

Minutes

LTLA Annual Meeting Minutes, August 2, 2025

Location – Cleveland Township Hall, 955 W. Harbor Hwy., Maple City, MI 39664

The meeting convened at 10:00 a.m.

Board of Directors in Attendance - Scott Siegel, Jeff Shutz, Beth Stephens, Michael Grover, Paul Skiem, David Skjaerlund, Carolyn Tabion.

Welcome and Call to Order – President Scott Siegel called the meeting to order and welcomed Members.

Board of Directors Election – Secretary Michael Grover led the election process for three open seats. Three candidates were nominated, so pursuant to Article VI, Section 4 of the LTLA Bylaws, Grover asked for a show of hands to approve the nominees. Scott Siegel, David Skjaerlund, and Beth Stephens were elected to two year terms, expiring in 2027.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Beth Stephens provided an overview of the Association's finances. She reviewed the profit and loss statement, balance sheet, and budgets from 2024 and 2025. She noted that the funding has been largely flat the past few years, but expenses are increasing. She noted the increasing share of the budget dedicated to invasive species eradication, and the reserve funds to address the appearance of Eurasian water milfoil. The 2025 budget anticipates a shortfall of approximately \$2,500, but that could go up or down, depending on developments.

Greenbelt Project – Kelsey Froelich of Freshwaters Solutions gave an overview of the three-year project to encourage the creation of greenbelts along the lakeshore. She presented a slide deck that explained what a greenbelt is, how to encourage it, and that she is available to consult with members. She described the drone survey that will be conducted to ascertain where greenbelts are lacking. She will conduct 10 consultations slots this year. The goal is to have three properties without greenbelts begin to develop them each year for the next three years.

Cleveland Township Supervisor Tim Stein – Supervisor Stein briefed the Membership on a variety of topics and took questions from Members. The topics he addressed were –

Traverse Lake Road improvements – The Leelanau County Road Commission has ended its cost-sharing program with townships to repair and upgrade roads. Cleveland Township passed a road millage in 2024 to replace some of the

discontinued funding (other townships are considering special assessments or reverting roads to gravel). In 2025, the Township is spending \$430,000 to repave and repair roads in Scenic Mountain View Estates and Fairway drive. The west end of Traverse Lake Road will be repaved in 2026, with more extensive work done from the Shalda Creek culvert to M-22. The culvert, originally installed in 1985, will not be replaced at this time.

Traverse Lake Road speed limit – The Township has submitted a request to the Leelanau County Road Commission to reduce the speed limit to 35 mph from the existing 40 mph. The Road Commission and the Michigan State Police both believe a new traffic engineering study is required, at a cost of \$12,000, to update the study performed in 2018. The Township has declined to perform the study in favor of waiting to see if HB 4137, a measure in the Michigan State House, passes. The bill would clarify language in current state law and would eliminate the need for a traffic study. Members were urged to contact their state representatives to encourage passage.

Beaver dam maintenance – Stein met with Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore Director Scott Tucker to present data on water levels and the flow of Shalda Creek. Stein said Tucker is committed to ongoing discussions with the Township and the Leelanau County Road Commission on Shalda Creek water levels and the impact on the Bohemian Road/CR 669 culvert. Narota Lake, downstream from Little Traverse Lake, is being affected by beaver activity. There is discussion about installing “Beaver Deceivers” under some dams, rather than removing the dams.

Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail Segment 9 – Stein reported that the trail segment, as designed to travel from Bohemian Road/CR 669 to Good Harbor Bay, is dead. The train from M-22 down Bohemian Road/CR 669 to Lake Michigan will not be built. The National Park Service has postponed the construction of a parking lot at the corner of M-22 and Bohemian Road/CR 669 due to funding issues at the federal government.

Sugar Loaf Mountain – The Leelanau Conservancy announced that the owners will donate two of the parcels that include the former ski lodge and the mountain itself if the Conservancy can raise \$8 million to build bathrooms and other amenities. Three other parcels, including the decommissioned air strip and property along East Mountainview Trail, will be retained by the owners. It is not known what will happen to those parcels. Removing the two Conservancy parcels, which are assessed at \$900,000, will reduce the Cleveland Township tax base by 0.055%.

Member Communications & Engagement – Paul Skiem and Carolyn Tabion, co-chairs of the Communications & Engagement Committee provided an update on the committee's efforts to keep members informed, recruit new members, and provide opportunities for members to get involved with the association. They demonstrated the new functions on the website, including the calendar, and encouraged members to participate in the LTL book project, being led by Matt and Victoria Sutherland, and Jane Siegel, to capture the history and stories of the people living on and near the lake.

Invasive Species – Jeff Shutz, Invasive Species Committee chair, provided an update on the committee's activities.

- No Eurasian water milfoil has been detected in the lake.
- Shutz, along with a team from SEEDS, an organization that helps eradicate invasive species, removed approximately 400 pounds of yellow flag iris from several properties.
- An examination of the lake bottom revealed no quagga mussels which, unlike zebra mussels that require a hard surface to propagate, can live in sand.
- Phragmites, an invasive species of grass, has been identified on three properties.
- After several years of eradication efforts, including digging up plants, using predatory beetles, and spraying, most of the purple loosestrife on the lake has been eliminated. There are few properties with patches or a few plants.

Water Quality – Carolyn Tabion, Board liaison to the Water Quality Committee, and Tom Lauer, chair of the committee, provided an update on the Committee's work and the status of the lake. Testing continues to show that Little Traverse Lake is very clear, and very clean, with low or non-detectable amounts of harmful chemicals and bacteria. In 2026 the Committee will focus on the impact of fertilizer and malfunctioning septic systems, including posting a video of a septic tank pump-out.

LTL Merchandise/Road Speed – David Skjaerlund encouraged members to purchase LTL-branded merchandise from the LTL online store and demonstrated various options. He then gave a further update on efforts to enhance the safety of Traverse Lake Road, including efforts to increase road safety by reducing the speed limit and improving sight distance. A traffic characterization study, which was conducted late summer 2024, indicates that on average 100 vehicular trips occur daily and an average of 50 non-vehicular users utilize the road daily for walking, running, or biking (a ratio of 1 non-vehicular users for every 2 vehicular user). Maximizing sight distance is imperative to improve road safety for a multi-use road. Efforts are being made to remove foliage that creates sightline blocks and property owners are encouraged to avoid landscaping

bushes in the road right of way and to keep lower branches trimmed. Skjaerlund encouraged Members to moderate their speed and be considerate of bikers and walkers who use the road, giving them a wide space when passing.

Member Comments – Several members provided comments and appreciations.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

2026 Annual Meeting – The 58th Annual Little Traverse Lake Association Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, August 1, 2026.