

## Healthy Pine River – Membership Meeting

### Meeting Minutes for Thursday, February 12, 2026

**Welcome** - Ben welcomed the audience and shared that tonight's topic was an extension of last month's membership meeting and our small group work dealing with Questions, Concerns, and Hopes in regards to the State Street Dam and Mill Pond/impoundment.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes** – Ben asked if there were any questions regarding the January 8, 2026 meeting minutes. Randy Lewis raised some concerns regarding comments made in the HPR Fall Newsletter regarding property values, dam removal, etc. Minutes were approved (Gary Rayburn, Doug Brecht)

**Financial Report** – Ben drew the audience's attention to the Financial Report at the bottom of the page and asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, he moved to Tonight's Program.

**Tonight's Program** – Ben shared that tonight's program would focus on answering the questions and concerns related to the State Stream Dam, the Mill Pond, and continuing our community engagement and conversation designed into the Feasibility Study which is part of our EGLE Dam Risk Reduction grant. He also mentioned a summary he had prepared (in member packet) from the small group discussions from our last meeting and Michelle LaRose (GEI) had responded by providing answers to a number of the questions raised from our last meeting on the last page of the member packet.

Garnet Johnson, TriTerra shared sediment testing information that TriTerra was contracted to complete for the DRRG. They mimicked the Barr Engineering grant from 2016 and found that sediment drop and depth had significantly increased throughout the impoundment particularly up near the Honeyoye Creek area. It appears the sediment coming down river and from Honeyoye Creek may be increasing sediment depth further upstream than nearer the dam. Estimates show that increase in sediment throughout the impoundment has increased from 420,000 cubic yards in 2016 to nearly 730,000 cubic yards in roughly nine years' time. TriTerra also took five composite tests for sediment composition and found metals in the sediment which was not unusual for Michigan, but found nothing of a more serious nature that would raise red flags.

Chuck stepped in for Dave Ringle regarding dam safety, maintenance, and liability. He shared that the State Street Dam is defined as a non-functioning dam by the state that includes a "significant risk" classification. The dam is inspected every two years by the EGLE Dam Safety program and the city is required to maintain the dam up to state standards which is the liability issue due to costs for dam upkeep without a fund or revenue stream to pay for those anticipated costs. The city received cost estimates from an engineering firm regarding dam

maintenance over time which were significant liability without a funding mechanism to cover such costs.

Gage, Alma College senior student shared information he had researched regarding property values for homes through discussion with local realtors. He mentioned that all home property values and sales were seeing a significant increase however water front property in Alma was up 89% while non-water front homes had increased more than 100%. Some discussion ensued about home sales on water were surprisingly high. Garnet had shared that home sales on the impoundment may be high, however if the impoundment were a healthy body of water, they would be even higher.

Ben concluded the program with sharing that there would soon be a survey available for the public to gather feedback in the early stages of community engagement that can help provide greater clarity as we move forward trying to better understand various issues/postures by our at-large community. Ben also mentioned that the community engagement and conversations would be ongoing along with some "focus group" sessions as well. The grant is a two year grant.

With conversations concluding, Ben asked for a motion for meeting adjournment. Meeting adjourned.