

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE
WATERSHED DISTRICT
April 22nd, 2021**

1. Call to Order

President Spence called the April 22nd, 2021, regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. via online video conference.

Present: President Jon Spence, Vice President Jackie Anderson, Treasurer Steve Schmaltz, Secretary Jen Oknich

Absent:

Others: Michael Kinney, Emily Heinz, Jessica Lindemyer, Garrett Miller (CLFLWD Staff), Greg Graske, Kevin Biehn, Cecilio Olivier (Emmons and Olivier Resources), Chuck Holtman (Smith Partners), Hanna Valento (Forest Lake City Council)

2. Setting of Meeting Agenda

Manager Anderson moved to approve the agenda, with agenda item 8b - Comfort Lake and Little Comfort Lake Diagnostic Study and agenda item 7b - 2020 audit report and presentation deferred to a board workshop on April 28th and item 8b replaced with the Greenway Corridor visioning discussion. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich	X		

3. Consent Agenda

- a) **Regular Board Meeting Minutes – February 11, 2021**
- b) **Regular Board Meeting Minutes – February 25, 2021**
- c) **Regular Board Meeting Minutes – March 11, 2021**
- d) **Special Board Meeting Minutes – March 16, 2021**
- e) **Regular Board Meeting Minutes – March 25, 2021**

Manager Anderson moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Manager Oknich. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich	X		

4. Public Open Forum

There were no members of the public present.

5. Citizen Advisory Committee Update

Operations and Outreach Specialist Jessica Lindemyer noted that the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) met to discuss the official 60-day draft of the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) but has no formal comments yet. The CAC also discussed implementing a chairperson rotation as it has been without a formal chair for over two years.

6. Aquatic Invasive Species Update

Watershed Assistant Garrett Miller reported that the Moody Lake and Shields Lake aerators were deactivated on March 29th and that dissolved oxygen levels are much improved this year compared to last year. He added that stop logs were installed at the Bone Lake inlet and mentioned that the Bone Lake outlet will be allowed to flow freely this season. The outlet grate will be a sufficient barrier to carp. Mr. Miller reported that zebra mussel sampling plates are in and there are plenty of volunteers, which Steve McComas of Blue Water Science may be able to use to quantify the water quality improvements of zebra mussels. Regarding curly-leaf pondweed (CLP), Mr. Miller noted that Steve McComas of Blue Water Science performed delineations of Moody, Comfort, and Shields Lakes. He will be waiting to delineate Forest and Bone Lakes due to a historical pattern of later CLP emergence. Mr. McComas recommended conducting a CLP treatment on Shields Lake, while Moody and Comfort Lake do not have enough growth to warrant a treatment. Mr. Miller noted that the District is currently hiring watercraft inspectors, with some offer letters already sent. He hopes to have a full 8 watercraft inspectors, which will require additional hires beyond the sent offer letters. Mr. Miller noted that the final sign and sticker designs for bait disposal bins have been sent to the printer and should be installed by the next AIS update.

There were no questions on the AIS update.

7. New Business

a) Permit # 21-006 2021 Wyoming Street Improvements

Greg Graske of Emmons and Olivier Resources (EOR) reported that the City of Wyoming is reconstructing roads in the city, with a small portion of the project on

Glenwood Oak Drive falling inside the District boundary. Mr. Graske noted that the road is rural section and will remain rural section, triggering the stormwater rule due to subgrade corrections. He stated that the stormwater requirements are met and recommends approval, with issuance upon receipt of maintenance agreement for roadside swales.

Manager Anderson asked if the District encourages water quality enhancements when meeting with cities for road programs. Mr. Graske confirmed that the District does so.

Manager Anderson moved to approve Permit #21-006 with conditions as recommended in the engineer's memorandum. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz.

Discussion: Mr. Graske discussed Manager Anderson’s comment regarding recommending treatment to cities, bringing up a small road reclamation project on Iden Avenue where the District is exploring with the City of Forest Lake its installation of sump manholes on the structures for some treatment. This project does not trigger a permit. Manager Anderson questioned why the District does not require stormwater treatments on drainage directly to lakes. Mr. Graske directed Manager Anderson to previous rules discussions with cities in the District, recalling a strong push by the cities to be able to do basic road reconstruction without triggering stormwater rules. Manager Anderson brought up that perhaps the District could pay for stormwater treatments on these projects. Manager Spence agreed that if funding is an issue the Board should at least take the time to consider funding stormwater treatments, while noting that the goal is not to hold up these projects unnecessarily. Mr. Graske noted that he will continue to push the cities to install treatment and will consider District funding as needed in the future. Manager Anderson suggested that EOR include treatment recommendations in their reports.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich	X		

