

1 **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE**
2 **COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT**
3 **Wednesday, May 24, 2023**
4

5 **1. Call to Order**
6

7 President Schmaltz called the May 24, 2023, regular board meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.
8 at 44 Lake Street South Forest Lake MN 55025 and via online video conference.
9

10 **Managers Present:**

11 Steve Schmaltz, President
12 Christopher Loth, Vice President
13 Douglas Toavs, Assistant Treasurer
14 Dave Bakke, Secretary (attending remotely)
15 Jackie Anderson, Treasurer (attending remotely)
16

17 **Staff Present:**

18 Mike Kinney, Administrator
19 Bobbie Law, Office Manager
20 Emily Heinz, Planning Coordinator
21 Jessica Lindemyer, Operations and Outreach Coordinator
22

23 **2. 2024 Budget Workshop**

24 Emily Heinz gave an overview of the materials provided and presented the proposed
25 2024 budget including a summary of proposed expenses and estimated revenues.
26

27 The managers discussed a recent legislative action that increases watershed districts’
28 general administration levy cap from \$250,000 to \$500,000.
29

30 **Expenses**

31 Ms. Heinz displayed the priorities submitted by the managers including:

- 32 • Future District office space
 - 33 • Water quality goals – shoreline stewardship
 - 34 • Floodplain vulnerability
 - 35 • Greenway corridor visioning – regional stormwater
36 treatment/assessment/feasibility
- 37

38 President Schmaltz asked if a resource inventory had been conducted. Ms. Heinz
39 confirmed that staff and Emmons and Olivier Resources worked together to create a
40 plan to gather intentional and strategic data involved in a natural resource inventory.
41 Managers discussed the goals and deliverables of the natural resource inventory. Ms.

42 Heinz indicated staff will ultimately present the findings and recommended next steps
43 to the Board.

44

45 Managers discussed the possibility of receiving a grant to conduct the floodplain
46 vulnerability assessment. Ms. Heinz explained that the District did not receive a grant
47 from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), but will apply to the program again
48 next year. Managers discussed other forms of funding including the levy and the Clean
49 Water Partnership loan.

50

51 Ms. Heinz outlined the expense budget priorities including:

52

- 53 • 11 full-time District staff
- 54 • Lake water quality goals – Project wrap-up
- 55 • Enhancing District programming – 3004 Non-Point Source Pollution Abatement
56 (Cost-Share Programs), 3005 Education & Outreach, 3006 Interagency
57 Communication, and 3010 Operations & Maintenance

57

58 Ms. Heinz highlighted the main budgeting differences compared to the 10-year
59 Watershed Management Plan. She noted that most 2024 budget items were lower than
60 what was expected when completing the 10-year watershed management plan. Some
61 of which due to the District's efforts to bring program work in-house, which results in cost
62 savings.

63

64 Manager Anderson joined the meeting.

65

66 **Revenues**

67 Ms. Heinz presented information regarding the proposed 2024 levy and recent years' tax
68 impacts for District residents.

69

70 President Schmaltz requested a further explanation of the proposed increase in the levy.
71 He noted that the market value and tax capacity increase each year which could affect
72 the levy increase as well. Ms. Heinz explained that levy increases vary by year. President
73 Schmaltz requested more information regarding estimated market value increases as it
74 relates to the District levy. He noted that the 6% levy increase seemed high. Managers
75 discussed the multiple factors affecting taxes.

76

77 Ms. Heinz gave an overview of earned grant revenues. She explained how these are
78 tracked internally. She provided her projection of earned revenues for 2024.

79

80 Ms. Heinz presented information regarding the Clean Water Partnership loan. She
81 explained how the District applied for more loan dollars than the state was able to
82 provide in recent months. The MN Pollution Control Agency has indicated that cash flow
83 within the program has been tight, due to so many entities utilizing the program.
84 Manager Anderson requested a cash flow projection for the program so the District can

85 better understand its ability to obtain loans over the next couple of years. She stated that
86 the District isn't always going to keep spending so much on capital improvement
87 projects in future years; the loan will help fund the remaining projects, and then project
88 spending will go down in the years when the loan repayments are higher, so there is a
89 balance.
90

91 **3. Adjourn**

92
93 **a) Next regular board meeting – May 25, 2023, 6:30 pm**

94
95 Manager Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Toavs.
96 Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:57
97 p.m.
98

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Dave Bakke	X			
Christopher Loth	X			
Doug Toavs	X			
Jackie Anderson	X			
Stephen Schmaltz	X			

99
100 Dave Bakke, Secretary _____