DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
Thursday, March 13, 2025

1. Call to Order

President Anderson called the March 13, 2025, regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at the CLFLWD office, 44 Lake Street South, and via online video conference.

Managers Present:
Jackie Anderson, President
Christopher Loth, Vice President (virtual attendance)
Dave Bakke, Secretary (virtual attendance)
Steve Schmaltz, Treasurer (virtual attendance)
Douglas Toavs, Assistant Treasurer (virtual attendance)

Staff Present:
Tori Philippi, Office Manager
Emily Heinz, Planning Coordinator
Mike Sandager, Permitting Coordinator
Blayne Eineichner, Project Coordinator

Others Present:
Chuck Holtman, Smith Partners
Anne Wilkinson, Emmons & Olivier Resources
Camilla Correll, Emmons & Olivier Resources
Greg Graske, Emmons & Olivier Resources
Keith Kuhnly, Citizen Advisory Committee
Dan Pfeiffer, Zan Associates

2. Setting of Meeting Agenda

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

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

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3. New Business

a) Chisago County Joint Powers Agreement

Mike Sandager explained the proposed joint powers agreement would provide up to 5 watercraft inspectors to perform inspections, to be employed, trained, and supervised by Chisago County, in an amount up to $35,000. These inspectors would work at public boat launches within the District.

President Anderson moved to approve the joint powers agreement between Chisago County and the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District for cost sharing of the boat launch inspection program. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz.

President Anderson indicated the Comfort Lakes Association is still deciding the amount it will contribute to the watercraft inspection program this year. Mr. Sandager indicated that the inspection hours on Comfort Lake ~~are~~ dependent on the total funding received from the various contributors. Manager Schmaltz explained that his understanding is that the District's local funds for watercraft inspections are distributed equally among the five public launches in the District (three launches on Forest Lake, one on Comfort Lake, and one on Bone Lake). Mr. Sandager indicated that Forest Lake has the highest boat traffic of the three lakes, and so would have more inspector hours. President Anderson stated this is to be expected.

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

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

b) 2025 Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention & Management Plan

Mr. Sandager explained the proposed Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention & Management Plan focuses on seven lakes: Moody, Keewahtin, Bone, Shields, Little Comfort, Comfort, and Forest ~~l~~Lakes. There are no major changes from the 2024 AIS Prevention & Management Plan. Mr. Sandager noted staff provided a pre-recorded presentation on the board packet webpage.

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Manager Schmaltz moved to approve the 2025 CLFLWD AIS Prevention and Management Plan. Seconded by Manager Toavs. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

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

c) 2025 Water Monitoring Plan

Blayne Eineichner explained the District received an Accelerated Implementation Grant for Sunrise River Headwaters Project Development. The District's diagnostic monitoring program will dovetail with this project. Mr. Eineichner indicated the proposed program is expected to be under budget by about $16,000.

Manager Schmaltz asked Mr. Eineichner to clarify that Forest Lake 1st Basin is included in the monitoring plan. Mr. Eineichner explained it is included, and it is the only basin on Forest Lake that currently has a monitoring volunteer. Mr. Eineichner clarified that District staff will collect monitoring data on the other two basins if the District doesn't have any volunteers. Manager Schmaltz said he would try to recruit some volunteers. Manager Schmaltz noted that the District will monitor for dissolved oxygen on 2nd and 3rd Basins, and asked if that should be done for 1st Basin. Mr. Eineichner replied that Basin #1 mixes more, so that the District typically hasn't done profiles. Manager Schmaltz asked staff to consider the benefit of doing so, if the budget allows.

(Manager Loth joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.)

Manager Toavs asked if the proposed flow modeling will help the District identify flood resiliency projects. Mr. Eineichner said flow monitoring will help inform the District's hydrologic & hydraulic modeling efforts, but the primary objective is to measure nutrient loading.

