

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
COMFORT LAKE – FOREST LAKE
WATERSHED DISTRICT
Thursday, October 22, 2015**

1. Call to Order of Regular Meeting

Manager Anderson called the October 22, 2015 Regular Board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Forest Lake City Offices 1408 Lake Street South, Forest Lake, Minnesota 55025.

Present: Vice President Jackie Anderson, Secretary Wayne Moe, Treasurer Jon Spence and Assistant Treasurer Stephen Schmaltz

Others: Michael Kinney and Emily Schmitz (staff), Chuck Holtman (Smith Partners), Greg Grasko and Meghan Funke (EOR), Jerry Grundtner (CAC), Mark Edlund and Adam Heathcote (St. Croix Watershed Research Station), Kevin Theissen (University of St. Thomas), Jenny Gieseke and Dan Fabian (BWSR), Mark Lobermeier (City of Wyoming) and Debbie Meister (MMC Associates)

2. Setting of Meeting Agenda

Manager Moe moved to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Manager Spence. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0.

3. Consent Agenda:

- a) AIS Update

Manager Moe moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0.

4. Public Open Forum

There were no public comments.

5. New Business

a) Election of Officers

Administrator Kinney stated that in his memo to the Board, Mr. Damchik resigned due to health issues. By state statute the District is required to have a president, secretary and treasurer. The District bylaws provide for a president, vice president, treasurer, assistant treasurer and secretary and state that a manager shall not hold two offices, except if one is held pro tem. The Board therefore has two options: it can elect a president to replace Mr. Damchik and temporarily waive the bylaws to forego either the vice president or the assistant treasurer position; or it can elect a president and, in addition, have one manager hold two offices, the second pro tem. Forest Lake has been asked to submit candidates to Washington County by November 15 to fill the board vacancy. Mr. Holtman recommended that, in any event, the vice president position be filled, if pro tem, to ensure that in the absence of the president there is someone to sign documents. Manager Anderson stated that, if possible, she would like to wait for a new member to be

appointed before a full officer election because that person may want to serve in an office and January is when officers are normally elected. Manager Moe moved to elect Manager Anderson to serve as president and Manager Spence to serve as treasurer and vice president pro tem. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0.

b) St. Croix Watershed Research Station (SCWRS)

Senior Scientist Mark Edlund introduced himself and Associate Scientist Adam Heathcote of the SCWRS and research partner Kevin Theissen of the University of St. Thomas. The SCWRS is the environmental research wing of the Science Museum of Minnesota working on sediment cores, microscopy and computer modeling to help manage lakes, rivers and streams. Sediment cores help to understand how lakes have changed over time. This information can then help with water management plans and setting water quality goals. Water modeling assessment tools help to understand how water, sediments and nutrients move across the landscape. These tools were used for assessments of the St. Croix and Sunrise River basins.

The SCWRS works in partnership with colleges, universities, agencies and firms to improve the understanding of complex environmental problems. CLFLWD is facing the same types of issues as other watershed districts such as aquatic invasive species, nutrients, erosion and climate change. Dr. Edlund further explained that with sediment cores it is possible to go back thousands of years to understand lake history, but he usually goes back to pre-European settlement. The type of sampling depends on the type of questions one is asking. This method has been used to develop phosphorus standards for Minnesota lakes. Comparing phosphorus levels pre- and post-settlement indicate what standards can reasonably be met and where money would best be spent.

Dr. Theissen provided examples of projects where the team took cores, looked at the history to determine changes over time and made management recommendations based on the studies. Although phosphorus increased in Spring Lake in Scott County in the 1950s, the lake did not meet state phosphorus standards in pre-settlement times. The research indicated that money would not be well spent trying to improve the lake's water quality to meet the deep lake standard artificially set by the PCA but should focus on the historical levels of the lake which align with the shallow lake standard. Dr. Theissen clarified that while lakes decline over time, the cores show how activities are accelerating the changes and where lakes never met water quality standards. In comparison, a core sample of Rice Marsh Lake in Hennepin County found evidence of the long-time impact of a waste treatment facility that persisted after it went off line. Efforts to improve water quality in the lake are paying off and if they are continued, the lake will meet standards. Dr. Theissen added that these kinds of studies are conducive to education partnerships and provide his undergraduate students with the opportunity to be involved with all aspects of the research from the sampling, to the research lab, to the reporting and presenting.

