

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE**
2 **COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT**
3 **Thursday, June 27, 2024**
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5 **1. Call to Order**
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7 President Schmaltz called the June 27, 2024, regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
8 at the CLFLWD office, 44 Lake Street South, and via online video conference.
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10 **Managers Present:**

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

17 **Staff Present:**

18 Mike Kinney, District Administrator
19 Tori Philippi, Office Manager
20 Aidan Read, Land Management Specialist
21 Emily Heinz, Planning Coordinator
22 Garrett Miller, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator
23

24 **Others Present:**

25 Anne Wilkinson, Emmons & Olivier Resources
26 Greg Grasse, Emmons & Olivier Resources
27 Chuck Holtman, Smith Partners
28 Adriana Atcheson, Washington County
29

30 **2. Setting of Meeting Agenda**
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32 The following items were added to the agenda:

- 33 • New Business: Forest Lake Eurasian Watermilfoil
- 34 • New Business: Lake Level Readings
- 35 • Old Business: Administrator Quarterly Review
36

37 Manager Anderson moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Manager
38 Toavs. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0.
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Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Dave Bakke	X			
Christopher Loth	X			

Doug Toavs	X			
Jackie Anderson	X			
Stephen Schmaltz	X			

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3. Consent Agenda

- a) Special Board Meeting Minutes – May 2, 2024
- b) Regular Board Meeting Minutes – May 9, 2024
- c) Regular Board Meeting Minutes – May 22, 2024

Manager Anderson moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. Seconded by President Schmaltz. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0.

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

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4. Public Open Forum

There were no comments.

5. Citizen Advisory Committee Update

Aidan Read reported the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) met on June 18th and discussed the draft 2025 annual budget, office space search, and the 2024 summer field trip – Forest Lake shoreline tour.

6. Aquatic Invasive Species Update

Garrett Miller reported the watercraft inspection program is underway for the season, and he expects to see full boat launch coverage over the Fourth of July holiday weekend. Mr. Miller reported on recent curly-leaf pondweed herbicide treatments on Shields Lake, Forest Lake, Bone Lake, and Comfort Lake. He noted that he recently met with some local government partners to discuss aquatic invasive species (AIS) rapid response planning. Mr. Miller provided background information regarding Forest Lake Eurasian watermilfoil including the June 20th delineation survey by Blue Water Science.

71 Manager Anderson indicated that purple loosestrife is present in Little Comfort Lake. She
72 recommended that the District perform outreach to Little Comfort Lake residents
73 regarding removal techniques for purple loosestrife.
74

75 Manager Toavs noted that there is substantial curly-leaf pondweed growth this year on
76 Moody Lake. Mr. Miller explained that the District did not use herbicide on Moody Lake this
77 year as precautionary measure to protect the transplanted native aquatic plants that
78 the District planted last year.
79

80 **7. New Business**

81 **a) Forest Lake Eurasian Watermilfoil**

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83
84 President Schmaltz indicated that he recently received reports of hybrid watermilfoil
85 growing in abundance on Forest Lake's middle basin, 2nd Lake. He indicated that the
86 cost to treat the milfoil would be approximately \$70,000. He recommended that the
87 District cost-share the treatment through the Forest Lake AIS tri-party agreement in
88 the amount of \$24,500. He asked Mr. Miller for his recommendation on the matter. Mr.
89 Miller recommended that the District confirm whether the proposed action is
90 consistent with the District's policies.
91

92 President Schmaltz referenced sections of the Watershed Management Plan (WMP)
93 pertaining to AIS management. He noted that the WMP indicates the topic of AIS is
94 multi-faceted and highly visible, and that the District prioritizes ecological integrity
95 of the waterbody, improvement of native plant diversity, management of AIS growing
96 in adverse densities, and managing for public recreation. The WMP includes a
97 progress evaluation metric which states: "Success in managing existing populations
98 of AIS to improve water quality will be measured by maintaining carp densities below
99 their adverse impact threshold (100 kg/ha) and controlling curly-leaf pondweed in
100 areas exceeding moderate growth conditions (100-280 stems/m2)."
101

102 President Schmaltz stated that he is concerned the hybrid milfoil has a higher risk of
103 negative ecological impacts to Forest Lake than regular Eurasian watermilfoil. He
104 observed that the stem density figure is for the purpose of fish habitat and perhaps
105 isn't as applicable to concerns about native plant habitat and diversity.
106

107 Manager Anderson stated that early treatment is critical to containment of newly
108 introduced AIS populations. She indicated that she is in favor of aggressive herbicide
109 treatments to contain new populations of AIS.
110

111 President Schmaltz recommended the District consider costs when it considers
112 doing treatments like this. He stated that costs can get out of hand quickly when
113 managing watermilfoil. Administrator Kinney noted that the Blue Water Science

114 maps delineate light, moderate, and heavy growth. These growth conditions for
115 delineation surveys are not the same as stem densities that can pose an ecological
116 threat. Instead, delineation survey growth conditions are based on rake fullness from
117 sampling the surface. A delineation survey can identify an area of heavy growth
118 based on surface matting, but sampling the stem densities at the lake bottom could
119 indicate light or moderate growth ecologically. President Schmaltz indicated that
120 Blue Water Science defines ecological heavy growth at 180 stems per square meter,
121 which is too dense for fish to navigate.