c) Forest Lake Curly-Leaf Pondweed Treatment Contract

Manager Schmaltz asked if the \$70,000 contract limit is too low as 2021 may be a big curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) year. He noted that there is \$92,000 unallocated for Forest Lake and that the District is taking a risk that the cost may exceed the \$70,000 limit, resulting in not being able to complete a treatment due to lack of funds. Manager Anderson suggested expanding the \$20,000 treatment allocation for Moody, Bone, Shields and Comfort to \$80,000 as a way to cover for this scenario. Garrett Miller noted that the quotes for Aquathol K would allow for 110 acres of treatment at \$65,000, which according to Steve McComas (Blue Water Science) should be enough for full lake

control with Aquathol K. Mr. Miller then pointed out that the \$70,000 limit covers Forest Lake only and mentioned that diquat treatments could be as low as 1/5th of the price of Aquathol K while being just as effective, then further reiterated that Mr. McComas believes it will be highly effective for the price. There was discussion about increasing the cost allowance limit from \$70,000 to \$80,000 to maintain flexibility in treatment.

Manager Spence moved to authorize the Administrator to enter into a contract for treatment of curly-leaf pondweed on Forest Lake in an amount not to exceed \$80,000, increased from the proposed \$70,000. Seconded by Manager Anderson.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich	X		

d) One Watershed One Plan Implementation Services Contract

Planning Coordinator Emily Heinz presented the recommended action.

Manager Anderson moved to authorize the administrator, on advice of counsel, to enter into a contract with the Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District for services of District staff to implement One Watershed One Plan workplan tasks and corresponding reimbursement to the District. Seconded by Manager Oknich.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich	X		

8. Old Business

a) 2020 Year in Review, Annual Report, Progress Report

Administrator Kinney noted that, over the years, these reports have been improved by staff contributions, adaptive management, and process improvements. Manager Anderson commented that the phosphorous removal needle graphs as presented need additional phrasing to clarify why the District has higher goals than the State of MN – she recommends labelling them “District Sustainability Goals” to consistently underscore the purpose of the District’s higher standards. Manager Anderson

commented further that the cost-per-pound measurements of pollutant removals ought to have a chart for each project, as these are discussed frequently. She also requested a new cover photo for the reports each year. Manager Schmaltz noted that when changing phrasing in reports, e.g., “District Sustainability Goals”, care should be taken to explain and define the new terminology. Manager Spence pointed out that any reporting terminology changes should be included in the Watershed Management Plan and accompanying glossaries. Administrator Kinney noted that the State standard is a minimum standard, an aspect which could stand to be explained in reporting and goal documents to provide additional context. Manager Schmaltz requested a printed copy of the progress report for reference.

Manager Schmaltz moved to approve the 2020 Year-in-Review, Annual Report and Progress Report with changes as recommended by Manager Anderson and with updated financial figures when the audit is completed. Seconded by Manager Anderson.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich	X		

b) Greenway Corridor Discussion

Administrator Kinney noted that the District has hired a Senior Land Management Coordinator to start in May that will help facilitate this item, but in the interim expects that EOR can assist with it and then coordinate meetings in June and July with District partners on these topics. Manager Schmaltz asked if there will be enough time to feasibly complete this project by the end of June, and if the new office facility will be included in the scope of the Greenway project. Administrator Kinney clarified that this will be a long-term effort and given that all entities are at different stages the responsibility of coordinating discussion will fall upon District staff. Administrator Kinney pointed out that Scandia is the most advanced in this area with meetings scheduled soon that EOR will attend to understand the capacity of the system and what people are expecting from it. He noted that the new office facility is a completely separate discussion at this time, and that the District will need to begin design and location conversations about the facility on its own and with EOR. Manager Anderson agreed with Administrator Kinney that the Greenway program is a preliminary concept with a long-term vision for District partners. She clarified that the current step in the process is providing tangible items for District partners to get a more complete understanding of the Greenway concept.

Manager Anderson moved to approve Task A and Task B on the Greenway Visioning EOR scope of work #00376-0195 as presented on 4/22/2021. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz.

