




## Summary of Secord Lake Association April 20, 2024 Meeting

We held our first meeting of the new season on Saturday April 20th. We appreciate the positive energy and engagement that filled Secord Township Hall. We discussed our current challenges and opportunities. Attendees were provided with three handouts. The update referenced these, and we will provide the links to each below for your review. We encourage you to read the linked materials to gain a better understanding of the situation.

**WELCOME**



- Our goal is simple, to **restore Secord Lake** as soon as possible while **reducing assessment costs for all property and business owners** within the special assessment district.
- SLA supports the plan of the Four Lakes Task Force to accomplish this
- We **continue to assist the FLTF to seek additional grant dollars**
- Our mission is to work for the benefit of the Secord Lake Community, communicate relevant information, and advocate for the welfare of our group with local, state and federal agencies. We also provide a voice for our lake within the Four Lakes Task Force

During our welcome we reinforced our on-going goal to restore Secord Lake as soon as possible while **reducing assessment costs for ALL property and business owners.**

We shared our continued commitment to provide information to the Secord Lake community.

Today marks the 26<sup>th</sup> town hall style update meeting. Our meetings, townhalls and informational publications are available to ALL. Materials can be found at [www.SecordLakeAssociation.org](http://www.SecordLakeAssociation.org)

**We Are Secord Property Owners . . .**



- We are Secord Lake Association Members
- We are **volunteers**
- We study to understand the **complexity**
- **We explain the complexity as it relates to Secord**
- We understand things **change**
- We want Secord Lake Restored ASAP!

26th Town Hall Informational Meeting



Over 70 Informational Publications


**Time – Money - Resources**

Our friend “Angry Man” made an appearance as he does with each update. He reminds us that no one asked to be in this situation. The journey to rebuild is **complex and changes**, leading to **confusion**. Confusion can lead to **frustration** and frustration can bring **anger**.

All agreed “Angry Man” had a busy winter.

One of our goals is to provide accurate, timely information to help relieve “confusion”. We may not always like the news, but having updated information is preferred to not knowing.

We also discussed the dangers of Facebook with some people constantly posting things that are not true. **The situation is complex enough without a handful of people purposely causing more confusion with untruths.**



Complexity → Confusion → Frustration → Anger

## FLTF?

- FLTF is delegated authority of the Counties
- **Board members VOLUNTEER -- there is NO Compensation**
- Secord has 2 FLTF Board Members
  - 9 Board positions voted on by Members
  - Board votes officers
  - Board votes FLTF representatives
  - FLTF Board interviews, screens and appoints Board Members from Recommendation
- FLTF has one County Commissioner from Gladwin and Midland
  - County Commissioners are elected officials



Phil and Chuck explained how they were appointed / elected to the FLTF Board to represent Secord. They also explained their roles and challenges on the Finance and Construction committees.

We reiterated that **FLTF BOARD MEMBERS are VOLUNTEERS from each of the lakes -- they receive NO PAY, perks, or benefits.**

Joel indicated that county commissioners, township supervisors and other volunteers receive no compensation, perks, or benefits from FLTF.

## Rumors and Nonsense

“Facebook Says”

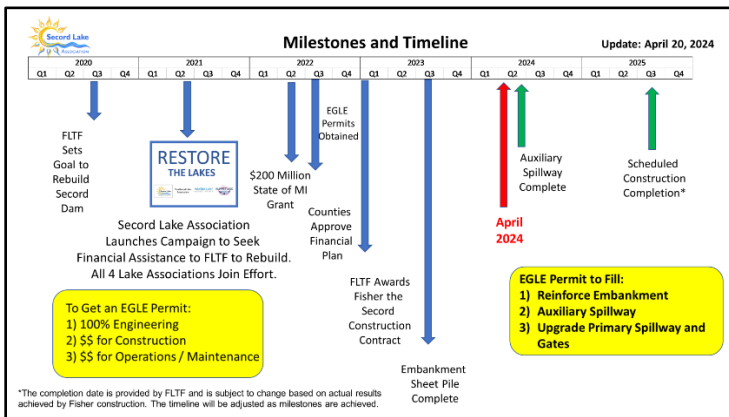
- **FLTF can increase assessment 10% per year.**
  - ✓ **FALSE** -- the current Operations / Maintenance 2022, 2023, 2024
  - ✓ **FALSE** -- recently approved assessments 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029
  - ✓ **Must be approved via hearing process by counties.**
- **FLTF pays Dave Kepler \$250,000 a year for office space.**
  - ✓ **FALSE** -- Office space, utilities and printing donated by Kepler family 2019-2023.
  - ✓ Office space is in **downtown Midland / meetings with politicians** and others.
  - ✓ Edenville construction trailer is **not** conducive to office employees or meetings
- **FLTF awarded a no bid contract for Operations to Dave Kepler's son.**
  - ✓ **FALSE** -- there is **no contract.**
  - ✓ Operations is in-house → the pick-up trucks to transport employees and equipment
  - ✓ Dave's son has **no experience or desire** to be involved in the FLTF.



