

MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

To: Board of Managers
From: Mike Kinney
Subject: Interactive Watershed Display

Date: May 4, 2018

Background/Discussion

Staff have been in communication with Tracy Fredin of the Global Center for Environmental Education at Hamline University regarding the possibility of incorporating new technologies into the District's education program to help meet our education and outreach goals. One such technology would be an interactive watershed display consisting of a large-format (55"), multi-touch, ultra high-resolution (4K) table-top computer kiosk which would display highly detailed maps and compelling stories told through high-definition video, photo galleries, and immersive photography.

An example of the technology in use can be viewed here:
<https://www.hamline.edu/education/cgee/missrivergallery/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgV1oFowR8A>

Tracy Fredin will be attending our upcoming regular board meeting to provide the Board with further information and answer questions about the technology. He is also planning to bring an existing kiosk similar to the one described above so the Board and others to interact with it. Mr. Fredin will be arriving about 30 minutes early for those who want to test it out first hand so as to see the capabilities of these interactive displays.

Options for the District to partner with the development of a custom designed system for our watershed region include having it rotated through various community locations, schools, businesses, etc. as well as approaching the Lower St. Croix watershed organizations, foundations, etc. so as to determine their interest in such a partnership in the future. These devices are designed to use the story maps developed by both the students from the University of St. Thomas and the one already completed for Moody Lake by EOR. Again, to learn more about story maps, you can click here: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/> Staff recently obtained a grant for the ArcGIS software which is the framework for story maps and so much more.

Recommended Action

No action is required at this time but several options exist for the Board. These include collecting more information on this option, pursuing other partnerships, using reserve funds to proceed with the development of this education and outreach tool, consider this for the 2019 budget, or decide to not deliberate this any further, among other things.