

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE
WATERSHED DISTRICT
Thursday, July 11, 2019**

1. Call to Order

President Spence called the July 11, 2019 regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the offices of the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District, 44 Lake Street South, Suite A, Forest Lake.

Present: President Jon Spence, Vice President Jackie Anderson, Secretary Jen Oknich, Treasurer Steve Schmaltz, Assistant Treasurer Wayne Moe.

Others: Mike Kinney, Emily Heinz (via teleconference), Jessica Lindemyer (CLFLWD staff); Meghan Funke (Emmons & Olivier Resources); Chuck Holtman (Smith Partners); Angie Hong (East Metro Water Resources Education Program)

2. Setting of Meeting Agenda

Manager Schmaltz requested that an item be added in order to discuss an update on the District office space search.

Manager Moe moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Manager Anderson. Upon a vote, the motion carried 5-0.

3. Consent Agenda

- a) **Regular Board Meeting Minutes – May 9, 2019**
- b) **Special Board Meeting Minutes – May 21, 2019**
- c) **Regular Board Meeting Minutes – May 23, 2019**

Manager Anderson moved to approve the consent agenda with the addition of one minor spelling correction to the May 9th minutes. Seconded by Manager Moe. Upon a vote, the motion carried 5-0.

4. Public Open Forum

There were no comments.

5. New Business

- a) **East Metro Water Resources Education Program Update**

Angie Hong, Water Education Senior Specialist with East Metro Water Resources Education Program (EMWREP) provided an update on education and outreach initiatives in 2019. Updates included:

- Spring educational workshops in the area were attended by a cumulative 83 people
- EMWREP developed new surveys for Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District (CLFLWD) watershed planning
- EMWREP gathered input from 110+ farmers in the area
- Three Master Water Stewards in CLFLWD are currently being trained by EMWREP (20 stewards county-wide)
- EMWREP is creating 5 new videos and 10-15 new print materials for the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Toolkit
- Managers are encouraged to attend the shared booth at the Washington County Fair (July 31 through August 4)
- Ms. Hong has been working with CLFLWD staff regarding targeted outreach for high priority shoreline restorations to address cases of severe erosion

There was discussion about being careful to evaluate the potential for ice heaving when pursuing residential shoreline restoration cost-share projects and particular areas of shoreline on Forest Lake susceptible to ice heaving. There was discussion about multiple benefits of shoreline restorations including phosphorus reductions, total suspended solid reductions, and habitat creation. Manager Anderson recommended holding an annual event focused on farmers and agricultural landowners and suggested a “Junior Water Stewards” program. She requested that CLFLWD receive more recognition in EMWREP articles that touch on CLFLWD-specific projects or initiatives and suggested sidebars identifying specific projects. There was discussion about how to make public surveys more scientific. Manager Schmaltz commended Ms. Hong on the program, specifically the frequency of articles being published. There was discussion about the Adopt-A-Drain program and EMWREP progress on outreach to develop sponsors. Manager Schmaltz suggested that this could be incorporated into the Forest Lake Lake Association’s weekly “Art in the Park” presence. Mr. Kinney noted the benefit of native emergent vegetation in resisting ice heaving along shorelines.

b) Manager Per Diem

Administrator Kinney explained that the statutory per diem allowable rate recently changed from \$75/day to \$125/day. The Board’s per diem policy doesn’t cite a specific per diem amount, but simply provides for per diem in accordance with the statute. Therefore, unless the Board intends that some or all manager per diems would be below the permitted \$125/day, no amendment of the policy is required. Manager Anderson recommended keeping the District’s policy in alignment with statute. She expressed that it is difficult to find new managers that are interested in serving on the Board, and a higher per diem may support wider candidate interest. Manager Oknich noted that meetings and other responsibilities can take several hours, displace work time, and otherwise represent a significant manager investment of time and effort. Manager Moe offered that those who serve as managers do it for the general welfare, not the money,

but that it is important that serving not constitute a financial cost. Manager Schmaltz expressed concern about the District's budget as it relates to the increased per diem and policy to allow per diem payments for meeting preparation days. He recommended keeping the per diem at \$75 or raising to \$90. There was further discussion about the pros and cons of raising the per diem and difficulties with filling vacant Board seats.

Manager Schmaltz moved to set the District's per diem rate to \$90. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Manager Anderson recommended disbursing per diem payments monthly rather than quarterly. There was discussion regarding payment scheduling. Staff was directed to check with the District Auditor regarding payment scheduling and, with counsel assistance, to review District policies to confirm that no policy revision is needed to move to monthly processing. There was consensus to move to monthly payments, so long as it is acceptable to the District Auditor. The managers also asked that the administrator inquire of the District accountant as to the choice between Forms 1099 and W-2 for reporting per diems.

6. Old Business

a) Draft 2020 Budget

Mr. Kinney noted that Watershed Technician Emily Heinz is connected via telephone to take notes and answer questions if necessary. There was discussion regarding changes to the budget since the last draft that was distributed.

