

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
Thursday, August 27, 2026**

1. Call to Order

Manager Schottmuller called the August 27, 2026, 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 (virtual attendance for information only, not participating)
Steve Schmaltz, Treasurer
Jim Schottmuller, Vice President
Dave Bakke, Secretary (virtual attendance)
Douglas Toavs, Assistant Treasurer (virtual attendance)

Staff Present:

Mike Kinney, Administrator
Brad Jernberg, Business and Operations Manager
Tori Philippi, Office Manager
Emily Heinz, Planning Coordinator
Blayne Eineichner, Project Coordinator
Aidan Read, Land Management Specialist
Mike Sandager, Permitting and AIS Coordinator
Adam Hjelm, Education and Outreach Coordinator
Victoria D'Amico, Water Resources Engineering Technician

Others Present:

Anne Wilkinson, Emmons & Olivier Resources (EOR)
Erik Megow, Emmons & Olivier Resources (EOR)
Chuck Holtman, Smith Partners
Michael Miller

2. Setting of Meeting Agenda

Manager Schmaltz 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
Jim Schottmuller	X			
Dave Bakke	X			
Doug Toavs	X			

Stephen Schmaltz	X			
Jackie Anderson			X	

3. Consent Agenda

a) Regular Board Meeting Minutes – July 23, 2026

[6:31 pm]

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

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Jim Schottmuller	X			
Dave Bakke	X			
Doug Toavs	X			
Stephen Schmaltz	X			
Jackie Anderson			X	

4. Public Open Forum

[6:32 pm]

No public comments.

5. Advisory Committee Updates

[6:33 pm]

Aidan Read provided a summary of the most recent Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting, including discussion of the budget as well as the Watershed Champions Awards review process. Manager Bakke took note of the comment made by several CAC members who would have liked to see the proposed levy percentage published in the public notices in addition to dollar amounts. Administrator Mike Kinney stated that there was consensus among the Board at its last budget meeting not to include the percentage. Manager Schottmuller said that the standard can be reconsidered during next year's levy process.

6. New Business

a) MN Watersheds Annual Meeting Awards

[6:36 pm]

MN Watersheds is currently accepting award nominations for the Capital Improvement Project of the Year and Watershed Program of the Year. Watershed districts are limited to two total nominations this year.

Staff have recommended the following nominations for the two categories:

- Project of the Year: Forest Lake Enhanced Street Sweeping
- Program of the Year: Aquatic Invasive Species Partnerships

b) Audubon Property Acquisition

[6:38 pm]

Blayne Eineichner reviewed that the Wild River Audubon Society would like to donate a 66-acre parcel in the Shallow Pond wetland to the District through a quitclaim process. Before the deed can be transferred, a property deed discrepancy must be resolved. An 8-foot strip of property allowing access from the city-owned Hawk Meadows property to the greater Audubon parcel was approved but never officially conveyed from Wyoming Township to the Audubon Society in 1998. Staff are working with the City of Wyoming to resolve the issue prior to presenting the acquisition to the Board. Mr. Eineichner stated that the current stage of the acquisition process requires the Board to approve two site evaluation forms.

Manager Schmaltz moved to approve the Candidate Site Evaluation and Review forms for the Shallow Pond Wild River Audubon Society parcel, PIN 21.11130.53, and directed the Administrator to work with legal counsel and/or a licensed title company to resolve the deed issue in the title commitment findings. Seconded by Manager Toavs. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Jim Schottmuller	X			
Dave Bakke	X			
Doug Toavs	X			
Stephen Schmaltz	X			
Jackie Anderson			X	

7. Old Business

a) Permit 25-019 Maintenance Amendment

[6:44 pm]

Victoria D'Amico explained that during the May 14, 2026 regular board meeting, the Board reviewed and approved Permit 25-019 for the Amberly Woods development, with conditions stated in EOR's April 7, 2026 memorandum.

Ms. D'Amico stated the City of Forest Lake has agreed to take responsibility for maintenance of the stormwater basins according to the terms of an existing programmatic maintenance agreement between the District and the City and retain

ownership of Outlots A and B of the plat, where the basins are located. The agreement must be amended to state that the City will be the party responsible for maintenance, not the permittee.

