

Welcome to 2026! The current Board of Directors, elected in July 2025 are President: Cheryl Leach, Vice President: Mark Pollard, Secretary: Ilze Liepa, Treasurer: Sharon Quist, Board Members: Aimee Smith, Jim Badour and Cheryl Perrigo.

The board has set regular meetings on the following dates: 7/26/25, 10/18/25, 1/24/26, 4/25/26, 6/13/26. Any association member is welcome to attend the Board Meetings, to just listen, or to bring up a topic. If you are interested in attending or would like a concern addressed, please contact one of the board members or send information to esslakeassociation@yahoo.com or to our mailing address: PO Box 388, Hillman, MI 49746. Minutes are available on our website shortly after each meeting. You can also request a copy via email.

2025-2026 Ess Lake Board Objectives:

- Setup Budget for fiscal '25/26
- Review Association Insurance Policies
- Address Duckweed issue in the canal: Long-term & Short-term Solutions
- Continue to address the issue of dead/dying trees along Norway Court
- Develop plans (short term and long term) to maintain canal
- Develop a plan to repair and maintain tennis / PB court
- Replace road name signs in the Association
- Review and understand available grants and applications for Association improvements

Please let the Board know if you would like additional items addressed.

Message from Cheryl Leach – President:

The catastrophic ice storm that hit our area left considerable damage to our individual and association properties. Your board wishes to thank all the members in the association who helped with the cleanup efforts! Email communication was used during this time to keep members updated on the ice storm and other events. Email will remain our primary form of communication for any key issues that may impact our whole association. Please make sure we have your current email address. Send updates for your email to esslakeassociation@yahoo.com

- We requested new road signs from the road commission following the ice storm and the old, faded ones have now been replaced.
- Two new board members were elected this year. We welcomed Ilze Liepa and Cheryl Perrigo to the board and thanked Rick Koger and Geoff Denstaedt for their service. This coming year we may also have openings on the board. Please think about serving on the board in the future and putting your name up for the vote in July.
- We completed the goal of revising the association bylaws and restrictions and distributed copies to all who attended the annual meeting. If someone could not attend the meeting their copy was mailed to them. A new process to continually review our restrictions will be developed in the future.
- We again assigned different areas of the board goals and responsibilities among board members and reports for each area are included in this newsletter. We appreciate the time and talents of our board members as we all work together for the benefit of our Ess Lake Community.

Treasurer Update – Sharon Quist:

Dues notices come in January. They are due by June 30, 2026 without a late charge. The dues have increased to \$50.00 per year per lot. The late fees have also increased to \$50.00 per lot.

The association has set up separate accounts for special projects which are funded through your generous donations. They are (1) Legal Fund: used for non-compliance issues which need to be mediated through attorneys and judges. (2) Pickleball Fund: used for repair and upkeep of tennis/pickleball/basketball court, (3) Water Fund: used for canal projects such as dredging, spraying of canal and (4) Norway Ct Enhancement fund: used for clean-up of the dead trees along Norway Ct, along the shoreline of the island and the canal.

If you are interested in donating money to any of these causes, please send a check to the Ess Lake Owners Association, P.O. Box 388, Hillman, Mi 49746 and please note on your check as to which project you are donating to. Thanks to everyone who has donated through the years to all of these projects. We could not have done any of these projects with your help.

Website Update – Jim Badour: Our website www.esslake.com continues to evolve based on your feedback. All forms can now be found on the ribbon at the top of the main page between the “Home” and “Our Association” buttons. The forms available on this page are Request for Building Approval, Request for Tree Removal, Request for Variance, and the Annual Meeting Proxy. The Member Directory was also updated on 9/25/25. As a reminder, the directory, treasurers reports and photo upload are only available to association members in the “members only” area of the website, found in the upper right-hand corner of the home page. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Badour at: jpbad1@yahoo.com or at esslakeassociation@yahoo.com

ByLaws & Restrictions Update: Our new bylaws and restrictions are effective as of July 1, 2025, and were distributed to all members at last year’s annual meeting or by mail and are available on the association website. Summarized below are four restrictions that had substantive changes. For the full verbiage, and entire bylaws and restrictions documents, please see the website, www.esslake.com

- 4.04 / 3.04: On a lot with a residence, RVs and tents can be used for temporary living space for up to 14 days/year. (Not previously allowed)
- 5.04a / 4.04a: Garage/Outbuilding maximum allowable size increased to 936 sq ft. (Was 672 sq ft)
- 10.02 / 9.02: Ess Lake dock maximum length increased to 60 ft from the water’s edge. (Was 40 ft)
- 14.01 / 13.01: Bylaws and Restrictions are in effect for a period of 5 years, (was 20 years) after which they will renew automatically, or can be updated with approval from 66% of members (was 50%).

Canal and Lake Water Update – Mark Pollard: The Ess Lake Canal Committee comprised of Mark Pollard, Dave Shawdash, Jim Badour, and Rick Koger, John Laskowsky and Dan Lewalski continue to work on a plan to upgrade the status of the canal to its original state as depicted in the Ess Lake Estates plat #3.

Based on information provided by a consultant (Erick Elgin) and research conducted by Rick Koger, through Michigan State University, a plan was devised to address the immediate needs of the canal. Overall, Ess Lake was assessed to be in very good shape, and the canal was deemed to have no impact on the quality of the lake water. However, the canal was inundated with duck weed and weed growth at the bottom of the canal. To address this issue, Savin Lake Service was contracted to provide three treatment applications to address the duck weed and weed problem. The three applications were highly successful in addressing the problem. By future dredging and opening all sides of the canal, it is surmised that future treatment of the canal will not be necessary due to restricted run off, wind and boat traffic churning up the water, precluding weed growth.

