DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
Thursday, September 11, 2025

1. Call to Order

President Anderson called the September 11, 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)
Douglas Toavs, Assistant Treasurer (virtual attendance)

Managers Absent:
Steve Schmaltz, Treasurer

Staff Present:
Mike Kinney, District Administrator
Tori Philippi, Office Manager
Emily Heinz, Planning Coordinator
Mike Sandager, Program Coordinator
Katherine Miller, Seasonal Technician

Others Present:
Matthew Kreilich, Snow-Kreilich Architects
Dan Vercruysse, Snow-Kreilich Architects
Anne Wilkinson, Emmons & Olivier Resources
Britta Hansen, Emmons & Olivier Resources
Chuck Holtman, Smith Partners
Jim Schottmuller

2. Setting of Meeting Agenda

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

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Dave Bakke	X			
Christopher Loth	X			
Doug Toavs	X			

Jackie Anderson	X			
Stephen Schmaltz			X	

3. New Business

a) MN Water Resources Conference Manager Registration

Manager Bakke recommended that due to budget restrictions, the Board not approve any expenditures for Board members to attend the University of Minnesota Water Resources Conference in October.

Manager Bakke moved not to approve expenditures for members of the Board to attend the 2025 MN Water Resources Conference. 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	

b) Watershed Implementation Funding Agreement Extension

The matter before the Board is a three-year extension of the partner funding agreement for the Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) grant awards through the Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership (LSCWP).

The extension would allow the District to receive WBIF grant awards through the Partnership's grant fiscal agent, Chisago SWCD.

Manager Toavs moved to authorize the Administrator, on advice of counsel, to enter into an agreement with Chisago SWCD for Watershed Based Implementation Funding. Seconded by Manager Bakke. 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	

4. Old Business

a) Building Architect Consultants

Given the 2026 budget projections, President Anderson invited discussion about delaying the pre-design work for a new District office building to 2026, or attempting to cover the design and construction costs with grant funding. She also favors working with the owner of the current office space to construct a new office space to be built to the District's needs and specifications, and leased to the District.

Manager Bakke noted that the budget for professional services related to architectural design has already been overspent and spoke in favor of delaying building planning to 2026. Mr. Kreilich said he is excited to support the District's vision, whether it be now or in the future.

Ms. Heinz added that the proposal would not change, just begin at a later time. Not many grants will cover costs for architectural services, but large grants such as the one the District is seeking from the Bush Foundation may offset local spending and thereby free up levy dollars that could be used for this purpose.

President Anderson is hopeful that if the District receives funding from the Bush Foundation, its broad parameters for education and outreach may make it applicable toward design and building costs.

Manager Loth recommended postponing the decision for a few months in consideration of the budget and pending more information on the potential Bush Foundation grant.

<u>President Anderson moved to postpone action on engaging architectural services until a later date when more funding information is available. Seconded by Manager Toavs. The motion carried 4-0.</u>

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

b) 2026 Budget & Accomplishments Outreach

Mr. Hjelm and Ms. Heinz have created an outreach plan to communicate information about the proposed 2026 budget to members of the public. A public hearing for the budget is set for September 25, which is when the Board intends to adopt the 2026 budget. Those interested in attending via Zoom must preregister on the District website to attend and participate.

President Anderson recommended keeping the messaging brief and mentioned that similar topics will be addressed at the State of the Watershed event on September 30.

5. Program and Project Update

a) Project Update

Ms. Heinz gave an overview of current projects. The Heath Avenue Iron Enhanced Sand Filter is in the design phase, and currently under review by the City of Wyoming. Construction is planned for 2026.

The second phase of the Forest Lake alum treatment is planned for early October. This will include a public presentation at the Forest Lake Senior Center on October 2.

President Anderson asked for an update on connecting with residents in the neighborhood bordering Bixby Park. She directed that staff set up a time to meet with residents and invite Board members to be present. Ms. Heinz said this will most likely take place before the State of the Watershed event on September 30, and staff will be sure to share the invitation with the Board.

b) Program Update – Grant Research and Preparation

Ms. Heinz explained that grants are one of the largest sources of revenue used by the District, in addition to the tax levy and loans. In recent years the District has taken out low-interest and no-interest Clean Water Partnership loans. The District has a repayment schedule over the next 9 years, and in the meantime the grants have come into focus as another source of revenue that could be increased.

The Heath Avenue Iron Enhanced Sand Filter project was awarded a competitive grant of nearly $1.5 million from the Clean Water Fund. Ten years ago, this amount was close to the District’s entire operating budget. The District has taken on bigger and bigger projects since then and continues to increase its scale.

Success in achieving the targeted water quality benefits has followed.

These kinds of projects will continue, but the District will also look toward projects with even wider scope such as flood resiliency, greenbelt and open space protection, and land acquisition and restoration.

6. Report of Officers and Managers

This is Manager Loth's final meeting as a Board member. He thanked the members of the staff and the other managers for the opportunity to serve the community in this way. The other members of the Board in turn commended his service and thanked him.

Manager Bakke thanked Citizen Advisory Committee members Ted Hanson, Tom Furey, and Randy Schumacher for their expertise and feedback shared with the Board during the 2026 budget planning process. He also welcomed Jim Schottmuller, newly appointed by the Washington County Board of Commissioners, to the Board. He will take his oath of office at the September 25 regular board meeting.

Manager Toavs shared that he attended a Chisago City meeting that provided an overview of the planned MNDOT Highway 8 expansion project. Mike Sandager shared that staff met with MNDOT consultants in early September and discussed concerns about reducing roadway runoff and invited MNDOT representatives to attend a future Board meeting.

7. Summary and Approval of Board Direction

The following board directive was summarized:

- Staff will continue to prepare materials for residents near Bixby Park and will invite the managers to meet with that group of neighbors.

8. Adjourn

a) Next regular board meeting September 25, 2025, 6:30 pm

Manager Toavs moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Loth. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 pm.

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

Dave Bakke, Secretary ____