

FOREWORD

- The following presentation was initially presented to the Gerrish Township Board at the December 2024 work session on December 4, 2024.
 - It is intended to be the beginning of a comprehensive plan to consolidate ideas and work effort toward the improved health of Higgins Lake.
 - While it will be initiated by the Township Board, it must be a combined effort of many organizations to bring together ideas, concepts, and plans to check any deteriorating conditions found in the lake.
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- Questions can be addressed to Trustee Jim Ostling at:
trustee1@gerrishtownship.org



HEALTH OF HIGGINS

NEXT STEPS TO ADDRESS THE LONG-TERM HEALTH OF HIGGINS LAKE



Mission Statement

Facilitate and guide a renewed collaborative effort of stakeholders with a common interest in securing the overall health of Higgins Lake for the generations to come

Identify Common Ground

- ▶ Consolidate Efforts
- ▶ Search for those interested in health of Lake –
- ▶ Minimize Partisan Conflicts
- ▶ Identify a Single Direction on two parallel tracks
 - ▶ Health of Higgins initiative
 - ▶ GLUA – potential wastewater treatment effort
- ▶ Improved Transparency
- ▶ Identify stakeholders – local and statewide
- ▶ Attract new Funding

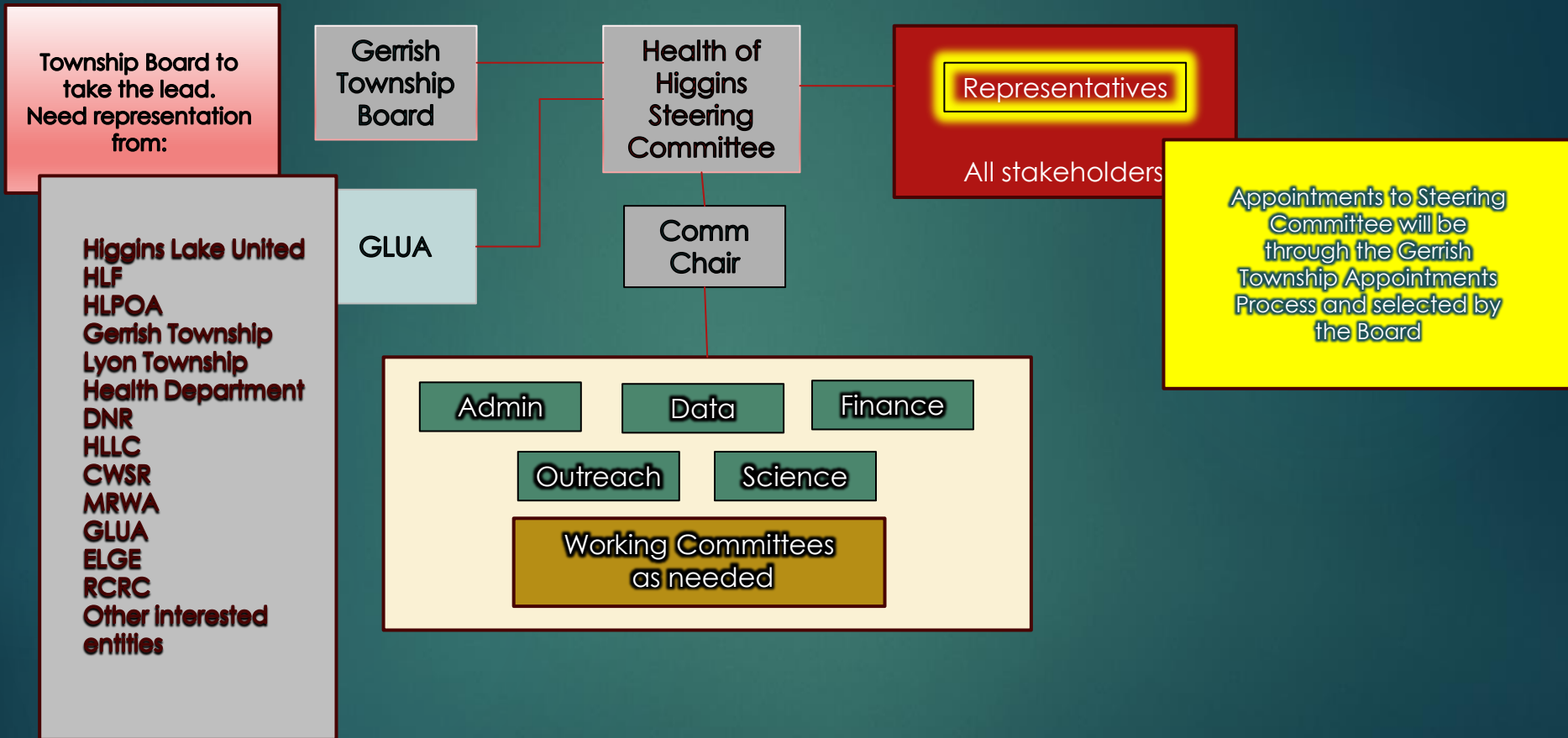
New & Consolidated Effort

- ▶ Steering Committee
 - ▶ Search for Committee members
- ▶ Baseline Data / Old and new
- ▶ Universal Database
- ▶ Immediate opportunities
 - ▶ Septic Ordinance
 - ▶ Road End Erosion
 - ▶ Fertilizer Ordinance
- ▶ Mapping
- ▶ Address Sewer prospect
- ▶ Focus on needs of Entire Township
- ▶ Outreach to community
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Higgins is a regional resource –
- ▶ Need statewide support to maintain its quality

Suggestion to get started

- ▶ Gerrish Township Board to take the lead initially.