Complexity → Confusion → Frustration → Anger

We then addressed three rumors that continue to be circulated by a few people on various Facebook pages here on Secord.

**While these rumors have been debunked several times, the perpetrators of these false statements continue to purposely “stir the pot” to cause more confusion, frustration, and anger among their neighbors.**



We reviewed the Milestones and Timeline. We have watched this build over the previous updates.

The two areas outlined in yellow:

To the left indicates what was needed to secure an EGLE permit to begin construction.

To the right what is required to receive an EGLE permit to fill Secord Lake.

**The key takes away -- engineering and construction meet EGLE requirements to allow the lake to fill when completed. And we are closer to the end than the beginning.**

**RESTORE THE LAKES**

SECOND LAKE ASSOCIATION | SMALLWOOD LAKE ASSOCIATION | WISDOM LAKE ASSOCIATION | SANFORD LAKE ASSOCIATION

**We continue to support FLTF in discussions with state and federal officials to seek additional grants and financial aid.**

**Ken, Brent and Tami working to help FLTF identify opportunities provided by Congressman Mooleenaar and Kildee's teams.**

We provided an update of the ongoing efforts of members of the Secord Lake Association to help seek additional support and funding to help the FLTF reduce assessment costs to ALL.

A bit later we will outline areas where you can help.

**FOUR LAKES' DAMS ANTICIPATED WORK SUSPENSION SCHEDULE**

DAM	SUSPENSION DATE AND DESCRIPTION
Secord	<b>July 2024</b> Shortly after the completion of the auxiliary spillway and stabilization of the primary spillway
Smallwood	<b>August 2024</b> After auxiliary spillway is complete and the primary spillway is stabilized
Edenville	<b>May 2024</b> Phase V (final phase) of the Edenville Dam, planned to start by May (pending permit), is now delayed until financing <b>September 2024</b> After completion of the current embankment improvement project (Phase IV)
Sanford	<b>December 2024</b> After completion of the current east side work

**Secord Suspension - July**

- Cofferdam in place, pour select concrete in the primary spillways to stabilize it.
- Divert water flow through new Auxiliary spillway.
- Water level at the dam projected to rise 1 foot.
- Some gently sloped shorelines / sand bars may see water move up to 4 feet closer to shore.
- Ready for Primary Spillway / New Gates when work resumes.



**What is the Heron Cove Association Appeal?**

- HCA legal appeal indicates all work on Secord dam should not have started.
- The HCA legal appeal seeks to terminate and redesign the special assessment district.
- The HCA legal appeal indicates there is no benefit to property values should the lake not be returned.
- HCA is an organization that states it only cares for “the general welfare of its members.” It does not address the well-being of our community at large.

**NO Confidence in Heron Cove Path Forward for Secord Lake**

- **The HCA has no plan to restore Secord Lake.**
  - The only plan is to attempt to invalidate the capital/construction SAD.
- **The HCA president** has stated that they are looking to have the State of Michigan **“step in and stop this dramafest.”**
  - In Michigan for an appropriation to pass there must be agreement from a majority in the House (110 people); Senate (38 people) and the Governor.

Here is the link to the first handout referenced earlier:

<https://www.four-lakes-taskforce-mi.com/document-library-21/april-construction-update>

This table indicates when construction on Secord is expected to suspend and at what point in the project for stabilization purposes.

We reiterated while Secord is projected to suspend in July, the other dams will suspend at intervals as work is completed to stabilize those structures for construction suspension.