Progress is being made on the dredging project. Currently a depth survey of the East, West and North legs of the canal has been accomplished. A depth survey of the southern leg will be accomplished soon. The mulching of the dead trees and debris along the southern leg of the canal (Norway Court), was accomplished in

November, allowing dredging equipment access to the canal. A survey of property owners along the canal will be conducted to determine the condition of the shoreline and need for improvement. Based upon this information, a dredging permit will be developed and submitted to EGLE for evaluation and approval.

Due to the generosity of numerous Association members, the cost of mulching the trees along Norway Ct. was accomplished with minimal cost to the Association. The dredging project will require a similar effort to make the project a reality. Members wishing to contribute to this project should do so designating the donation specifically to the water management fund.

Building Committee – Mark Pollard: The Declaration of Restrictions governing Ess Lake Estates requires building plans be submitted and approved in writing prior to the commencement of the building project. Building Plan Forms are located on the Ess Lake Estate website. Article V provide guidance on the character and size of buildings, while Article VI stipulates the requirement for approval of plans. Article VIII establishes the setback and location of buildings. Article IX stipulates conditions for and permission required to remove trees. Association members must review these requirements when preparing to build or remove trees on their property. Submit plans for building or removing trees to Mark Pollard (building committee lead) at mpollard@freeway.net. If you wish guidance or direction concerning your plans and their approval, contact Mark at 989-742-3521 or 989-464-0749.

Community Parks / Outlots – Ilze Liepa: Thanks again to all of our community members who lend a hand in keeping our outlots in great shape for everyone's use. This year the outlots were challenged with extra damage and debris from the ice storm, but with the ongoing help of our volunteers and a strong turnout of the community during the clean-up day in May, the outlots are back to normal. The Pavillion, Horse Shoe Pit and Tennis Court Fence all sustained storm damage, but with the help of volunteers are all back to normal. This year in May, we'll be installing the dock, putting out the picnic tables and getting the outlots ready for the summer. Watch for email communication on the exact date. We will keep our eye on Red Pine Parks A&B for flooding, washout condition on the entry of Park B, and the driveway condition and dead oak trees on the Long Lake Lot. If you'd like to be included in the email list of our outlot volunteers, please contact Ilze Liepa, ilzemike@gmail.com. The tennis / PB court surface does require maintenance this spring, if you'd like to join a small sub-committee to help develop a sustainable short and long term court maintenance plan, please also contact Ilze.

Pickleball: Are you interested in playing pickleball this summer? It's a fun sport that combines many elements of tennis, badminton, and ping pong. We have a few Ess Lake Association members who like to play and will welcome anyone who wants to join them, even if you've never played. If you are interested or have more questions, please contact Nancy Lee (734)624-8757 or Shelley Libka (989)916-6933.

Security Patrol: We have secured patrol services with John Quist again this winter from November 1, 2025 – March 30, 2026. If he finds any issues at your property, John will contact you. If you have any concerns that you would like him to check, send an email to the association address: esslakeassociation@yahoo.com or call John directly at (989) 742-4056. If your property is posted with a No Trespassing (or similar) sign, then you need to contact the association to give John permission to go on your property.

Continued Community Ice-Storm Clean-up: Thank you to everyone for their continued efforts to clean up the damage and debris in our neighborhood after the catastrophic Ice Storm of 2025. The Board urges all members to continue to be diligent in cleaning up downed trees, hanging limbs, brush piles and taking down damaged trees, not only to bring back and/or preserve the beautiful aesthetics of our neighborhood but also

for your and other's safety. High winds will continue to take down dead limbs and even entire trees that may be damaged, therefore please be proactive in removing these dangers. If needed, you can find the link to the County Website with the list of local tree and clean-up services published during the ice storm on Association Website or directly at: <https://www.montcounty.org/ice-storm-info.html>. If you plan on replacing trees, a good resource is the Alpena-Montmorency conservation district. On their website you will find good information on picking the right native trees for the location, and they offer tree sales 2 times a year. <https://www.alpenamontcd.org/biannualplantsales.html>

In addition, a few mailboxes damaged during the storm and by last winter's snow plows have not been repaired. We ask that you please maintain your mailbox, or remove it entirely.

Community Communications: Do you want to know what's going on in the neighborhood, share information, lost and found, items for sale (or free!), ask for or give a recommendation, develop a social connection with your neighbors? There are 2 social media options that are in use by our members.

(1) The Facebook Group "Ess Lake Unofficial". This page is private, but non-association members can also join. (Useful for family and friends who visit often!) Want to join? Search for the group directly on Facebook or:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/107147679380477>

(2) Band App "EssLake Community", allows for fast messaging, announcements, and posts, but is only visible to the community, making it more private than the Facebook page. Want to join? Scan this QR code:



*** As a reminder, all official Ess Lake Association communications will continue to be sent via email, from the address esslakeassociation@yahoo.com or via USPS Mail. ***

Contact Info: We learned during the ice storm that current contact info is very important during emergencies. If your address, phone number or e-mail address changes at any time, please let us know at esslakeassociation@yahoo.com or PO Box 388, Hillman, MI 49746. This will ensure that you receive all Association communications, and can be contacted directly if needed.

Directories: Sharon Quist keeps the directory up to date with all members information. The latest directory is always available on the association website under the member area. Please sign up as a member on the website so that you have access to the most up to date version.

2026 Annual Meeting and Proxy: Mark your calendars, the annual meeting will be held at the Pavillion on Saturday July 4th, at 10am. If you can't attend, the proxy voting form is available on the website under "Forms", or by requesting it through the association email address: esslakeassociation@yahoo.com.