In response to questions, Dr. Edlund stated that the number of cores on a lake depends on the depth of the lake, the variation of the water quality and the questions one is asking. In

Lake of the Woods seven cores were taken, but generally just one is needed. The depth years to give a nice detail of how things have changed from pre-settlement to agricultural development to urbanization. In a watershed, lakes get more productive as water moves downstream. To reduce phosphorus levels, options are to bury it or send it downstream. Water quality modeling—as was used for Sunrise River—does not take into effect the BMPs put into place. Before proceeding with sediment cores, SCWRS works with districts to understand the issues. Typically deeper lakes absorb and bury nutrients, while shallower lakes tend to cycle the nutrients. Core samples on Forest Lake would help the District set achievable management standards for the lake by identifying how Forest Lake has changed over time and what factors might have caused that change. Looking at the alum to iron ratio helps understand the availability of phosphorus in the lake. Cost varies depending how much is analyzed per core, but generally core sampling starts at \$15,000-\$20,000 per core. Manager Anderson stated that moving forward to consider such options will call for a more intensive meeting. But core analysis will provide the information needed for a water quality goal set at predevelopment conditions.

c) BWSR Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP)

Ms. Gieseke introduced Mr. Fabian and herself. She provided background on the program, data gathering for the district and the outcome. The program started in about 2008 to look at overall performance of local government units (LGUs). There are four levels of review. Level I covers compliance with basic planning and reporting requirements for all LGUs. Level II reviews are conducted about once every ten years to determine compliance with BWSR's Level I and II performance standards, to assess progress on management plan goals and objectives and to gather input using a survey of board, staff and partners. BWSR staff compiles a report of findings, conclusions and recommendations. Level III and IV reviews emphasize assistance to address LGUs' specific needs.

CLFLWD received a Level II review. The District is meeting all 16 basic performance standards and 10 of 13 benchmark performance standards. The three practices not being met are adopting a training plan, measuring education goals and adopting a short-term strategic plan that set priorities for a few years out. No recommendations are being made on these, but rather it is an observation. Board and staff identified the fish barrier, BMP cost-share projects and AIS management programs as the most successful. The Hilo Lane stormwater project was cited as the slowest to progress. Slow progress, in general, was attributed to administrator turnover. Thirteen District partners responded to the partner survey. Most rated the District highly in areas of communication, quality of work, relations with customers and timelines/follow through.

The District has a strong engaged Board and knowledgeable administrator working consistently on its management plan. No action items were identified, though BWSR provided two recommendations.

1. Implement prioritized, targeted and measurable criteria for goals and objectives in the next water management plan.
2. Conduct a workload analysis of planned activities for the next three years, so the District does not over extend itself related to staff and funding.

Administrator Kinney stated that there are BWSR matching funds to hire a consultant to help implement the recommendations. Ms. Gieseke invited the District to submit a letter of comments that she will respond to and incorporate into the report. She noted that the summary sheet of the report, along with all LGU summary sheets, goes into a report to the legislature and is posted on the BWSR website. Manager Schmaltz stated that this is a very thorough job and articulates some points we can work on, especially on overextending ourselves.

d) Municipal Grant Program & Street Sweeping

Administrator Kinney reported that the City of Forest Lake and Rice Creek Watershed District have expressed interest in a joint street sweeping program including pursuing grant funding. Dr. Funke provided some information on what is known about street sweeping based on a study the University of Minnesota helped launch. The study compared types of sweepers (brush versus vacuum), frequency and time of year of sweeping, vegetative covering/tree canopy, sweeping targeted areas and cost effectiveness based on cost per pound of phosphorus removed. A vacuum sweeper costs about \$300,000. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency can provide a list of cities, their costs, lessons learned and funding obtained. For example, the City of Edina, by increasing to monthly sweeping in targeted areas, got an additional 60 pounds of phosphorus per year. Discussion included: lake diagnostic studies can include calculating phosphorus removal through street sweeping; Non-point Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) identified sweeping as a good BMP; by working cooperatively, Forest Lake could get a better sweeper; if a cooperative sweeping program is adopted, the participants would likely contribute based on the percentage of the area being swept; a broad estimate needs to be presented to the city.

