collaboration.
- Assessor database updated to incorporate incoming FETCH data, strengthening tracking and integration efforts.
- With support from the IT Committee, a new latitude/longitude-based mapping approach has been developed to visually display Health Department data to help the community understand the number, location, density, and status of septic systems around the lake, as well as where there are information gaps.

ROAD ENDS

- Compiling GPS data and road-end evaluation report.
- Future meeting with Roscommon County Road Commission planned.



IT/FUNDRAISING

- Strengthened reliability and interface capabilities of cloud-based data and sharing platform used for HOHL committee work.
- Researched and documented solutions for a macOS-specific web interface issue.
- Developed the upgraded latitude/longitude-based mapping framework that supports the Septic Committee's work, enabling more accurate display and integration of Health Department data.
- Began to identify opportunities to bring more resources to the work of HOHL, from individual donations to public and private grants to partnerships and collaborations.
- Created structures to coordinate outreach and track opportunities.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Email outreach continues; January Committee Reflection sent.
- Two February Ripple Effects planned highlighting Science Committee AIS findings.
- Discussed opportunities to expand social media presence to engage and inform the community.
- Exploring launch of an Instagram account.
- Website updates: all agendas and minutes now uploaded.
- Contacting lake associations to schedule summer meeting presentations.
- New trifold brochure designed and printed for public distribution.