Discussion: Kevin Biehn (EOR) noted that the July schedule is intended to maintain momentum and is not set in stone, so work will proceed at the speed at which meetings can be scheduled. Administrator Kinney mentioned that, based on interactions with Scandia staff and residents, the District will bring a proposal to the Board in the near future.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich	X		

9. Report of Staff

a) Administrator

Administrator Kinney noted his disappointment with the BWSR metro administrators' dismissal of improved metrics and offered that the District's improved metrics and reporting are good candidates for submittal to the Governor's office or elected officials. He would like to work with the Board to submit these items for official consideration. He then noted that there is a link in the Administrator's Report to submit items to a Chisago County project survey and that anyone can submit them, not just Chisago residents. He reminded the Board that the deadline to apply for the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) board has been extended. The District's new Land Management Specialist, Aidan Read, has started with the District and will be on a full-time basis going forward. Mr. Read has a degree with a focus in soil health. He is expected to work on a more personal basis with agricultural landowners and other individual. Administrator Kinney noted that he has signed an offer letter for the position of Office Manager. Staff has begun monitoring on lakes, and the District now has the equipment and the capability to make observations and gather data for District purposes. Administrator Kinney pointed out that Operations & Outreach Specialist Jessica Lindemyer is working on Turf Talk items, and Ms. Lindemyer added that she is conducting outreach at Lakes International Language Academy along with District Technicians Jason Kuennen and Trey Jonas. Projects are moving forward as planned and Blayne Eineichner has done good work with landowners to move things along.

There were no questions about the Administrator's Report.

b) Emmons & Olivier Resources

Engineer Graske reported that there have already been two water quality sampling events on March 24th and April 8th during which EOR staff sampled at locations throughout the District. Mr. Graske noted that Dr. Meghan Funke has been working on

coordination and prep for Clean Water Fund and Section 319 watershed grants. Mr. Graska mentioned coordination meetings and a site utility survey for the County Road 50 Iron-Enhanced Sand Filter Project and hopes to move forward with the project soon. Mr. Graska also mentioned that the Bone Lake Northeast Wetland Project is nearly ready and that EOR staff have been out conducting survey work for the project with plans to start in winter.

c) Smith Partners

Mr. Holtman had nothing to report.

10. Report of Treasurer

a) Approval of Bills and Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Schmaltz reported income for the period of \$652,893.40 with the bulk of it being the 4th disbursement of the District loan, and expenditures of \$152,208.89, and requested that the Board accept and pay those expenses.

Manager Anderson moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report and pay the bills in the amount of \$152,208.89. Seconded by Manager Oknich.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich	X		

11. Report of Officers and Managers

Manager Oknich had nothing to report. Manager Schmaltz and Manager Anderson noted that the Lower St. Croix meeting for April was cancelled. Manager Anderson reported that she responded to the Highway 8 survey and requested that similar items be added to the weekly Friday update to the Board. Manager Anderson reported that the Metro MAWD meeting had over 30 people in attendance and that a slideshow will be made available to administrators which well encapsulates the positions of MAWD and MN Legislature, requesting that it be sent to the Board directly. She noted that MAWD has taken a policy position that Clean Water Funds not fund capacity funding as it is not the intent of the legacy amendment, which Manager Anderson disagrees with as the larger Districts, One Watershed One Plans, etc. are outlined and required by law. She indicated she is working with MAWD to try and move forward their philosophy to reflect the changing needs and requirements of watershed districts, noting that all MAWD Zoom meetings are recorded and would be good to watch. Manager Anderson then noted that she is pushing to have managers elected to Minnesota Association of Watershed Administrators (MAWA) squads to expand the perspective of those teams to include

constituents of affected Districts. She believes that a unified front will help get watershed district initiatives on the legislative agenda.

Manager Anderson then reported that she is on the Lower St. Croix education and outreach subcommittee and mentioned that they have had 63 resumes come in, resulting in a pool of 27 candidates and 8 interviews for new positions and that the Lower St. Croix hiring process overall is going well. Manager Anderson then discussed her lake association grant program drafting and mentioned that the revised vision should go out to Board members for discussion later.

Manager Schmaltz mentioned that the Clean Water Council listed expenditures for next year and noted a BWSR grant request for \$300,000 to do a study on watershed district and SWCD consolidation, noting that the District should attempt to remain on top of those items. Manager Schmaltz indicated that he would like Mr. Holtman to provide a general opinion on this potential consolidation. Manager Anderson mentioned that Marcy Westrick sent an email to Metro Convene members and wanted Manager Schmaltz to be sure to respond to it. President Spence reminded the Board of his impending move and noted that his residence may not remain in the watershed.

12. Summary and Approval of Board Direction

Board directions were summarized by Mr. Holtman.

- The Annual Report and Progress Report needle graphs regarding District goals will be renamed District Sustainability Goals with the term brought into reports and the ten-year plan with definitions.
- Manager Anderson requested that the annual and progress reports have a chart added that shows the cost per pound pollutant removed for each project.
- Manager Schmaltz requested a double-sided printed copy of the Progress Report. All managers requested a double-sided printed copy of the Progress Report.
- Manager Anderson requested that the weekly Friday email update to the Board include items such as the Highway 8 project survey be included.

13. Adjourn

a) Next regular board meeting – May 13th, 2021

Manager Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich	X		

Jen Oknich, Secretary _____