

**MINUTES OF BOARD WORKSHOP  
OF THE  
COMFORT LAKE – FOREST LAKE  
WATERSHED DISTRICT  
Wednesday, August 19, 2015**

**1. Call to Order**

The President called the August 19, 2015 Board workshop to order at 4:30 p.m. at the Comfort Lake - Forest Lake Watershed District Offices, 44 Lake Street South, Suite A, Forest Lake.

Present: President Richard Damchik, Vice President Jackie Anderson, Treasurer Jon Spence and Secretary Wayne Moe.

Absent: Assistant Treasurer Stephen Schmaltz.

Others: Emily Schmitz (CLFLWD staff) and Greg Graske (EOR).

**2. Discussion of Draft 2016 Work Plan and Budget**

Managers and staff discussed the following and adjusted the budget accordingly:

- An income report and 2016 budget summary was provided by the accountant. The wages reflect amounts for both employees.
- A grant summary was provided. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) grants remain the same. Washington County water grants will be discussed later. Chisago County provides aquatic invasive species (AIS) funds directly to county offices. Extra inspection hours for Comfort Lake came through county office funds. Manager Anderson suggested applying to the Initiative Foundation for clean water projects in Chisago County and setting up a spreadsheet for grant application deadlines and focuses. Mr. Graske stated that plans are to submit BWSR Clean Water Fund requests for Moody Lake, Bone Lake and 3<sup>rd</sup> Lake pond implementation projects and, depending on the timing, for Forest Lake. Wetland restoration between Moody and Bone lakes are projects and potential grants farther down the project list.

**Programs**

- Account #3009 – Grant Research & Preparation. EOR, with help from Ms. Schmitz, prepares grants. Staff coordination of \$14,000 is in another category. It was agreed that \$12,000, rather than \$6,000 is a more realistic number.
- Account #3010 – Operations and Maintenance. This account relates to projects and includes a catchall for matters that may arise, including, for example, maintenance of Washington Judicial Ditch 6 if the District assumes the role of drainage authority from the Rice Creek Watershed District. Other project expenses include \$15,000 for the Shields Lake fish barrier and \$800 for the dam. Staff will check with the accountant on keeping the expenses for the vehicle line item here or moving it to a general account.
- Account #3004 – Non-point Source Pollution Grant (cost-share). Manager Anderson noted that the program needs changes in order to get participation. Ms. Schmitz stated

that the Board suggested program cuts in the 2016 budget and asked which line items to cut. Manager Anderson suggested that Ongoing Initiatives, which are general expenses such as BMP maintenance or site visits, be called Miscellaneous. Mr. Graske clarified that Community Grants are projects that exceed District rules and there are currently no specific projects identified. After discussion, the total budgets for each line item were as follows: 3004A = \$17,969, 3005B = \$34,778, 3004C = \$35,000, 3004D = \$25,000, 3004E = \$25,000.

- Account #3005 - Ed and Outreach remained as proposed. Manager Spence noted that there is not a line item for the newsletter, website, etc., rather all activities are lumped into 3005A.
- Account #3006 - Technical Resource Sharing & Interagency Communication. It was suggested that this be reduced down to \$65,000. Manager Spence stated that to reduce this account would probably require taking out H&H modeling. In the current plan, boat inspections are under Education and Outreach. If the Board wishes for all AIS activities to be grouped under one subcategory in the Watershed Management Plan, then a Plan amendment would be in order. The major plan update is not due until 2019-2020.
- Account #3007 – Research was reduced to \$35,000 from \$70,000. Discussion included doing core sampling of sediments while doing lake diagnostic studies and implementation plans; weighing the cost-benefit of deep core sampling to determine pre-settlement conditions to the expense and value of the information; doing core sampling in just Comfort and one other lake or sampling in the end point of a system to see what water quality outcomes are achievable; and including sampling in diagnostic and implementation funding requests. All agreed to seek grant funds through a featured project request, possibly for Big and Little Comfort Lakes.

