

43 noted the Board won't be directly involved in the production of the plan, but the Board
44 will review the plan once it is done.

45

46 Manager Bakke noted the strategic planning process is needed so the Board can
47 achieve alignment on priorities and build momentum together in the same direction. He
48 suggested the Board revisit the strategic plan framework/touchstone annually.
49 President Anderson suggested the Board review the governance side of the organization
50 (e.g., the District Rules, the Governance Manual) at least every 5-6 years.

51

52 Mr. Arhontoulis moved on to the Project Operations & Maintenance section of the
53 Initiative Table. Managers indicated Project O&M is well covered in the 10-year Plan and
54 is an ongoing initiative. President Anderson said the District Engineer is the overseer of
55 everything the District does in this area. Administrator Kinney noted that District staff
56 inspects best management practices (BMPs) under maintenance declarations from
57 past permits as part of the District's Permitting Program. He noted the O&M Program is
58 for inspecting BMPs owned by the District. Manager Schmaltz asked who inspects and
59 maintains stormwater ponds that aren't covered by a CLFLWD permit maintenance
60 declaration. Mr. Kinney explained that the City of Forest Lake alone has approximately
61 180 stormwater ponds that it needs to maintain. He indicated the City inspects and
62 maintains these ponds as part of its Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4)
63 permit. The City of Forest Lake and the City of Wyoming are both MS4 permit cities.

64

65 Managers noted that Ditch Law is not a major time commitment for the District, but it is
66 a requirement and should therefore be included in the strategic plan. Permitting and
67 District Rules are well covered in the 10-year Plan. The District should review the Rules at
68 least every 5 years.

69

70 [Manager Bakke and Manager Loth left the meeting]

71

72 Mr. Arhontoulis said staff retention, company culture, wages and benefits, etc. are
73 important elements of planning. Manager Toavs said Administrator succession planning
74 is an important element to note and is currently in progress. Manager Schmaltz
75 indicated the board isn't directly involved in personnel management and delegates staff
76 management authority to Administrator Kinney. President Anderson said the District is a
77 small organization and has some limitations compared to larger organizations in terms
78 of offering benefits. President Anderson indicated that the board has a personnel work
79 group, and employees are welcome to talk to the personnel workgroup if there are any
80 issues they would like to discuss. Mr. Kinney noted he has been trying to persuade other
81 metro area watershed districts to collaborate on salary surveys. Mr. Kinney indicated
82 that the District's staff turnover rate is standard for "knowledge workers." He indicated
83 the District doesn't track turnover rates over time, but it could do that.

84

85 Mr. Arhontoulis noted the importance of personnel-related planning including
86 succession planning, new employee onboarding, defining clear salary and benefits
87 structures, implementing and sustaining performance-based culture (i.e., abiding by
88 very clear guidelines and metrics for evaluating performance). Mr. Kinney indicated that
89 each employee has SMART goals to evaluate performance against. He asked if Mr.
90 Arhontoulis has any examples of an employee incentive framework. Mr. Arhontoulis
91 indicated he could look into this.

92
93 President Anderson indicated that District staff have shown a lot of dedication to the
94 District's work. She suggested the Board could provide a statement setting the tone for
95 what the District does, what its objectives are, what the community objectives are, and
96 stating that staff are dedicated to something that is going to last forever.

97
98 Mr. Arhontoulis asked how the organization implements human resources such as filing
99 complaints, enrolling in payroll, etc. Mr. Kinney indicated staff have put together an
100 onboarding plan which has evolved and grown over the years. He indicated the District
101 currently works with an outside human resources consultant, and the District is currently
102 looking to hire a Business Manager which would assist with human resources.

103
104 Mr. Arhontoulis summarized feedback he has received so far regarding the District office
105 space. He indicated that the current office space is too small and does not meet the
106 District's needs. He explained that there are multiple paths the District could take in
107 visioning a new office – meeting the bare minimum of what is needed versus expanding
108 the District's needs and obtaining an office that includes increased community
109 education capacity (e.g., building a watershed education center). President Anderson
110 noted the building owner of the District's current space has offered to work with the
111 District to purchase and build or retrofit a new office space; in exchange, the District
112 would sign a long-term lease with the building owner. She indicated this is an attractive
113 offer because it wouldn't require as much upfront financial investment on the District's
114 part.

115
116 Manager Schmaltz said the District has been working on visioning and finding a new
117 office space for years but hasn't made as much progress as it had hoped. He indicated
118 he hasn't heard a concise explanation of what exactly a watershed education center
119 would entail.

120
121 Mr. Kinney said he has been working with Emmons & Olivier Resources to further the office
122 space search, and that he has visited the offices of several other metro watershed
123 districts that have undergone building expansions or new builds in recent years. He
124 indicated he is working with EOR to prepare a memo which will be brought to the board
125 soon.

126

127 Ms. Heinz indicated she would share several personnel related documents with Mr.
128 Arhontoulis including the staff onboarding plan, the Business Manager position
129 description and posting, and an example of staff SMART goals. Mr. Arhontoulis indicated
130 he will review this information and provide a discussion framework for the next strategic
131 planning meeting. Ms. Heinz was directed to coordinate with managers to schedule the
132 next meeting based on managers' availability.

133

134 3. Adjourn

135

136 a) Next regular board meeting – March 27, 2025, 6:30 pm

137

138 Manager Schmaltz moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Toavs.
139 Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 3-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30
140 p.m.

141

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

142

143

144

145 Dave Bakke, Secretary -----