

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE  
COMFORT LAKE-FOREST LAKE  
WATERSHED DISTRICT  
Thursday, September 12, 2019**

**1. Call to Order**

President Spence called the September 12, 2019 regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the offices of the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District, 44 Lake Street South, Suite A, Forest Lake, MN 55025.

Present: President Jon Spence, Vice President Jackie Anderson, Secretary Jen Oknich, Treasurer Steve Schmaltz

Absent: Assistant Treasurer Wayne Moe

Others: Mike Kinney, Blayne Eineichner (CLFLWD staff); Meghan Funke (Emmons & Olivier Resources); Chuck Holtman (Smith Partners)

**2. Setting of Meeting Agenda**

Legal Counsel Holtman noted that as a part of the later agenda item concerning the Administrator's annual review, Manager Anderson or Manager Oknich, on behalf of the Administrator Review Committee, should summarize the outcome of the closed session that the Committee conducted to discuss the review with the Administrator. Manager Anderson noted that this meeting's agenda item is not the actual Administrator's review, but just board discussion of the Administrator's performance. She recommended the agenda be revised to indicate "Administrator Annual Review, Board Discussion."

Manager Anderson moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon a vote, the motion carried 4-0.

**3. Public Open Forum**

There were no comments.

**4. New Business**

**a) Road Salt Symposium**

Administrator Kinney explained that the Freshwater Society requested that the District become a sponsor for the Road Salt Symposium in October. While the 2019 Education and Outreach budget does not have excess funding for this, the overall 2019 yearend total expenditures are predicted to come in under budget. President Spence asked if any staff members are planning to register and attend the event. Mr. Kinney indicated that

Project Coordinator Blayne Eineichner may attend. It was clarified that the event will be held in the east metro, specifically Vadnais Heights. In response to a question from Manager Anderson, Mr. Kinney noted that he isn't sure which local municipality staff members are going, but the City of Forest Lake has historically sent someone. Manager Anderson suggested sponsoring at the \$500 level given that it is unclear how many CLFLWD municipalities will attend, but it is an important topic.

Manager Anderson moved to sponsor the event at the "Enthusiast" level at \$500. Seconded by Manager Oknich.

Discussion: Mr. Holtman explained that the District may expend funds only for the purpose of advancing water resource goals within District boundaries, and therefore the Board should approve a contribution only if it concludes that the event will have this watershed link. Managers Anderson and Oknich expressed their view that this link exists.

By unanimous consent, the motion was amended to include the transfer of funds necessary to cover this for the appropriate subcategory.

Discussion: Mr. Kinney noted that a portion of the CLFLWD is included in the MN Pollution Control Agency's chloride Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), and the District responded with comments on the TMDL in the past.

Upon a vote, the motion carried 4-0.

## **5. Old Business**

### **a) Watershed Management Plan Update**

Mr. Kinney explained that staff is going through the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) update process, recently completing steps 6 (Needs assessment) and 7 (Review relevant plans and programs) out of the prescribed 21-step process. Step 8 (Identify priority issues and goals) will require input from the Board and advisory committees. This provides the District with an opportunity to do some additional engagement. He suggested holding small group meetings with some District residents, Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) members, lake association members, one or two CLFLWD Board members, and agricultural producers. It was clarified that the main purpose of the small group meetings would be to discuss priority issues and goals that these various individuals and interest groups have as they relate to the WMP. Manager Anderson expressed that it is important to get down to the Lake Management District level; focusing on a specific area might engage more people to come. President Spence added that attendees may be more engaged in the conversation if they can specifically discuss issues in their lake district, as opposed to trying to discuss topics District-wide. There was discussion about potential meeting locations such as Wyoming City Hall. Manager Oknich suggested that these meetings should be posted in some sort of general newsletter in order to inform general residents. Mr. Kinney explained that staff is

proposing to do more direct outreach to certain interest groups for the small group meetings. He suggested having a larger event later this year which can be publicized in a fall newsletter. He also noted the anniversary open house which is scheduled for September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Manager Anderson expressed that she liked the idea of sending out a notice to a broader audience, as some residents may like to be engaged, but may not be part of one of these specific interest groups. There was discussion about the feasibility of sending postcards to residents in each lake district inviting them to the small group meetings. There was agreement to set small group meeting dates for each lake district, directly inviting interest groups and sending out a general mailer to District residents giving them the option to attend whichever meeting they wish. Mr. Kinney indicated that staff will follow up with board members to determine managers' availability on proposed meeting dates.

