



THE HEALTH OF
HIGGINS LAKE

PROTECTING OUR WATERS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

COMMITTEE REFLECTIONS

MAY 2026

EXPLORING EVERY IMPACT

EMPOWERING EVERY VOICE

ENSURING A HEALTHIER HIGGINS LAKE



STEERING COMMITTEE

- The Steering Committee forwarded the Septic Ordinance Draft developed by the Septic Committee to the Gerrish Township Board, which voted on April 14 to send it to the Planning Commission for review.
- The Groundwater/Wells subcommittee merged with the Septic Committee due to significant overlap, streamlining committee structure.
- IT/Funding was separated into two committees due to distinct/evolving functions.
- A one-year anniversary press release was distributed to media, officials, and stakeholders.

COMMUNICATIONS

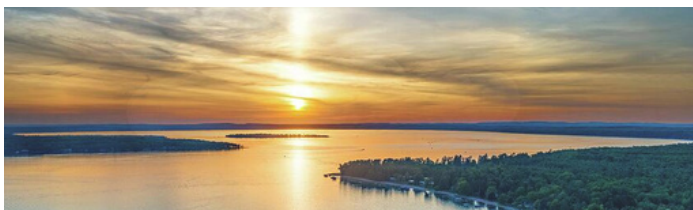
- The April Ripple Effect was published, focusing on invasive species and what residents can do; Committee Reflections combined February and March activities.
- A summer community outreach expo is in planning stages; the expo will potentially take place on August 8 to coincide with the Fire Department open house in Gerrish Township; the initial plan is for booths for each subcommittee and other topics of interest.

Health of Higgins Lake



ROAD ENDS

- The committee provided a sample of the Higgins Lake Road End Erosion Inventory.





SCIENCE

- Draft reports are expected from the Near Shore and Aquatic Invasive Species groups at the May meeting.

SEPTIC GROUNDWATER WELLS

- The Septic Committee welcomed members of the Groundwater/Wells subcommittee at the April 28 meeting; the groups will continue forward as one committee covering both topics.
- The committee discussed whether it should propose a different draft septic ordinance — one that separated inspection and enforcement — but decided that it was better for the Planning Commission to decide whether these components should be separate as part of its review the previously forwarded septic ordinance draft.
- A FOIA request was submitted to CMDHD for the results of water well testing in the Township.



FUNDING

- Catherine Voigt was introduced as the new Funding Subcommittee chair.
- A centralized rolling calendar is being developed to track grant deadlines, application windows, and subcommittee funding needs.
- Work is underway to make the website donation path more prominent, including the donate button with PayPal functionality.
- Alternative funding sources were identified for follow-up, including community development block grants and USDA Rural Development opportunities.

INFO/TECHNOLOGY

- The committee continued work on the septic mapping effort, including updates to parcel density views, septic and well context, shoreline/high-slope areas, and presentation layers to inform the Planning Commission, Steering Committee, and Township Board discussion.
- It experimented with a mapping layer that combines parcel data with LiDAR/terrain information to show land surface and likely water-flow patterns toward Higgins Lake.
- The committee provided continued IT support, system maintenance, and project coordination across HOHL technology platforms.