

**MEETING NOTES OF THE
COMFORT LAKE-FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, November 15th, 2022**

Present: Geneva Kubal (Chair), Tom Fury, Ted Hansen, Curt Sparks, Jerry Grundtner, Randy Schumacher

Others: Aidan Read, Jess Hall

1. Watershed Update

Aidan Read, Land Management Specialist, gave an update on District activities. Updates included the status of the County Road 50 Iron Enhanced Sand Filter and Judicial Ditch #6 projects, the status of fall operations and maintenance, and the results of carp removal from Shields Lake. The only question on this topic was from Randy Schumacher on the results of the carp removal. Mr. Read indicated that only a few carp were found and removed, which is a potentially positive indicator. The electrofishing involved in the removal also indicated a diverse population of native fish.

2. Shoreline program update

Mr. Read provided an update for the committee regarding the continuing shoreline program planning. Staff are currently assembling a proposal for a tiered cost-share program using the amount budgeted for 2023. This program will be a pilot that will guide future efforts as this program continues to develop. The shoreline program team continues to meet weekly to develop this program, and staff have met with members of Stearns and Crow Wing SWCDs to discuss their successful shoreline restoration programs.

Education and outreach staff have been working to develop workshops targeting residents interested in “lakescaping” their properties, and District staff will be hosting a workshop this winter at Hardwood Creek Library on this topic. Additionally, staff are assessing the possibility of hosting a workshop for area contractors this winter.

The Lake Steward Program developed by the Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates is another initiative that the District hopes to roll out in coordination with our Lake Association partners this winter.

Jerry Grundtner brought up the example of Willow Point as an area of critical shoreline that the Forest Lake Lake Association would be interested in restoring in partnership with the District.

Following the general update, Jess Hall, GreenCorps Member, offered a brief presentation on the iTree tool as a method of quantifying benefits of tree canopy in the watershed. This tool may offer use as an engagement tool or a way of promoting citizen science. Ms. Held also led a short discussion on a potential program promoting tree planting in the shore impact zone. The committee was generally supportive of the idea of promoting tree

planting, with several suggestions. Tom Fury mentioned that his gravel bed will be installed soon in Scandia, and that he hopes to use this to incentivize tree planting in the Bone Lake area. Several committee members mentioned that the bare root seedling available from SWCDs tend to have high mortality, so it would likely be beneficial to offer a more mature tree to District residents. Ms. Kubal mentioned that it would be important for any effort to have a strong education component so that the trees would be planted effectively, but also to use this as an outreach tool for priority shoreline parcels. Mr. Grundtner emphasized the importance of offering a larger age class than bare root seedlings and mentioned that he would like to keep such a program targeted to priority areas such as the shore impact zone.

3. Chloride discussion

Mr. Read provided an update on chloride reduction initiatives being developed by Ms. Hall. Outreach to local government partners had shown mixed results. Chisago County public works, for example, was unsure of any training staff had undergone for salt application, while the City of Forest Lake has successfully reduced salt application by around half since undergoing Smart Salting Training and upgrading equipment. Ms. Hall will also be working to develop a social media campaign to educate residents around issues with overusing winter salt.

Committee members were also invited to attend the MPCA's Smart Salting for Local Leaders training, a virtual training for local leaders to learn more about chloride reduction efforts and how behavior change can be used on the local level to reach reduction goals.

4. 2023 Calendar and goal setting

Mr. Read led the Committee in a discussion around the 2023 meeting calendar and prompted members to think about goals for 2023 for the December meeting. Mr. Read will develop the 2023 meeting calendar for approval at the December meeting using the same schedule as 2022.

For goal setting, Mr. Grundtner encouraged the committee to be sure that goals are realistic and achievable. He also shared that he thought any initiatives that the committee wanted to spend the limited budget on should be in pursuit of the CAC's mission to engage the public.

5. Closing

Tom Fury was elected chair for the December meeting.

Next regular meeting of the Citizen's Advisory Committee will be Tuesday, December 6th at 5:00pm. The meeting will be held remotely via Zoom. Manager Schmaltz is the scheduled manager in attendance for December.