- ▶ The 5 member steering committee with representatives from interested stakeholders -
- ▶ Most important - each representative must believe that the future health of Higgins Lake is of utmost importance.
 - ▶ If they do not share this belief, they should find another area to focus their efforts. This has to be a "can-do" group willing to work through all ideas until solutions are reached.
- ▶ Steering Committee should have the ability to add and remove individuals from the committee.
- ▶ Identify Common Ground and get extreme positions on the periphery.
- ▶ Prepare a common set of criteria.

Organizational Chart



Major Areas to Consider

- ▶ Administrative framework
- ▶ Baseline quality of Lake
- ▶ Baseline potable water wells throughout the Township
- ▶ Septic Ordinance
- ▶ GLUA - Potential Sewer system
- ▶ Other components
 - ▶ Road end runoff
 - ▶ Fertilizer
 - ▶ Shoreline erosion
- ▶ Mapping
 - ▶ Testing
 - ▶ Well/Septic
 - ▶ Topography
 - ▶ Geo Locations
- ▶ Universal Database
- ▶ MS Project Tracking

Data Analysis

- ▶ Assemble and analyze data to date
- ▶ Start new testing if warranted
- ▶ Baseline status of lake in common terms
- ▶ Commission review of data to date

- ▶ Create new Universal Data base to track progress
- ▶ Website / wide access to data
- ▶ Community outreach and involvement

Strive for: **Data Informed Solutions**

Develop Septic Inventory

- ▶ Prepare draft Septic Ordinance to be implemented when needed
- ▶ Township wide – all septic's would need to comply
- ▶ Expand universal database to include septic data
- ▶ Start with mapping – locate all well/septic
 - ▶ New geo-mapping / Health Department
 - ▶ Leverage others work
- ▶ Target specific problem areas

Sewer System

- ▶ Work in conjunction with GLUA
- ▶ Re-evaluate solutions
- ▶ Revisit technologies
- ▶ Consider alternate approaches
- ▶ RFP to select engineering consulting firm
- ▶ Outreach to wider community
- ▶ Remove existing SAD?

