



MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

MEETING NOTES OF THE COMFORT LAKE-FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE Tuesday, November 18th, 2025

Attendees: Keith Kuhnly, Tom Furey, Randy Schumacher, Ted Hansen, Jerry Grundtner, Mike Miron, Gary Kramlich

Others: Manager Jackie Anderson, Manager Stephen Schmaltz, Administrator Mike Kinney, Adam Hjelm, Aidan Read, Brad Jernberg

Election of Chair

Tom Furey was elected Chair of the meeting.

Manager Introduction

Prior to the start of the meeting, newly appointed Manager Jim Schottmuller provided a brief introduction for the Committee members. Manager Schottmuller discussed his background and interest in serving on the Board of Managers.

Watershed Update

Aidan Read, Land Management Specialist, provided an update on programs and projects throughout the District. This update included the conclusion of the watercraft inspector program, flowering rush surveys, seasonal weir operations, and other topics.

Project Update

Blayne Eineichner, project coordinator, provided an update on projects throughout the District. Details were given on the Heath Avenue Iron Enhanced Sand Filter project in the Little Comfort Lake Subwatershed. Administrator Mike Kinney added details and context to some of this project. The Committee asked questions regarding the impact on flow of water for the filter system and the impact of upcoming road work. Mr. Eineichner also discussed the recently completed alum treatment on Forest Lake, the Green Infrastructure project near Comfort Lake, the Moody Capstone Project, and the School Lake Agriculture BMPs.

2026 Goals and Calendar

The Committee was prompted to consider items they would like to include on 2026 agendas. The Board of Manager's calendar was reviewed to note items that the CAC would be interested in reviewing or participating in. Tom Furey discussed his idea of creating a land use committee, or similar group, to advise and assist with management tasks on District



MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

properties. This could be a method to reduce costs while engaging interested residents. The discussion continued on potential items for 2026 including the budget, project tours, and other ideas.

2026 Budget Discussion

Randy Schumacher began the budget discussion by asking what the results were of inquiries to increase the payback time of existing loans. Administrator Kinney stated that this effort was a success, and the loan payback period was extended to the original ten-year term. The Committee discussed perceived deficiencies in public notice for the 2026 levy. It was discussed that truth in taxation notices went out and have been received by many residents. It was noted that Washington County had a relatively low levy increase. Gary Kramlich discussed that part of the messaging around the levy increase needs to be paired with easily digestible information about the investments being made for water quality. Managers Anderson and Schmaltz added context for the budget changes and added some of the history of levy and budgeting for the District.

Ted Hansen added a final question to the budget discussion: how will the District work to a point where expenses cease exceeding revenues. This has been an issue for the last seven years and will need to be addressed if the intention is to pay down debt. Manager Anderson provided some follow-up materials including an MPR article that was distributed to Committee members.

Closing

Ted Hansen was elected Chair for the December 16th meeting.