Manager Toavs moved to approve the 2025 Monitoring plan ~~as presented in this memo~~. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Dave Bakke	X			
Christopher Loth	X			

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Doug Toavs	X			
Jackie Anderson	X			
Stephen Schmaltz	X			

Manager Schmaltz moved to authorize the administrator, on advice of counsel, to enter into an agreement with EOR to complete *Tasks 1 - 3 as in accordance with the 3-04-2025 scope of work and in an amount not to exceed $91,327. Seconded by President Anderson. 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			

4. Old Business

a) Floodplain Vulnerability Assessment Update

Emily Heinz introduced Dan Pfeiffer, Zan Associates, and Camilla Correll, EOR. She noted that the District held two workshops in the month of February.

Dan Pfeiffer presented a summary of the Community Workshop on February 12th and the Technical Partners Workshop on February 27th. Mr. Pfeiffer summarized outreach for the Community Workshop including 600+ letters and 300+ door fliers. Nine community members attended the workshop on February 12th. Key concerns and impacts included stagnant water, concerns about new developments, tax concerns regarding unusable land, and mosquito increases with stagnant water.

Mr. Pfeiffer summarized the Technical Partners Workshop on February 27th including 12 attendees. Discussion themes included: CLFLWD should be the catalyst for flood resiliency, past development practices have affected Forest Lake, there is a need to plan for future development, there is a need for technical guidance from the watershed district, and there is a desire for continued collaboration.

Mr. Pfeiffer presented next steps including a summary report from Zan Associates and a scope of work from Emmons & Olivier Resources (EOR) for the Flood Resiliency Action Plan. Mr. Pfeiffer presented a timetable of potential flood resiliency actions including short-term (e.g., public awareness campaign), medium-term (e.g., projects on publicly owned lands), and long-term actions (regional treatment facilities and greenway corridor).

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President Anderson explained she attended the workshop on February 12th. She asked that the final report make specific note of the concerns voiced by homeowners near Bixby Park regarding perceived increasing flood encroachment and slower drainage.

Manager Bakke indicated the purpose of the community meeting was to gather input from the community, and Zan Associates did a good job of summarizing this. He stated that these are good talking points to move the District forward.

President Anderson said it is good to know that partners want the District to take the lead on the flood resiliency effort. She asked EOR to include a timetable of next steps for the Board's consideration at the next meeting. She noted that Capitol Region Watershed District developed memorandums of understanding with its communities to clarify roles and responsibilities with respect to flood resiliency.

Manager Loth noted 900 invitations went out, but only 9 people attended the February 12th event. He asked if this is a typical response rate for an event like this. Mr. Pfeiffer said he would have expected a higher response rate given the topic. He hypothesized that there is low awareness of the flooding issue and of the District specifically. President Anderson said this underscores the District's need to increase its marketing and public awareness.

Ms. Correll said EOR will prepare a scope for the next board meeting. The next phase of this effort will utilize the hydrologic & hydraulic model and start identifying practices to alleviate flooding. She asked for the Board's feedback on the activities presented in the timetable.

Manager Schmaltz said EOR has more technical knowledge of the issue than the board, and he would like to see some recommendations from EOR. He said there are probably a lot of things the District can do in a lot of different areas, and the District should be as prioritized and data-driven as possible. Manager Schmaltz indicated the District should ensure local cities are on board with the proposed action plan before the plan is presented to the public. President Anderson agreed with the idea of having EOR provide recommendations in the action plan and communicating with cities about those recommendations. President Anderson said the process should align with the District's previous project identification efforts in being prioritized and scientifically driven. She noted that partners expect the District to take the lead on this, and she would like to see some recommendations from EOR.

Manager Schmaltz asked how lake levels will factor into the action plan. President Anderson said Dr. Wilkinson should be involved in this next part of the plan. President Anderson said the District should explore types of agreements with municipalities to clarify roles and responsibilities.

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Greg Graske clarified that EOR will bring a scope of work to the next board meeting, and the scope will generally include meetings with cities, running flooding scenarios in the H&H model, and identifying flood resiliency actions. Mr. Graske noted that Ms. Heinz has identified some grant programs to which the District may apply for funding. Ms. Correll recommended that the District be very intentional with how it ultimately shares the action plan with the public. Mr. Pfeiffer recommended disseminating the information in a way that conveys the importance of the issue without causing too much concern. He noted that cities can help amplify that message and build awareness.