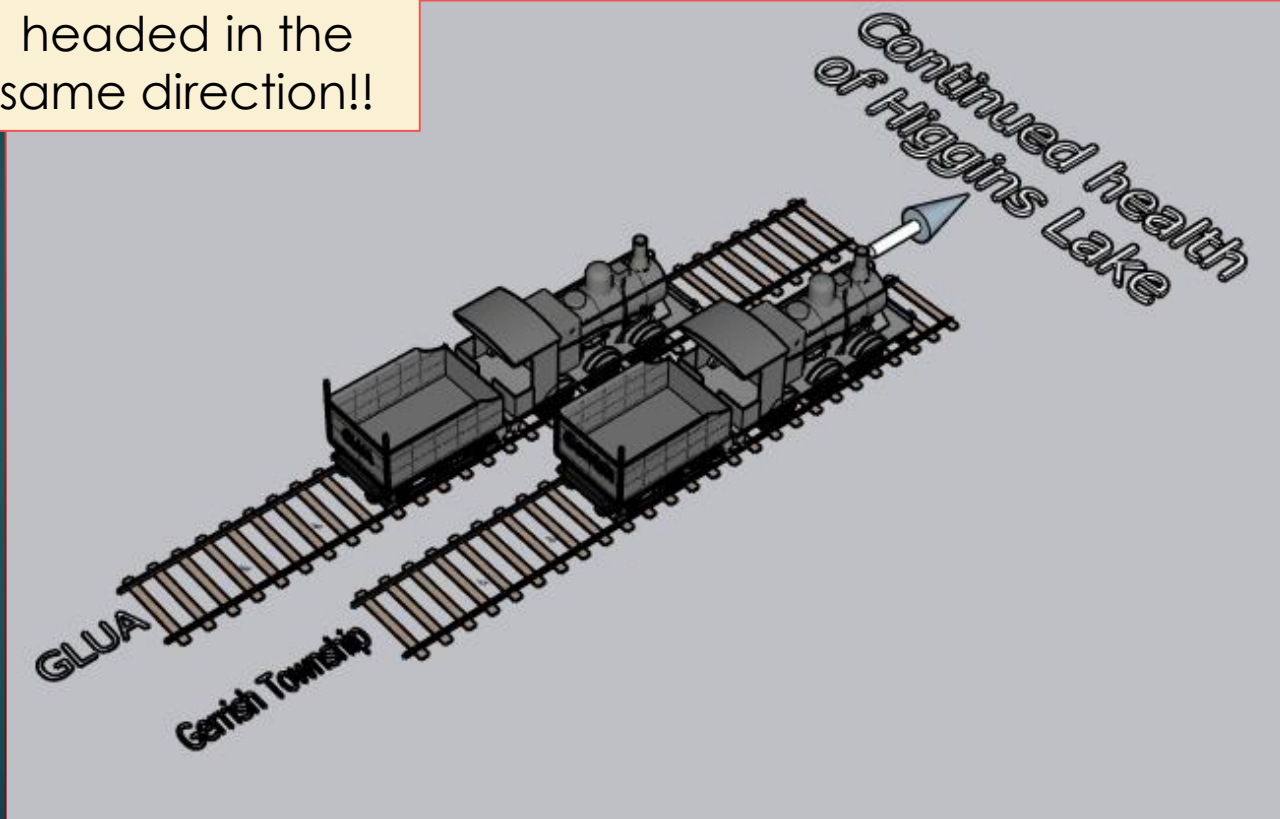
Summary

- ▶ New Steering Committee formed by Gerrish Township
- ▶ Evaluate Data to date and start additional testing
- ▶ Do what we can now – Septic inventory, Fert ord, Road ends, mapping, etc.
- ▶ Community education and outreach
- ▶ Provide guidance for GLUA

- ▶ Develop Master plan/approach

The Goal is the Health of the Lake

We are all headed in the same direction!!



To do nothing is not an option

14

Be part of the solution - not the problem