

HEALTH OF HIGGINS LAKE – STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

2997 E. Higgins Lake Drive, Roscommon, MI 48653 - Phone: (989) 821-9313

Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 7PM

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Biggar present, Booser present, Chaney present, Fisher present, Teisen Zoom, Walker present

CHANGES TO AGENDA – No Changes

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Fisher, Supported by Biggar to approve the agenda for 4-21-2026 as presented.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF 2-17-2026 MEETING MINUTES:

Motion by Chaney, Supported by Biggar to approve February 17, 2026 minutes as presented and be forwarded to the Gerrish Township Board Members for review.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2026 MONTHLY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT:

Motion by Chaney, Supported by Biggar to approve the February 2026 Monthly Subcommittee Report as presented and be forwarded to Gerrish Township Board Members for review.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 2026 MONTHLY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT:

Motion by Booser, Supported by Fisher to approve the March 2026 Monthly Subcommittee Report as presented and be forwarded to Gerrish Township Board Members for review.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (LIMIT OF 3 MINUTES EACH): None.

PRESENTATION: Septic & Well Database Evolution and Current Status Report– Ed Panyard & Jim Ostling

Ostling and Panyard presented the evolution of the septic and well database, explaining how they migrated from Excel to an SQL relational database to manage information on approximately 3,500 residential properties in Gerrish Township. The database now includes 22 categories with scoring factors to evaluate properties based on factors like acreage, proximity to the lake, septic system permits, and well records. Panyard demonstrated the mapping capabilities showing property densities and scoring distributions across the lake area.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

· Science – Brad Gibson – They will develop realistic timelines for subcommittee draft reports at the May Science committee meeting. The Groundwater and Well Subcommittee will merge with the Septic Committee. Affected members will be informed and ongoing work will be coordinated.

· Communications – Sue Gelderbloom – Committee has planned to coordinate with the fire department to plan a one-day expo/open house tentatively scheduled for August 8.

- IT & Funding – Ed Panyard – Committee to coordinate with Communications and Treasurer to implement and test the website donation button. Committee plans to coordinate with Communications to determine the best location for the rolling grant calendar and implement it.
- Road Ends & Fertilizers – Tim O’Rourke and Dave Hobson - The team discussed progress on 86 road end sites around the lake, with 36 in Gerrish and 50 in Lyon Township. The team plans to meet with the Road Commission to discuss maintenance of these sites. After meeting with Road Commission, the committee will report back to Steering Committee on maintenance plans and potential funding sources for road end improvements.
- Septic – Jim Ostling – Committee will continue to vet and finalize scoring methodology and database.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Joint Steering Committee & Subcommittee Chairpersons Work Session Overview – March 9, 2026

- Higgins Lake Watershed Management Plan – Plan was reviewed and previous partners contacted.
- Northern Michigan partnerships – Steering Committee will explore partnerships with similar lakes and stream groups.
- A Year-end Press Release – Communications Committee will create a draft to be presented in June.

NEW BUSINESS:

Press Release:

Motion by Booser, supported by Biggar to approve the drafted press release as presented and be forwarded to the Gerrish Township Board Members for approval and action.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (LIMIT OF 3 MINUTES EACH):

Dave Hobson asked about the scale used for scoring properties and if it was real time data. Panyard replied that the data was not real time data and the data is updated every six months.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MEMBER COMMENTS:

Steering Committee will meet April 30 for a work session at 4 pm to revisit the Higgins Lake Watershed Management plan, including stakeholder engagement and potential funding. They will also revisit and continue development of legislative/advocacy letters following up on the press release.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Biggar, supported by Chaney to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 pm.

Motion carried.

Jennie Walker, Chairperson & Date

Jolie Booser, Secretary & Date