The current plan is for Secord to be suspended with the coffer dam in place with water diverted through the new auxiliary spillway. We will see a modest rise in water levels when this phase is complete.

The second link for your review:

[https://www.secordlakeassociation.org/files/ugd/cd86dd\\_6fa4977e4d394744b7ef4847d155d556.pdf](https://www.secordlakeassociation.org/files/ugd/cd86dd_6fa4977e4d394744b7ef4847d155d556.pdf)

The above contains an overview of the Heron Cove Appeal with a link to entire amended document submitted by Heron Cove.

As we discussed at the meeting, our comments were consistent with this written overview.

The third link for your review:

[https://www.secordlakeassociation.org/files/ugd/cd86dd\\_1b299a82abe44ec3a009046fb657f0fa.pdf](https://www.secordlakeassociation.org/files/ugd/cd86dd_1b299a82abe44ec3a009046fb657f0fa.pdf)

The Secord Lake Association leadership team has NO CONFIDENCE in the HCA path forward to restore Secord.

As we discussed at the meeting, our comments are consistent with this written position.

FLTF Informational Webinar May 14<sup>th</sup> 5 – 7 PM  
(it will be recorded)

**May 29<sup>th</sup>  
Appeal Oral  
Arguments**

## What's Next . . .

Judge rules in favor of Special Assessment District  
Both Parties Agree with Ruling -- NO APPEALS COURT

HCA drops their additional lawsuits against Counties and FLTF

Back in Business . . . Obtain Funding . . . Minor delay

Judge Rules -- Either Party Appeals

Next stop is APPEALS COURT plus County lawsuits.

Unknown Delay . . . As the legal process can be slow and open ended

People ask, "What's Next?" The chart contains possible outcomes with key dates:

- 1) FLTF has another monthly informational meeting scheduled for May 14<sup>th</sup>. Visit their website at <https://www.four-lakes-taskforce-mi.com/> to learn more.
- 2) May 29<sup>th</sup> is Midland Circuit Court Appeal Oral arguments. You can read the written oral arguments here: [https://www.four-lakes-taskforce-mi.com/document-library-21/appellees-brief-on-appeal?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=fltf\\_files\\_brief\\_on\\_appeal&utm\\_term=2024-04-17](https://www.four-lakes-taskforce-mi.com/document-library-21/appellees-brief-on-appeal?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=fltf_files_brief_on_appeal&utm_term=2024-04-17)

## What Else Can We Do?

1. Become a **MEMBER** of the Secord Lake Association.
2. Sign the **Petition** -- Show your support to return Secord without delays.
3. Write a letter seeking support for the **Deferred Assessment Legislation**.
4. Write letters seeking additional support and funding to reduce assessments for ALL property owners.
5. **Retake Our Lake** -- we need to keep ahead of nuisance trees.
6. Ideas to use fundraising to support a foundation to help those in financial need with assessment assistance.

Visit  
[RestoreTheLakes.org](http://www.RestoreTheLakes.org)  
to learn more!

**People continue to ask WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?**

We provide a list of 6 proactive things we can all do now to help restore Secord.

Visit [www.SecordLakeAssociation.org](http://www.SecordLakeAssociation.org) to learn more about points 1, 2 and 5.

Visit [www.RestoreTheLakes.org](http://www.RestoreTheLakes.org) to learn more about points 3 and 4.

## SLA Fund Raisers

**4<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing**

DATE: September 21, 2024

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Chili Cook Off**

DATE: November 2, 2024

**How Can WE HELP?**

Our annual fundraisers are fun social events that help raise community and money. We seek volunteers to help organize, coordinate, and hold these fun events. Let us know how you can help.

[SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com](mailto:SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com)

During the Q&A session, we received feedback from Members, coupled with several questions and suggestions regarding the current legal situation. We put these questions on the Parking Lot and will report back with appropriate answers via a future FAQ publication.

This current legal situation is yet another test of our resolve to restore Secord. There has been so much progress made since the summer of 2020 to work through the complexity of engineering and funding to get to this point of the project.

**We continue to seek additional support and funding to reduce assessments for ALL. We continue to seek legislation to help seniors and disabled that meet certain requirements. We are exploring possibilities to join a foundation to provide assessment assistance to those in need. WE ARE FOCUSED ON HELPING ALL, not just a select group of people.**

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM – Secord Township Hall. <END>