Dr. Funke will bring details to the next meeting and estimated that the assessment would cost about \$5,000. Administrator Kinney suggested providing sweeping information to Forest Lake and Wyoming before they approve their MS4 budgets. He noted that Forest Lake intends to contract for spring and fall sweeping at a cost of \$60,000-\$70,000. Manager Spence moved to direct the Administrator to continue talks with the City of Forest Lake to explore cooperation on a joint street sweeping program. Seconded by Manager Moe. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0.

e) President Damchik Reception

Administrator Kinney reported that City of Forest Lake staff is planning a reception for Mr. Damchik on his retirement from the Planning Commission. The District can contribute to the city's reception or host its own. Manager Anderson stated that according to Mr. Damchik of all the boards and commissions he served on, the CLFLWD was the most productive and he had the most pride in serving on this Board. She stated that the reception is a wonderful thing and sharing a reception and gift with the city is the right thing to do. Manager Schmaltz moved to contribute \$100 to a gift and \$100 to the reception for Mr. Damchik from the Manager Expenses line item. Seconded by Manager Moe. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0.

It was agreed to provide gift suggestions to Administrator Kinney within a week and provide a certificate and small plaque to Mr. Damchik.

6. Old Business

a) Moody Lake High Water Update

Administrator Kinney reported that at the last meeting a few Moody Lake residents in attendance expressed concern about the high water level. Mr. Graska reported on EOR's investigation of the situation using an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) at a cost of \$350. He showed photos and videos of the channel of 218th Street to Moody Lake. At an old field road a beaver dam was found to be holding water up. A buried culvert was also discovered. The culvert was cleaned out, but the next day the beavers had blocked it up again. Options are: Continue to remove debris, remove beavers, install a beaver baffle or remove the field road. Mr. Graska stated that although he does not know the cost of the baffle and the DNR will need to OK installation, the baffle is a potential option. Manager Anderson added that the president of the Comfort Lake Association investigated this option. Mr. Graska clarified that large pieces of bog broke off this year because the condition of the field road and culvert continued to deteriorate plus the many rain events. As water overtops the dam, the beavers build it higher. He noted that there have always been floating bogs on the lake and the high water was also caused by the road and culvert deterioration, the rain, plus less active farming. The culvert is on one individual's property, but that person is not interested in keeping the culvert clean. It was agreed that Administrator Kinney will evaluate the size and capacity of the culvert, baffle sizes and required maintenance and will work with Mr. Graska to make a recommendation to the Board. Manager Moe moved to postpone further discussion pending the administrator's review. Seconded by Manager Spence. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0.

b) Lake Vegetation Management Plans (LVMPs)

Administrator Kinney reported that Ms. Schmitz waded through much information, interviewed professionals and prepared a summary of the status of LVMPs for District lakes. After compiling the information, staff recommended not drafting LVMPs. Key points for the recommendation and Board agreement were: signature waivers for treatment do not require a LVMP, and a variance to the 50-foot lily pad buffer rule may be requested without having a LVMP. Ms. Schmitz clarified that the 50-foot buffer is not in statute, but was recommended by Department of Natural Resources AIS specialists. The assumption is this is the standard going forward and will be used by both the Washington and Chisago County AIS specialists. Manager Anderson thanked staff for a nice job.

7. Report of Staff

a) Administrator

Administrator Kinney reported that maintenance is happening on the dead-end street projects and Gator Signs has requested maintenance. The City of Forest Lake is interested in having the District take the lead on designing future additional dead-end street projects along with the maintenance. Administrator Kinney will provide an update on grants at the next meeting.

b) Emmons & Olivier

Mr. Grasko reported that the kick-off meeting for the Forest Lake diagnostic study was held to get input from the property owners. The schedule was updated. Scopes of work for the Heims diagnostic and stream work survey were completed. The reports are being compiled. In December 2016 project ideas will be presented.

c) Smith Partners – nothing to report

8. Report of Treasurer

a) Approval of Bills and Treasurer's Report

Manager Spence presented the Treasurer's Report and bills. Manager Moe moved to approve the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills in the amount of \$109,333.41. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0. Manager Spence stated that he will try to bring recommendations for negative budget line items to the next meeting.

9. Report of Officers and Managers

- Manager Schmaltz stated that the Board will need to appoint delegates to the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts annual meeting and conference at the next meeting. Manager Anderson plans to attend. Manager Schmaltz volunteered to draft criteria for setting priorities for 2016. Administrator Kinney added that the communications consultant and Dan Fabian can provide some samples. Also project proposals from Mr. Grasko will be helpful.
- Manager Spence reported that the Comfort Lake Association has been reestablished as a qualified nonprofit. Board rules and bylaws were approved and 11 people were elected to the board. The association plans to model itself after the Bone Lake Association, be more active with the City of Wyoming, focus on Comfort Lake, while relying on the District to focus on the whole watershed.

10. Adjourn and Next Meeting – November 19, 2015

Manager Moe moved to adjourn. Seconded by Manager Spence. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0, and the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Wayne S. Moe, Secretary _____