

**BEAR LAKE-LAKE BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, July 7, 2026
CITY OF NORTH MUSKEGON CITY HALL**

Chairman Paul Pek called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Paul Pek, Commissioners Barrett and Cook, Members Howell and Panici

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Taylor Hobby

ROLL

City Clerk Hobby called the roll.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Cook moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was supported by Commissioner Barrett and carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Panici moved to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2026 meeting. The motion was supported by Commissioner Barrett and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Chris Nance, 450 Mid Oak Drive, stated that he believes public funding should be explored to support the cleanup of a public lake. Mr. Nance, in his role as the Mayor of the City of North Muskegon, pledged his commitment to work with the North Muskegon City Council to draft letters to members of Congress and the State Legislature requesting assistance in lake cleanup and treatment efforts.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

OFFICER REPORTS

Chair

Chairman Pek shared information on the blue-green algae bloom on Bear Lake. He noticed it by his property and contacted PLM. PLM then treated what they could see in the lake and had applied two treatments over the past month. Chairman Pek stated that nutrients and heat can drive these blooms. Commissioner Cook shared that information on blue-green algae would be a great educational opportunity for the newsletter.

TREASURER

Member Howell stated that he will have an update at the next meeting as Carrie, North Muskegon Treasurer, could not pull the report due to being out on vacation.

SECRETARY

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

MI Lake & Stream Association Membership

Still in progress.

Spring Newsletter

Member Panici stated he is just about finished and believes it is ready to go to PLM. PLM will then put the newsletter together.

2027+ Assessment – Assessment District and Boundaries

Chairman Pek stated there are not a lot of updates at this time. The boundaries were determined at the last meeting – Witham Drive bridge to Ruddiman Drive bridge.

Chairman Pek asked Commissioner Barrett what the next steps would be. She stated next step would be having the assessors look at the splits or accommodations. This information will give the number of parcels for each jurisdiction which will then be given to each for review.

2027+ Assessment – Budget Draft

Chairman Pek shared projected expenses for the next five years to provide a rough estimate of the per-parcel cost for the assessment. He explained that while the board does not write a large number of checks, annual budgets can vary depending on when invoices are received from Grand Valley State University (GVSU).

He noted that there are a few line items that typically are not utilized, this includes education and grant match funds. The largest budget items are generally Grand Valley State University and PLM, followed by special projects. Chairman Pek stated that he used realistic projections, including increases in many line items and decreases in line items not utilized as much, but would like the board to continue reviewing the budget and identify ways to reduce the overall assessment amount.

Chairman Pek shared that investments were very beneficial over the last few years. Treasurer Howell stated that balance will be gone after this year. Chairman Pek also shared that in the past the board was able to get voluntary contributions from the City of North Muskegon, Laketon Township and County of Muskegon. This is an option to be explored.

Commissioner Barrett explained that the board must make sure there are funds that will cover the required notices which includes publishing and mailings.

Chairman Pek shared once the board whittles down the budget and determines the assessment amount, the hope is that this money will carry for an extra four or five-years after the assessment period.

Member Panici feels strongly that the assessment has to be below \$2,500 for the five-year period.

Commissioner Cook suggested doing single line items that are not quite as specific as what is listed in the draft, for example PLM would be listed as one-line and any expenses to PLM would be paid from that line. Another would be special projects which could include education or grant match funds.

Chairman Pek and Treasurer Howell will work to whittle the draft down and bring it back at the next meeting for review.

2027+ Assessment – Assessment Allocation Proposal

Chairman Pek shared that there were a lot of complaints on the initial assessment which went per parcel – residents pointing out how they all have different frontage. He recently reached out to Thomas VanBruggen with Muskegon County GIS to get an idea of the frontages for parcels. Chairman Pek inquired about how to assess, whether per parcel or based on frontage, the attorney advised against using frontage. The allocation subcommittee recommended assessment structure would be the same structure as the previous assessment; resident parcels pay the same regardless of frontage and commercial parcels pay double the resident parcels. Chairman Pek explained the condos could be done one of two ways, as a whole or split.

The board determined that more information is needed before deciding, especially when taking the condos on W Ridge Drive off of Witham Drive into consideration. Chairman Pek will reach out to the assessor to get more information.

2027+ Assessment – Lake Management Plan Updates

Chairman Pek shared that the Lake Management Plan has to be updated prior to the assessment. He spoke with PLM and they stated they could put one together fairly easy.

Commissioner Cook moved to approve paying PLM up to \$3,675.00 to prepare the Bear Lake-Lake Boards Lake Management Plan update. The motion was supported by Commissioner Barrett and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

2027+ Assessment – Timeline

Commissioner Cook inquired about the timeline. Chairman Pek stated that tentatively the public hearing would be September 2, 2026. The first publication would have to be 20-days prior and then another would be the week of the meeting. Notices would have to be sent to the residents. All notices would have to be out by August 22, 2026.

Commissioner Barrett stated there would likely need to be another meeting in the month of July to get the process moving to meet the deadlines for a September 2 public hearing.

NEW BUSINESS

2027+ Assessments – Voluntary contributions from Laketon Township, North Muskegon, and Muskegon County

Chairman Pek asked the board what they feel the best approach would be to approach Laketon Township, North Muskegon and Muskegon County about voluntary contributions. He drafted a letter that could be sent to each. The board believes that would be the best approach. Chairman Pek shared that he believes having the representative for each jurisdiction deliver the letter would be best.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Molly Jobin, 1844 Cedar Ave, shared thoughts on how access from her property would be very difficult due to the water level and the number of cattails on the property. She stated she has been

watching the swans on Muskegon Lake for years and is now concerned about the number of swans that have taken residence on Bear Lake across from their property. Ms. Jobin hopes the board is keeping an eye on this situation.

BOARD COMMENTS

Chairman Pek shared that he was shocked by the number of swans that are down in the area Ms. Jobin was referring to.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Next meeting: TBD

Taylor Hobby, City Clerk