Manager Bakke moved to amend Permit 25-019 so that Recommendation #4 of the engineer's April 16, 2026 memorandum is replaced with the following: "Receipt of a letter from the City Administrator stating that the City will maintain the stormwater basin pursuant to the terms of the November 9, 2012 'Cooperative Agreement for Maintenance of Stormwater Management Facilities and Watercourse and Basin Crossings.'" Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Jim Schottmuller	X			
Dave Bakke	X			
Doug Toavs	X			
Stephen Schmaltz	X			
Jackie Anderson			X	

b) Bone Lake South Nature Area Restoration and Management Plan

[6:48 pm]

District staff and EOR have prepared a draft management and restoration plan for the Bone Lake South Nature Area (BLSNA). The plan was presented at the August 13, 2026 Regular Board Meeting, and managers were given until August 21 to provide comments. Manager comments and edits have been incorporated into the final draft of the BLSNA Management and Restoration Plan presented for final approval.

Manager Bakke identified two typographical errors in the plan that should be corrected. He also noted that the five-year work plan exceeds the identified funding, and he expressed concerns that managing hunting activity on the property may rely too heavily on the use of signage. He suggested that more time is needed to refine the plan.

Legal Counsel Chuck Holtman advised that staff have used established best practices for managing sites with multiple recreational uses, such as those used by the DNR for its Wildlife Management Areas. He also stated that while hunting activity cannot be limited more than the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund (LSOHF) grant conditions allow, it would be within the District's authority to restrict non-hunters from using the property during certain hunting seasons. However, it is unclear whether the District practically could enforce this type of policy.

Manager Schmaltz asked whether liability insurance would be required for this property. Administrator Kinney responded that the District maintains liability insurance through the League of Minnesota Cities. He added that there is no urgency to complete the plan, and more research can be done to learn how other similar properties are managed, and what kinds of exceptions LSOHC and the DNR might allow. Mr. Eineichner emphasized that the proposed terms closely follow DNR practices.

There was consensus for the Board to continue discussion of the management plan at an upcoming meeting.

c) State of the Watershed Planning

[7:06 pm]

Adam Hjelm explained the 2026 State of the Watershed event is planned for September 29 at the Forest Lake American Legion. District staff met with and discussed the event with venue staff to look at further reductions for the venue costs as directed by the Board.

An updated budget for the event is as follows:

- Food/venue - \$2,800
- Watershed Champion Award Program - \$500
- In-house printing and misc. supplies - \$200

Estimated total: \$3,500

Managers thanked Mr. Hjelm for reviewing the budget and finding a way to reduce costs.

8. Report of Staff

a) Administrator

[7:09 pm]

Administrator Kinney and staff presented updates on current District projects and initiatives. Mr. Kinney shared his recent experience at the MN Watersheds Summer Tour and also noted that the staff had met with incoming manager Blake Roberts as part of his new manager orientation.

Aidan Read announced that he will soon be leaving his position at the CLFLWD to work with the Conservation Technology Information Center. His last day will be

September 15. Board members expressed their thanks for Mr. Read's years of service to the District.

b) Emmons & Olivier Resources

[7:39 pm]

Dr. Wilkinson shared that EOR is working on concepts and modeling for the flood resiliency plan, which will be brought to a future board meeting. Feasibility monitoring on the Sunrise River Headwaters project has been completed, and concept designs for that project will soon be presented to the board as well.

c) Smith Partners

[7:41 pm]

Nothing to report.

9. Report of the Treasurer

[7:41 pm]

Treasurer Schmaltz reported District income of \$1,228,594.51, interest of \$5,239.41, and expenses of \$195,977.17.

President Anderson joined the meeting virtually at 7:20 pm, but her camera was not functioning. Legal Counsel Holtman confirmed that President Anderson could present an informational item, but could not otherwise participate in the meeting.

Manager Schmaltz moved to accept the Treasurer's Report, transfer funds in the amount of \$22,000, and pay the bills in the amount of \$195,977.17. Seconded by Manager Toavs. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Jim Schottmuller	X			
Dave Bakke	X			
Doug Toavs	X			
Stephen Schmaltz	X			
Jackie Anderson			X	

10. Report of Managers

[7:48]

President Anderson shared her experiences from the MN Summer Watersheds Tour.

Manager Bakke reported that Bone Lake is extremely clear, and he thanked Tom Furey and Matthew Hendrickson for keeping an eye on the purple loosestrife on the lake.

11. Summary and Approval of Board Direction

[7:53 pm]

The following board directive was noted:

- Manager Bakke requested to be informed of the next Scandia coordination meeting.

12. Adjourn

a) Next regular board meeting – September 10, 2026, 6:30 pm

Manager Schmaltz moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Bakke. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Jim Schottmuller	X			
Dave Bakke	X			
Doug Toavs	X			
Stephen Schmaltz	X			
Jackie Anderson			X	

Dave Bakke, Secretary -----