

**MEETING NOTES OF THE
COMFORT LAKE-FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, May 17th, 2022**

Present: Curt Sparks, Randy Schumacher, Tom Furey, Ted Hansen, Jackie Anderson

Others: Michael Kinney, Aidan Read, Geneva Kubal

1.) **Introductions**

The committee provided introductions for the benefit of Geneva Kubal, a member of the public in attendance with interest in joining the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC).

2.) **Watershed Update**

Aidan Read, land management specialist, provided an update on watershed activities in the last month. Updates shared by Mr. Read included that monitoring activities are fully underway in the District, Mike Sandager is now the District's permitting coordinator, staff launched a new weed wrench loan program, and the District was accepted as a host site for a 2022-23 GreenCorps member through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The GreenCorps member will be primarily tasked with implementing a shoreline restoration program.

3.) **Cranberry Channel Property Update and Discussion**

Mr. Read provided an overview of the history of the Cranberry Channel Property, and an update on its current status. The parcel has been purchased by the District, and staff are currently working with partner organizations to assess restoration potential and pursue funding opportunities. Manager Jackie Anderson further elaborated on the history of the parcel and added that it had been identified as a priority parcel for acquisition. Curt Sparks also added some history of the site and discussed the value of some of the features. It was discussed that the parcel had been for sale for some time with the intent of developing lots for housing. Mr. Sparks also pointed out that the channel has been heavily modified, and there had been requests for dredging in the past.

While discussing the potential for restorations, Mr. Sparks mentioned that it would be possible to enroll the parcel in a forest management plan and pursue enrollment in a forest stewardship program through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Administrator Michael Kinney supported this idea and added that it would be useful to repurpose some of the timber marked for removal. Mr. Read was directed to investigate these opportunities.

4.) **Logo and Branding Update**

An update was provided by Mr. Read on the branding and logo redesign process. CAC members had previously been sent surveys to solicit feedback, any further suggestions or comments should be forwarded to Mr. Read to be passed along.

5.) **June CAC Field Trip**

As directed by the Committee previously, Mr. Read presented several dates for a potential CAC field trip to the Cranberry Channel Property. This field trip would be an opportunity for members to explore the property through a guided walk with District staff, while discussing potential restorations and future recreation opportunities for the public. Several dates and times were discussed, and Mr. Read was directed to commence planning this event on either the 21st or 28th of June. Further feedback will be sought from CAC members in scheduling this event. It was also decided this event, while open to the public, should be targeted for the CAC members, and potentially be held as a joint meeting with the Board of Managers. Mr. Read was directed to coordinate this with appropriate staff.

6.) **Land Acquisition**

Administrator Michael Kinney added an agenda item for discussion. Mr. Kinney provided an update to the CAC on a potential acquisition south of Bone Lake. The opportunity to acquire this parcel had just come up, and not many details were available, but more information will be provided in the future.

7.) **Election of chair**

It was decided to elect a rotating chair for the next several months to help with administration of the Committee. It was asked when a return to in person meetings might occur, as some members may not be available. Manager Anderson stated that the Board of Managers would continue to examine recommendations and make decisions as appropriate based on the latest science and pandemic information. A return to in-person meetings is not imminent.

Mr. Sparks added that some members may continue to avoid in-person meetings depending on personal health circumstances, or travel. Mr. Read stated that when a return to in-person meetings occurs, he intends on providing a hybrid option for the foreseeable future. Ted Hansen added that while there was certainly interest in meeting in-person, the CAC would continue to follow the direction of the Board of Managers.

Following the discussion on in-person meetings, the following were elected as rotating chair:

- June – Tom Furey
- July – Randy Schumacher
- August – Ted Hansen

Next meeting of the Citizen's Advisory Committee will be Tuesday, June 14th at 5:00pm. The meeting will be held remotely via Zoom. The Manager in attendance will be Manager Christopher Loth.