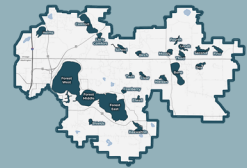




MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

Date: April 6, 2023
To: CLFLWD Board of Managers
From: Mike Kinney, District Administrator
Subject: Hybrid Board Meeting Options



District Wide

Background/Discussion

On January 30th the Presidential Administration stated their intent to end the COVID-19 Emergency Declarations on Thursday, May 11th. While many local government units have already returned to in-person or hybrid meetings, the CLFLWD has continued to meet remotely under the Board's 2020 [Open Meeting Law Declaration](#).

At the March 9th regular board meeting, President Schmaltz requested that the Board discuss the topic of returning to in-person or hybrid meetings at an upcoming meeting. To assist the Board in its discussion, staff have compiled a list of options for consideration.

Open Meeting Law Considerations

When discussing the options for returning to in-person or hybrid meetings it is important to keep in mind the following criteria related to the Open Meeting Law.

- In order for a manager to participate in the discussion and vote, they must fulfill one of the following criteria:
 - Attend the meeting in-person
 - Attend the meeting virtually from a publicly posted and accessible location, and by a means by which they can be both seen and heard by the other managers and attending members of the public.
- If a manager does not fulfill one of the above criteria they may listen in on the meeting, but they cannot participate in discussion or vote on motions.

Any meeting or gathering at which a quorum of the District managers will be present, and where District matters are discussed, must adhere to the above criteria.



MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

Meeting Options

Option 1: Fully in-person meetings

Managers, District staff, consultants, and members of the public attend the meeting in person with no option to virtually join the live meeting.

- **Pros:** No technology considerations needed
- **Cons:** Fully in-person meetings require significantly more space than hybrid meetings. Given that the CLFLWD does not have access to use the City of Forest Lake's Council Chambers, a new meeting location would be recommended that meets the needs of the Board. The District's current office space does not have a reasonable enough room for managers, staff, consultants, and members of the public to attend in-person.

Option 2: Hybrid meetings

The District Administrator and Managers attend the meeting in person (or virtually from a publicly posted and accessible location). Supporting staff, consultants, and members of the public may also choose to attend the meeting in person or they may attend virtually via Zoom.

- **Pros:** The District can utilize its current office space to host the in-person attendees (managers, limited staff, and members of the public) and any number of individuals can attend and participate virtually via Zoom (consultants, additional staff, and members of the public).
- **Cons:** Additional technology would need to be purchased in order to ensure all virtual meeting attendees can clearly see and hear all in-person attendees. Staff estimate the cost of the additional technology to be no more than \$2,500.

Recommendation

It is the recommendation of staff that the District implement the hybrid meeting option.

Manager _____ moves to convene future meetings of the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District Board in a hybrid format starting with the May 11, 2023 Regular Board Meeting. Seconded by Manager _____.

Should the aforementioned motion pass, President Schmaltz may want to consider revoking the [March 2020 Emergency Declaration](#).