122
123 Manager Loth asked if the District needs to have a different standard to measure the
124 severity of hybrid watermilfoil vs regular Eurasian watermilfoil, considering the risks
125 associated with hybrid watermilfoil propagation and impacts to native plant
126 populations. Manager Loth recommended that the District adapt its management
127 standards to the ever-changing science associated with AIS like hybrid milfoil.
128 President Schmaltz emphasized that this is a highly visible issue for the public.

129
130 Manager Toavs recommended that the District treat AIS aggressively as part of a
131 strategy to contain new populations.

132
133 Manager Loth asked if a grant could be turned around in time for a treatment within
134 the next week. Mr. Kinney noted that the DNR no longer offers the Innovative AIS
135 Treatment grant, and all other DNR AIS grants are closed for the year.

136
137 Manager Anderson moved to authorize cost-sharing of the Forest Lake milfoil
138 treatment in an amount not to exceed \$25,000. Seconded by Manager Bakke.

139
140 Legal Counsel Holtman recommended the Board confirm that the proposed motion
141 is consistent with the WMP. Manager Anderson stated that the Board is not
142 constrained, and it has the full authority to make this decision. President Schmaltz
143 stated that this treatment is consistent with the WMP because of the risk that hybrid
144 milfoil poses to native plants.

145
146 Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0.

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

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149 The Board directed staff to communicate with Steve McComas of Blue Water Science
150 to evaluate the District's AIS management standards.

151
152 Manager Loth indicated that a rapid response effort is only relevant when you can
153 prevent AIS from establishing itself. President Schmaltz noted that the proposed
154 milfoil treatment is not considered a rapid response because it has been present in
155 the lake for multiple years. He clarified that the proposed herbicide treatment is a
156 management strategy. Mr. Miller noted that staff collected samples of the Forest Lake
157 milfoil this morning and sent them to the lab for testing. Genetic testing is the only
158 way to confirm whether a population is hybrid. He indicated the District should
159 receive the results within the next few weeks.

160
161 **b) Lake Level Readings**

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163 President Schmaltz indicated that there are high water levels across the District due
164 to recent heavy rain. Manager Anderson noted that the Comfort Lake water level
165 exceeds the height of the staff gage. She indicated that the District needs accurate
166 readings for its lake levels. Manager Anderson recommended that the District take
167 weekly lake level readings, post them on the District website, and send the
168 information to the local newspapers. Administrator Kinney indicated that he had a
169 conversation with local government partners in 2014, and at that time the District
170 agreed to take the lake level data and disseminate it to local government partners.
171 Tori Philippi noted that the District has rearranged its website to make lake level data
172 easier to find, and the data are being updated regularly.

173
174 Manager Toavs, Manager Loth, and Manager Bakke indicated they haven't received
175 any complaints about people needing to know the lake level reading. Manager Bakke
176 indicated that enforcement of the no wake ordinance on Bone Lake is an issue.
177 Manager Anderson indicated that Comfort Lake is different from all the other District
178 lakes because it is downstream of all the other lakes and so subject to more variable
179 elevation change.

180
181 **8. Old Business**

182
183 **a) Public Relations Research Report**

184
185 Administrator Kinney indicated that the draft report is enclosed in the board packet
186 for managers' review, and this item will be on the July 11th agenda for discussion.

187
188 **b) 2025 Draft Budget**

189
190 Emily Heinz referenced the loan projection scenarios she prepared per the Board's
191 request at the June 20th workshop. President Schmaltz asked for clarification

192 regarding the loan repayment schedule. Ms. Heinz clarified that all the loan scenarios
193 have the same repayment schedule – the District must repay the loan by the
194 indicated deadlines. The difference between each scenario is the portion of the
195 District’s levy that is dedicated to the loan repayment. The District may dedicate
196 more levy funds to debt service than the payment expense amount, resulting in
197 building a savings for future loan repayments. Alternatively, if the District dedicates
198 less levy funds to debt service than the payment expense amount, it will draw upon
199 the savings that has already been built (\$400,000 as of 2023 yearend). She noted
200 that devoting more levy dollars toward debt service means less levy dollars
201 remaining for operating expenses (administration, programs, projects, land
202 acquisitions).

203
204 Staff was directed to schedule budget workshops in July and August. Managers
205 indicated that they would share their availability with staff.

206
207 **c) Administrator Quarterly Review**
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209 Manager Bakke indicated that the next quarterly review for the administrator is
210 scheduled for Monday, July 1st. He indicated that the Board’s process has been to
211 have two managers present at the review, and he indicated he would be in
212 attendance. President Schmaltz indicated he was unable to attend. Manager
213 Anderson indicated she could attend.