## **Projects**

Ms. Schmitz reported that Manager Schmaltz provided notes for the discussion.

- Line item #5228G – Forest AIS Management. Manager Schmaltz suggested that the budget reflect contributions (as noted in the spreadsheet) from the city and lake association.
- Line Item #5222C Bone Lake Basin Implementation. Mr. Graske concurred that the District probably will not get the land for the basin next year and so could have a budget of zero. However, Administrator Kinney suggested budgeting something for implementation, such as working with farmers, depending on what comes out of the diagnostic study.
- District-wide Boat Launch Site Upgrades. It was clarified that this is for signs and compost bins, will help with branding the District and is different than the funds in Education and Outreach. A DNR grant of \$10,000 is being sought.
- District-wide Lake Shoreline Inventory Tech Evaluation. Mr. Graske clarified that the \$5,000 is for investigating technology that can link photos with parcels, such as a google maps type program. Although Forest Lake was scheduled for investigation, just snapping photos of all shorelines is not very helpful unless they are linked in a GPS database. Discussion included: avoiding duplicating what we have in photos, the need to have proof so action can be taken, a shoreline inventory is good to establish a baseline; investigation

should be able to be done for less and is investigation worthwhile if the city will not take action?

- District-wide Invasive Species (IS) Management Plan. Mr. Graske clarified that this covers all species and action plans for current and future situations. Ms. Schmitz stated that Administrator Kinney expressed an interest in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District protocols. All agreed to reduce the budget to \$10,000 to get going, but include this in the plan amendment.
- Line Item #5220C - IS Control Pilot Project. It was clarified that there are no specific new technologies to try for a pilot project; a project is not planned until 2017 in the management plan, but this is hot topic; DNR funding should be used, not District funds and \$20,000 is anticipated in grants.
- Line Item #5221D - Moody Rough Fish Management. Mr. Graske stated that St. Mary's University completed a first netting and will do a couple rounds of electric fishing. Depending on the outcome, netting might not be needed next year, but \$15,000 could be a worse case. Fishermen are reluctant to net and a cash incentive helps.
- Line Item #5222B – Bone Lake Infiltration Basin Planning and Design. Mr. Graske stated that EOR is in the process of wrapping up the Bone Lake Diagnostic Study. Some small projects could come up next year. Plans are to submit a three-year grant proposal for implementation starting in 2017. In 2016 the focus will be on planning and design.
- Line Item #5222E - Bone AIS Management includes curlyleaf pondweed and Eurasian watermilfoil treatments. The budget was reduced to \$5,000, based on what was spent this year.
- Line Item #5222F – Bone Rough Fish Management. Depending on the outcome of surveys, a carp harvest might be recommended.
- Line Item #5222H - Bone Macrophyte & Invasive Survey. This was rounded up to \$5,000 to include EOR coordination.
- New line items include Bone Zebra Mussel Rapid Response (\$6,000) and Bone Lake Vegetation Management Plan Update (\$3,000). The Managers agreed to budget for lake vegetation management plans (LVMP) for Bone Lake, Comfort Lake, Forest Lake and either Shields Lake or Sylvan Lake depending on a motion from a previous board meeting. It was agreed that a LVMP would not be written for Moody Lake as it is classified as a Natural Environment Lake, doesn't have a public access and doesn't receive much boat traffic. Plans cost \$3,000 each.
- Line Item #5223A - Little Comfort Phosphorus Source Assessment- Mr. Graske stated that this was rolled into the diagnostic study that includes School and Birch lakes and the stream reaches. It covers a lot of ground. Manager Anderson recommended looking for grant money. Mr. Graske clarified that the high cost of the Forest Lake diagnostic was offset by a Clean Water Fund grant that covered 75% of the cost.
- Line Item #5226F- Shields 208<sup>th</sup> St. Neighborhood Ponds Maintenance/Improvements. Mr. Graske stated that the \$10,000 is to potentially cost share with the City of Forest Lake to clean the ponds or identify other projects. Manager Spence stated that these are the city's ponds and indicated that it is their responsibility to clean them out. Mr. Graske, in response, suggested using \$10,000 to evaluate the ponds and then give the city some plans for what they can do to clean up the lake and meet their TMDL requirements.
- Line Item #5227A - Sylvan Stormwater and Shoreline BMP Planning. This is a study of the shoreline and watershed and what BMPs can be done to continue to protect Sylvan Lake.

