

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE  
COMFORT LAKE - FOREST LAKE  
WATERSHED DISTRICT  
Monday, September 15, 2014**

**1. Call to Order**

The President called the September 15, 2014 Special Board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Forest Lake City Offices, 220 North Lake Street, Forest Lake, Minnesota

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

Absent: None

Others: Mike Kinney (CLFLWD District Administrator), Steve McComas (Blue Water Science), Margie Schmidt (Scandia resident and Bone Lake Association), Jim Gerard (Comfort Lake resident), Wally Ostlie (Comfort Lake resident), Bruce Anderson (Comfort Lake resident), Jerry Grundtner (CAC member)

**2. Setting of Agenda**

The President called for the approval of the September 15, 2014 Special Board meeting agenda. Manager Moe moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Manager Spence. Motion carried 5-0.

**3. Eurasian Watermilfoil (EW) and Comfort Lake Action Plan**

Manager Moe stated that the Bone Lake Association (BLA) has EW and had approached the District for assistance with treatment, but was denied. The District's position was to not treat EW because it does not affect water quality. For the past seven years the BLA has been treating EW itself. Manager Anderson stated that it is the District's responsibility to have an aquatic invasive species (AIS) plan, which will be on the September 25 agenda. Going forward the intent is to look at AIS on a watershed level. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) does not have a rapid response AIS plan so the watershed district is the appropriate body to deal with AIS.

Manager Anderson reported that while doing contract work for the District in July, Steve McComas first noticed EW in Comfort Lake. The Comfort Lake Association was notified. An educational meeting was organized with the association, the DNR, the District and the East Metro Water Resource Education Program. Attendees felt coordination and leadership would be best provided through the District and there is an opportunity to treat the EW in Comfort Lake before winter sets in. This is the purpose of the special meeting.

Mr. McComas stated that EW was first found in 1987 in Lake Minnetonka. It is now found in 280 Minnesota lakes and infests about 10 new lakes a year. EW does not take over every lake, but will if conditions are conducive to its growth. EW grows best in high nutrient

conditions compared to native plants, which are low nutrient specialists. With heavy growth, EW forms a heavy matt at the surface that restricts navigation and recreation, makes it difficult for waterfowl and can reduce the variety and density of native plants, but does not impact fish communities. EW is pretty well distributed around Comfort Lake. It is past the time for eradication. Instead the best approach is management and treatment. For the fall, Mr. McComas recommended treating the area around the boat launch. A long-term approach should engage homeowners who may treat the riparian zone (up to 150 feet from shore). Beyond the riparian zone, the District or the Association would need to obtain a DNR permit for treatment. Mr. McComas noted that EW has not been found beyond the riparian zone.

Herbicide treatments require a DNR permit. If native plant communities are also present, the DNR recommends hand pulling. A variance is required to treat the littoral zone (area near the shore) and necessitates a management plan. Herbicide treatment in the littoral zone is limited to 15 percent of the area. Over treating a lake with herbicides can cause water quality issues.

Ms. Schmidt reported that the BLA was very successful in treating for EW in 2012. The treatment did not include the north end. Treatment was not necessary in 2013 because of the late spring. This year the north end of the lake was treated. Many factors can affect the success of the treatment such as wind conditions, timing and plant growth.

Mr. McComas summarized annual AIS surveys on area lakes that he has been tracking for over 10 years. A long-term survey with a sediment study allows for pretty accurate predictions of the level of EW and curly leaf pondweed infestations. He explained the best approaches to treating EW and curly leaf. Regarding Comfort Lake, Mr. McComas recommended that for the short-term, a DNR permit for herbicide treatment at the public access be obtained for the fall, along with hand pulling by volunteers at other locations. The cost of treatment is about \$300-\$400 per acre with a maximum of two acres needing treatment. DNR grant funds, to help offset treatment costs, can be applied for. For the long-term, a three-step approach is recommended: delineation, treatment and assessment. At the Board meeting next week, Mr. McComas has been asked to present a proposal for an AIS plan for the District's six major lakes including Comfort and Bone.

Manager Anderson moved to allocate funds not to exceed \$1,000 from the lake management budget item to hire Steve McComas to coordinate applying for a DNR permit for herbicide treatment of Eurasian watermilfoil at the Comfort Lake boat landing this fall and to work with the District and Comfort Lake Association to organize a workshop about EW and recruit volunteers to hand pull EW. Discussion included asking the CLA to contribute to the treatment. Second by Manager Schmaltz. Upon vote, the motion passed 5-0.

### **3. Adjourn**

Manager Anderson moved to adjourn the CLFLWD special Board meeting at 7:32 p.m. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon vote, the motion passed 5-0.

Anderson motion to adjourn

Wayne S. Moe, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_