

HEALTH OF HIGGINS LAKE STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES
2997 E. Higgins Lake Drive, Roscommon, MI 48653
Tuesday, August 18, 2026

Call to Order: 7:00 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Biggar present, Booser not present, Chaney present, Fisher present, Walker present

Public Audience: Sue Gelderbloom, Tim O'Rourke, Edward Panyard, Charlene Cornell, Jim Ostling, Brad Gibson, Jean Laurence, Duncan Lawrence, Alicia McCoy

Changes to the Agenda: None

Approval of Agenda:

A motion by Biggar and supported by Fisher to approve the 8/18/2026 agenda as presented and be forwarded to the Gerrish Township Board Members for review. All members voted Aye. Motion carried.

Approval of 7/21/2026 Meeting Minutes:

A motion by Fisher and supported by Biggar to approve the 7/21/26 Steering Committee Minutes as presented and be forwarded to the Gerrish Township Board Members for review. All members voted Aye. Motion carried.

Public Comments: None

Presentations:

Community Partner Showcase – Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization – Duncan Lawrence presented a slide presentation and discussed how swimmer's itch is spread, issues with swimmer's itch in Higgins Lake, and what HLSIO is doing to help alleviate swimmer's itch in the lake. HLSIO would like the public to report incidence of swimmer's itch and sightings of the Mergansers on the lake on their website, HLSIO.org. Also, the public can report on the Fish and Wildlife Service website, info_R3MBMB@fws.gov.

Subcommittee Monthly Reports and Updates:

- **Communications** – Sue Gelderbloom reports they are distributing information to over 400 emails currently.
- **IT** – Ed Panyard reports they are working on the map, keeping NextCloud running and working with Communications on their projects.
- **Road Ends and Fertilizers** - Tim O'Rourke reports water samples are being collected at some road ends, and they are close to having enough information for a spreadsheet and a presentation for the Science committee to review before the Steering Committee meeting on September 29 at 7PM. Tim reports they have new volunteers for the Fertilizer subcommittee but are still looking for additional members.
- **Science** – Brad Gibson reports they have added 40 reports to their database. They are working on timelines within their subcommittees and will get a report out soon.
- **Septic** – Jim Ostling reports they have had a joint meeting with the Planning Commission to answer questions about the Septic Ordinance draft. He noted that GT/HOHL Septic applied for a grant and were awarded \$16,500 with the Higgins Lake Foundation for a demonstration map for Sovereign Park.

Old Business:

- **HL Watershed Management Plan (HLWMP) Update** – Jim Fisher met with Jack Biggar, Higgins Lake Foundation and EGLE to discuss the process of updating the plan. The goal is to meet with the HOH-Lake subcommittees to obtain data to help update the plan. Jim and Jennie will meet to identify community partners to round out a HLWMP advisory/steering committee.
- **Celebration of Higgins Lake and Beyond Review** – Sue Gelderbloom reported that the celebration was successful with 10 tables of educational presentations and materials, the team recorded 16 videos (What I love about Higgins Lake), obtained 25 email addresses, 24 children did the scavenger hunt, handed out 22 water testing kits, gave out over 10 yard signs, sold 5 tee shirts and ran out of 100 hot dogs by 2:30 pm. They had a debrief and are tentatively planning on July 31, 2027, from 11:00 am – 2:30 pm for next year's celebration.

- **Digital Outreach Review** – Sue Gelderbloom reports the Geofencing results were not as expected. They have decided not to subscribe for another month.

Approval to Submit WLNS Bill:

A motion by Biggar and supported by Chaney to submit the WLNS (Geofence Campaign) bill as presented to the Gerrish Township Board for review. All members voted Aye. Motion carried.

- **Watershed Info Map** – Ed Panyard reports that the map will be useful for the subcommittees to use. He reports that they are reviewing and looking for guidance from the subcommittees on how they might release the map to the public.

Motion:

The HOHL Steering Committee formally recognizes the Higgins Lake Watershed Information Map as an official HOHL information and educational tool and an authorized HOHL Informational Technology (IT) activity. HOHL IT subcommittee will develop and maintain the Map, with HOHL Communications participating in decisions regarding its public release and presentation. The Map and associated intellectual property remain privately and are provided to HOHL for use without charge.

Motion by Biggar, supported by Chaney to be approved as amended and forwarded to Gerrish Township Members for review. All members voted Aye. Motion carried.

- **Project and Funding Proposal Guidelines** – Jennie Walker

A motion by Biggar, supported by Fisher that the HOHL Project and Funding Proposal Guidelines be approved as presented. All members voted Aye. Motion carried.

New Business: None

Public Comments: None

Announcements: Next meeting will be September 29, 2026, at 7:00 pm.

Adjournment:

Motion by Biggar, supported by Chaney to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 pm. Motion carried.

Jennie Walker, Chairperson & Date

Jolie Booser, Secretary & Date