214
215 **9. Report of Staff**

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217 **a) Administrator**
218
219 Administrator Kinney reported that he presented information at a workshop in
220 Woodbury today pertaining to the cost-benefit analysis of street sweeping.
221 Attendees at the workshop were local public works staff.

222
223 **b) Emmons & Olivier Resources**
224
225 Dr. Wilkinson reported that the District is working through the final few construction
226 punch list items and working toward project closeout for the Moody Lake Capstone
227 Project and the WJD-6 Wetland Enhancement Project. She noted that EOR staff is
228 working on floodplain vulnerability modeling, per direction at the last meeting. Dr.
229 Wilkinson reported that preliminary monitoring results show that the Forest Lake
230 alum treatment has been effective at reducing internal phosphorus loading. She
231 noted monitoring grab samples show low chloride concentrations for runoff flowing
232 to Comfort Lake and Little Comfort Lake. She indicated that District staff and EOR will
233 give a monitoring update presentation in late July.

234

235 President Schmaltz noted that he has received feedback from Forest Lake residents
236 pointing out that the timing of the alum treatment coincides with the timing of
237 abundant Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) growth. Mr. Kinney noted though, that the
238 alum treatment did not occur in the shallow areas where the vast majority of the
239 EWM growth was present. Dr. Wilkinson explained that many factors are at play with
240 respect to the alum treatment and plant growth. She noted that the District always
241 expected the increased water clarity to result in increased aquatic plant growth
242 (whether that be native or invasive). She added that mild winter conditions, early ice-
243 out, and unusually high-water levels affect EWM growth as well.
244

245 Manager Anderson noted that she and Manager Toavs attended the MN Watersheds
246 Summer Tour, including a stop at the Capitol Region Watershed District office. She
247 noted a joint award for EOR and the Capitol Region Watershed District for
248 architecture and energy efficiency. She indicated was pleased to see that and proud
249 of EOR for accomplishing that. Greg Graske explained that the site has received
250 multiple awards. He noted EOR didn't design the building itself but designed the
251 landscaping and stormwater treatment features. He provided additional information
252 regarding the awards:
253

- 254 • [https://www.eorinc.com/projects/integrated-water-focused-site-design-
255 for-offices.html](https://www.eorinc.com/projects/integrated-water-focused-site-design-for-offices.html)
- 256 • 2024 ACEC National Engineering Excellence Award for Water Resources
257 Engineering
- 258 • 2024 ACEC-MN Grand Award for Water Resources Engineering
- 259 • 2021 ASLA-MN Design Award Recipient
- 260 • Green Infrastructure Case Study featured in the Minnesota Stormwater
261 Manual
- 262 • LEED v4 Gold Certification

264 c) Smith Partners

265
266 Nothing to report.
267

268 10. Report of Treasurer

270 a) Approval of Bills and Treasurer's Report

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272 Treasurer Anderson reported income for the period of \$27,839.40 and expenses in the
273 amount of \$201,451.76. Interest was \$5,100.
274

275 Manager Anderson moved to accept the Treasurer's Report, transfer funds in the
276 amount of \$220,000 and pay the bills in the amount of \$201,451.76. Seconded by
277 President Schmaltz. Upon vote, the motion carried 5-0.

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

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Manager Anderson noted manager expense reports for the first 6 months of the year are due July 11th.

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11. Report of Officers and Managers

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Manager Toavs reported that he and Manager Anderson attended the MN Watersheds Summer Tour. He noted that the Ford assembly plant redevelopment project was a highlight.

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Manager Anderson explained the MN Watersheds Summer Tour included about 8-9 sites and some inspirational, eco-friendly design projects.

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Manager Bakke indicated the Bone Lake delisting celebration occurred on June 11th, and staff is preparing a report. He stated he looks forward to delisting more lakes. President Schmaltz indicated it was a fun event, and Manager Anderson indicated she learned a lot about Bone Lake's history.

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President Schmaltz reported that he has been working with staff on a potential shoreline restoration project at Willow Point on Forest Lake.

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12. Summary and Approval of Board Direction

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Board directives were summarized.

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- Staff will communicate to Little Comfort Lake shoreline residents regarding purple loosestrife management best practices, similar to the outreach efforts for flowering rush on Forest Lake.

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- Staff will work with Blue Water Science to reevaluate the District's management standards for Eurasian watermilfoil vs hybrid watermilfoil.

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312

- Staff will send out a scheduling poll to managers to schedule budget workshops in July and August. Managers were asked to provide to staff any dates that they are not available.

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314

- 315 • Staff will consider the relationship between the alum treatment and Eurasian
316 watermilfoil growth on Forest Lake for the purpose of responding to public interest.

317

318 The Board thanked Adriana Atcheson, Washington County Senior Planning, for attending the
319 meeting.

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321 **13. Adjourn**

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323 **a) Next regular board meeting – July 11, 2024, 6:30 pm**

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325 Manager Toavs moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Anderson.
326 Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0, and the meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

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

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329 Dave Bakke, Secretary -----