- New line item for Sylvan Lake AIS Management - \$4,000 was budgeted to treat purple loosestrife.
- Line Item #5228A - Forest Diagnostic and Implementation Plan. The budget should be \$40,000.
- Line Item #5228E - FL Shoreline Survey. As noted above, this was removed from the budget until the technology research is completed.
- Line Item #5228G - AIS Management – updated from the Aquatic Macrophyte and IS Management. This reflects contributions from the city, lake association and Washington County, as outlined in the spreadsheet, with the District managing the project. The counties contribute to funding five full-time inspectors. Managers stated that management of the inspections is the issue. Inspections are needed during peak usage and, while a lot of progress was made this year, the program still needs tweaking. If a \$66,000 grant is not received from Washington County, Manager Damchik suggesting assessing the people on the lake for treatments—it's the owners' responsibility. Manager Anderson suggested exploring an extra levy for the subwatershed and asking the District accountants for a prospectus. She stated that AIS is typically not brought in by property owners, but they get stuck with the effects. Manager Spence suggested prioritizing and cutting the budget. Upon further discussion, it was agreed to make the total budget \$150,000 including the contributions from the city and lake association, grant funds, and a levy for the difference which was \$46,400.
- Line Item #5228J – FL44 BMP Implementation. It was clarified that this is for the design of potential projects resulting from the WCD's subwatershed assessment. It was agreed to wait until 2017 in order to find out what WCD recommends.
- Line Item #5229G – Bixby Park Stormwater Treatment. A total budget of \$428,000 was agreed upon including grant funds from BWSR and levy funds.
- Line Item #5229A-C -- Water Quality Studies- It was agreed to hold off on these.
- Line Items #5341A and D –E. Coli Assessments. Mr. Graske stated that the assessments are planned in the area between Bone Lake and Little Comfort Lake. This could all get rolled into the diagnostic study and could be done this fall during the Bone-Birch-School walking survey to look for phosphorus loads. The Management Plan envisioned lab testing to determine the source(s) of E. coli, but that is expensive. The Managers agreed to remove this from the budget and try to incorporate the assessment into the walking survey.
- Line Item #5340C – FL Outlet Channel Design and Restoration. Ms. Schmitz stated that Administrator Kinney discussed trying to get an MPCA grant for \$35,000, though that is optimistic, providing \$15,000 from District funds and billing the property owner for the railroad ties.
- Line Item #5421A -- Moody Cattle Exclusion— It was noted that a grant will be applied for.
- New Line Item - Bone Wetland Planning and design. Manager Spence stated that this is for work coming out of the diagnostic study and is needed.
- Line Item #5620A – Groundwater Dependent Natural Resource Inventory. Mr. Graske stated that some of resources are tied to the District's rule on buffer requirements. It was agreed to include this under Wetland Inventory (5420A).

## **General**

It was noted that the budget for general administration will change; about \$700,000 was removed from the proposed levy; grant monies are estimated at \$620,000; Administrator Kinney proposed a levy of \$897,000, but further cuts have been made and the budget/levy increase is not as big an increase and not as much as the watershed plan calls for. Manager Anderson requested a table for the Chisago County mill rate. She noted that the levy increase will be negligible on property taxes. Manager Spence stated that the levy increase is 8.2%, but is small on tax bills.

### **3. Adjourn**

The workshop was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Wayne S. Moe, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_