Manager Anderson asked why item 3-003-G Stream Biotic Monitoring has a budget of \$0. Dr. Meghan Funke explained that the District performed biotic monitoring in years past and found no issues with macroinvertebrate community.

Manager Anderson questioned whether the District has a complete, integrated study for the Little Comfort management district. Dr. Funke referred to the Little Comfort Lake Phosphorus Source Assessment, which covered available data to date and included project identification similar to a diagnostic study. Manager Anderson stated that she observed monitoring gaps in the December report, and noted that the District hasn't yet identified all of the inputs flowing into the Little Comfort management district. Mr. Kinney described the diagnostic process and the means of identifying additional monitoring needs as process proceeds.

Mr. Kinney explained how the District will continue to implement an adaptive management strategy and add to its understanding of the overall system; for example, by collecting a deep sediment core on School Lake. There was discussion about differences between a Diagnostic Study and the Phosphorus Source Assessment Study. Manager Anderson expressed that it doesn't feel like the District is approaching the Little Comfort Lake subwatershed in the same way that it approached Bone Lake and Forest Lake. She asked whether the District is monitoring to capture impacts from the

area that is seeing active development. Mr. Kinney explained that impacts from development are managed and quantified through the regulatory program. He noted that development can be beneficial to water quality overall due to required stormwater best management practices such as ponding. Dr. Funke explained that modeling is probably the best tool to keep track of projects throughout the watershed. Emmons & Olivier Resources (EOR) is working on the hydraulic and hydrologic (H&H) model update. EOR will seek to incorporate land use changes, such as new development, into the model.

There was discussion regarding budgeting for the District webmapper service through the Washington Conservation District. Mr. Kinney expressed the intent to stop paying for the subscription, as the District has not used the webmapper for the past few years.

Manager Schmaltz asked about the proposed increase for line items under the 3002 Permitting program. There was discussion about the recent increase in permitting activity and staff involvement. Manager Schmaltz expressed that it is important to keep track of and inspect all the best management practices (BMP) put in place under permits throughout the District using a database. Mr. Kinney explained that staff currently uses GIS to keep track of permitted BMPs and requires maintenance declaration holders to submit annual inspection reports. There was agreement to add \$20,000 to the budget to fund increased inspection and tracking. Mr. Kinney will identify an appropriate line item to hold these funds.

There was discussion about line item 3-004-E Municipal Stormwater Remediation Program. Manager Schmaltz noted that the Forest Lake City Council intends to meet with the District Board of Managers. There was discussion regarding setting up a workshop this fall.

There was discussion regarding staff time under line item 3-006-4100. Mr. Kinney noted that this line reflects \$42,000 in funding from Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District, with which the CLFLWD has a staff sharing agreement. Mr. Kinney noted that the District hasn't come close to spending the full contract amount yet. He explained how the staff sharing agreement allows the District to maintain a higher staffing capacity, which is helpful in many situations.

There was discussion regarding initiatives under the Research program including Claros Technologies and deep sediment cores. The board asked that Mr. Kinney clarify that the \$50,000 in line 3-007-A above the present Claros authorization is a placeholder for additional Claros work.

Mr. Kinney noted that the monitoring budget may shift as a result of ongoing discussions with Metropolitan Council.

b) Office Space Update

Manager Schmaltz provided an update on the status of the updated rental contract for the current office space. There was discussion about improvements to the space. Manager Schmaltz remarked that he was informed that the stair railing may not meet commercial building code. Mr. Holtman recommended that the District ask the city code inspector to review the item, and that reasonable temporary measures be put in place to address any deficiency until the landlord addresses the deficiency.

c) MN Association of Watershed Districts Resolutions

Mr. Kinney noted that the deadline to submit policy recommendations to the MN Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) through its resolutions process is September 1st. He noted that staff will work with legal counsel to start drafting two resolutions for consideration.

7. Summary and Approval of Board Direction

Mr. Holtman reviewed directives from the meeting:

- Requests/reminders to Ms. Hong and EMWREP:
 - Send the Microsoft Excel version of the project list to the managers.
 - Provide a specific list of the MS4 Toolkit materials that are being updated.
- Promote the storm drain stenciling effort through the Forest Lake Lake Association's Arts in the Park booth. Ms. Lindemyer indicated that she would give Manager Schmaltz some informational materials for this.
- Staff return to a future meeting with proposed text to institute the proposed monthly payment of per diems, as opposed to quarterly.
- Staff talk with the District Accountant with regard to managers using form 1099 vs W2 and reference to number of hours indicated on pay stubs.
- At a future meeting the Administrator will advise as to where the proposed additional \$20,000 should be classified in the budget for the purpose of monitoring best management practices.
- Staff will clarify which activities are included under budget line item 3-007-A (i.e. Claros Technologies and deep sediment core collection)

8. Adjourn

a) Next regular board meeting – July 25, 2019

Manager Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Oknich. Upon vote, the motion carried 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Jen Oknich, Secretary _____