#### **b) Update on One Watershed One Plan**

Mr. Kinney indicated that he gave a presentation on topics including Prioritized, Targeted, Measurable (PTM) implementation and project priority tier structure at the Lower St. Croix (LSC) Policy Committee meeting on August 26<sup>th</sup>. He explained that he plans to discuss the project priority tier framework further with Manager Anderson and make some changes to the PowerPoint slides.

Manager Schmaltz noted that he sent an email to other managers with some comments he had after the August 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. The email is included in the meeting packet. He believes some progress is being made, but further refinement to the goals and objectives is needed, as the list is currently very long. He described a prioritization matrix that is in use that categorizes projects as high or low results/impact and high or low input.

Manager Anderson expressed that the LSC is currently in the assessment phase of the overall process, and refinement will come in the next step. She expressed that there should be different leadership for the next step, and an engineering firm may be better suited for such prioritization. She described Manager Schmaltz's introduction/set-up on August 26<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Kinney's presentation, and the audience's reaction. Manager Anderson explained that she observed a lot of understanding from people in the audience, particularly from some of the county commissioners who have been asking how this plan will be implemented. She described multiple background studies and mapping that have been done for the LSC, but more granular pollutant loading "hot spot" targeting (e.g. diagnostic studies) needs to occur. Overall, the August 26<sup>th</sup> presentation seemed to have a positive effect. Manager Anderson pointed out the report card style progress measurement charts from page 12 of the presentation handout and expressed that audience members seemed to react positively to this format. She noted that the landowner's name is included on multiple slides on pages 6 and 7 of the presentation handout. She suggested removing mention of a specific landowner's name in this context and using a more general site name.

Mr. Kinney described his conversation with a Washington County commissioner regarding the high cost of the potential hiring of an agronomist which would result in

little funding remaining for plan implementation. Mr. Kinney indicated that there appear to be differing opinions within the LSC group about how much funding will be available for implementation. He recommended that agricultural cost-share programs offering 100% funding for best management practices (BMPs) are not as effective compared to those which require more buy-in from the landowner. Manager Anderson expressed that Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are currently taking the lead in the LSC, but this needs to change if the philosophy regarding prioritization is going to change. She expressed that the water resource engineers need to be involved. There was further discussion about agricultural BMPs, historical conservation efforts, methods for project targeting including subwatershed analyses (SWAs) and diagnostic studies, and economic efficiency of projects. Manager Anderson expressed that there should be proportional representation for organizations in the LSC based on geography; those organizations that comprise small portions of the watershed shouldn't lead the majority of decision making. President Spence noted that the CLFLWD takes this into account with its board being made up of 2/5 Chisago County managers and 3/5 Washington County managers, based on each county's proportion of the watershed district. There was discussion about the low-interest Clean Water Fund loan program for agricultural BMPs and usage of Clean Water funds for "capacity" expenses rather than implementation.

## **6. Summary and Approval of Board Direction**

Direction items included the outreach elements pertaining to the WMP update and Manager Anderson's comments on the 1W1P presentation slides.

## **7. Board Discussion of Administrator Annual Review**

Manager Anderson recapped that she and Manager Oknich, as the Administrator Review Committee, conducted an interview with Administrator Kinney. She expressed that it was valuable to get more back story into ongoing items and discuss things that don't always come to the Board level. Next steps include finalizing the review framework, meeting with Mr. Kinney again to make the offer, and bringing back a recommendation to the full board at the September 26<sup>th</sup> regular board meeting. Mr. Kinney added that he too appreciated the opportunity to have an in-depth discussion with Managers Anderson and Oknich. He explained that it can sometimes be a challenge to gauge the level of detail on a topic that should be brought to a board meeting. He also appreciated the opportunity to describe steps leading up to certain activities and how he aims to continually improve and strives for the CLFLWD to be the best watershed district in the state.

Manager Schmaltz moved to convene in closed session to review the Administrator's performance. Seconded by Manager Oknich. Upon a vote, the motion carried 4-0.

The Board reconvened in open session.

## **8. Adjourn**

- a) **District Tour – September 21, 2019**
- b) **Next regular board meeting – September 26, 2019**

Manager Oknich moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Anderson. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Jen Oknich, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_