Manager Bakke noted that some federal grant programs are being cut. He asked if this will affect the District's flood resiliency grant seeking efforts. Ms. Heinz indicated she is keeping tabs on this issue, and she does not expect this to affect the District's grant seeking efforts as ofKi yet.

5. Program/Project Update

a) Project Update

Blayne Eineichner provided an update on active projects:

- Heath Iron Enhanced Sand Filter: land acquisition is proceeding on track
- North Shore Circle Park Shoreland Enhancement: project agreement with the City of Forest Lake is in place, and contractor request for quotes has been distributed

b) Permitting Program Update

Mike Sandager noted that staff provided a pre-recorded presentation on the board packet webpage. He provided a brief summary including 1,767 site inspections performed, 96% compliance rating, 38 active permits, 41 permit applications received, 10 permit applications approved, and 27 permits closed out in 2024. Mr. Sandager indicated that staff have been doing more permit reviews in-house, but the District still works closely with Emmons & Olivier Resources to complete the more complex permit reviews.

Manager Bakke asked for a more detailed explanation of permit site inspections. Mr. Sandager explained there are two types of inspections: active sites and maintenance declaration sites. Active site inspections occur on active construction sites, and common issues include vehicle sediment tracking, perimeter sediment control (e.g., silt fence), soil stabilization and erosion prevention, and concrete washout stations to prevent concrete infiltration into the soil. Maintenance declaration inspections occur on sites where construction has been completed, and the permit has been closed out. These sites were required to install best management practice(s) to treat stormwater or protect a lake/stream/wetland

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buffer. The maintenance declaration inspections ensure these best management practices are being maintained in perpetuity, per the maintenance declaration (agreement). President Anderson stressed the importance of the District Rules and Permitting Program in order to ensure development is occurring in a more sustainable way.

6. Summary and Approval of Board Direction

The following board directives were summarized:

- Staff will discuss with the monitoring team getting dissolved oxygen profiles on Forest Lake 1st Basin.
- With respect to floodplain vulnerability, Zan Associates et. al. will ensure the Community Engagement Report includes the remarks from residents near Bixby Park, and EOR will bring a scope of work including sequence of next steps to the next board meeting.
- Administrator SMART goals will be shared with the managers.

7. Manager Reports

Manager Loth reported on the Forest Lake Lake Association meeting. He noted that the City of Forest Lake recently approved $50,000 to address ice ridges in Lakeside Park. He asked if the District has had any involvement with the Lakeside Park ice ridge removal. He noted that there was discussion about cattail removal near the Pizza Pub on Forest Lake.

Mr. Sandager said he has been in communication with the City of Forest Lake regarding ice ridge removal in Lakeside Park. He explained that the work will occur below the lake's ordinary high water line and is therefore under ~~the~~ Department of Natural Resources~~'~~ (DNR) jurisdiction. The City has applied for a permit from DNR, and the District has reviewed the plans. Mr. Sandager explained the City aims to simply repair the damage this summer, and it is considering potential lakeshore buffer improvements in future years. He indicated the City of open to working with the District to seek grant funding for such a project. Manager Loth asked about regulations for a wading beach, and Mr. Sandager said he would follow up with the DNR to confirm.

Manager Schmaltz noted that the monthly Administrator's Report is an important update for managers to review, but it isn't a real-time source of information. Manager Schmaltz said the board needs real-time updates if the watershed district is meeting with cities. President Anderson said the District Administrator or department supervisors need to be giving more frequent updates to the board.

The Board directed staff to add Report of Officers and Managers to the 2nd Thursday board meeting agendas.

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8. Adjourn

a) **Next special board meeting – March 25, 2025, 5:30 pm**
b) **Next regular board meeting – March 27, 2025, 6:30 pm**

Manager Schmaltz moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Toavs. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

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

Dave Bakke, Secretary _____

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