

1 **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE**
2 **COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT**
3 **Wednesday, October 2, 2024**

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5 **1. Call to Order**

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7 President Schmaltz called the October 2, 2024, special board meeting to order at 5:30
8 p.m. at the Comfort Lake–Forest Lake Watershed District offices, 44 Lake Street South,
9 Suite A, Forest Lake, MN.

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11 **Managers Present:**

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

17
18 **Staff Present:**

19 Mike Kinney, Administrator
20 Emily Heinz, Planning Coordinator
21 Tori Philippi, Office Manager

22
23 **Others Present:**

24 Yianni Arhontoulis, Cultivate Advisors

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26 **2. Strategic Planning Workshop**

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28 Board managers introduced themselves and described their experience with the District.
29 Yianni Arhontoulis introduced himself and explained that he aims to help the District
30 collect strategic planning input and create a cohesive vision and actionable plan.

31
32 Visioning themes were discussed, including:

- 33 - Water quality
34 - Increase education and outreach; tell our story, instill faith in the District, incite
35 behavior change
36 - Restore shorelines
37 - Smart salting, chloride reduction
38 - Smart development; ensure citizens understand their connection to water resources
39 - Our watershed is diverse, and there are four major lake management districts; each
40 lake management district has its own unique issues and demands

41
42 Each manager shared elements they found important to the vision statement:

- 43 • Manager Bakke:
 - 44 ○ Referenced Bone Lake Association’s vision statement as an example
 - 45 ○ Build relationships
 - 46 ○ Celebrate events
 - 47 ○ Promote water quality for future generations
- 48 • Manager Toavs:
 - 49 ○ Picture a time when we are confident our water is and will continue to be
 - 50 safe; grandkids can swim and not worry about ill effects; provide
 - 51 recreational spaces for everyone (not just fishing and boating, but hiking
 - 52 and exploring)
- 53 • Manager Anderson:
 - 54 ○ Have every employee and citizen engaged in the role they play to
 - 55 promote the ecosystem. Where everyone is working toward the same
 - 56 objective. Where the public and board are respected and fully informed.
 - 57 ○ Clean Water Council’s mission statement should be incorporated
 - 58 ○ Mission is to achieve excellence in protecting improving and sustaining
 - 59 our water resources and educating our stakeholders on stewardship;
 - 60 protecting the ecosystem is also important
- 61 • Manager Loth:
 - 62 ○ A resilient and vibrant watershed, where you have community
 - 63 stewardship and community engagement working together toward the
 - 64 long-term health of the ecosystem
- 65 • President Schmaltz:
 - 66 ○ Top priority shifting from water quality improvement to flood control,
 - 67 greenway corridor, and land acquisition
 - 68 ○ Protect and improve water resources, manage flooding, preserve special
 - 69 natural resources areas/ecosystems, public outreach for benefit of the
 - 70 community for generations to come, “pristine” water resources

71
72 Mr. Arhontoulis indicated he will distribute draft vision statements to the managers for
73 consideration. He requested that managers consider these statements between now
74 and the next meeting. He requested that managers select their favorite statement,
75 explain why, and provide any re-wording they would like to see.

76
77 Managers discussed stakeholder engagement for the strategic planning process.
78 There was general consensus to ensure the CLFLWD Board is on the same page first,
79 and provide some draft materials to partners to react to. Managers suggested
80 stakeholder groups to reach out to once a draft vision statement is agreed upon,
81 including but not limited to the Citizen Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory
82 Committee, Board of Water and Soil Resources, cities.

83
84 Managers summarized their takeaways from this meeting:
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86 Manager Bakke indicated he appreciated the opportunity for the board to have open
87 dialogue in this format, because most board meetings are agenda-driven.

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89 Manager Loth stated that the visioning discussion went faster than he expected, but he
90 was pleased with the outcome of the discussion. He indicated that he felt the Board's
91 discussions often get very detailed, and there is a blurred line between the board's duties
92 and staff's. Hex expressed an interest in having the Board spend more time on high-level
93 visioning discussions, such as this meeting, and spending less time discussing the finer
94 details of the District's work. Manager Anderson stated that it is the Board's responsibility
95 to understand all of the finer details of the District's work.

96
97 Manager Anderson stated that she found it interesting to hear other board members'
98 perspectives. She indicated that it is a good idea to incorporate all the managers'
99 statements into the ultimate vision statement.

100
101 President Schmaltz agreed that it was interesting to hear other managers' perspectives
102 and to have enough time for discussion.

103
104 Manager Toavs indicated he appreciated the materials that were provided ahead of
105 time. He stated that the vision statement should be succinct and concise; the longer it
106 is, the harder it is to keep the reader's attention.

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108 Ms. Heinz noted that the next strategic planning meeting is scheduled for October 15th.
109 Managers agreed that the proposed schedule of meetings is acceptable.

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111 **3. Adjourn**

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113 **a) Next regular board meeting – October 10, 2024, 6:30 pm**

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115 Manager Bakke moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Anderson.
116 Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:37
117 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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120 Dave Bakke, Secretary -----