

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE
COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
AND CITY OF SCANDIA
Thursday, June 22, 2020**

1. Call to Order

President Spence called the June 22, 2020 special joint board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. via online video conference

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District Board: President Jon Spence, Vice President Jackie Anderson, Treasurer Steve Schmaltz, Assistant Treasurer Jim Dibble.

Absent: Secretary Jen Oknich.

Scandia City Council: Mayor Christine Maefsky, Councilmember Steve Kronmiller, Councilmember Patti Ray, Councilmember Chris Ness.

Absent: Councilmember Jerry Cusick.

Others: Mike Kinney (CLFLWD Administrator), Ken Cammilleri (Scandia City Administrator), Emily Heinz (CLFLWD Watershed Technician), Ryan Goodman (Scandia City Engineer).

2. Introductions

Attendees introduced themselves and went over meeting objectives including desired inputs to Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District (CLFLWD) 10-year plan, understand common goals and objectives, and identify opportunities for collaboration/partnership.

3. CLFLWD Watershed Management Plan Update

Watershed Technician Heinz provided an overview of CLFLWD's progress on its 10-year watershed management plan update. In 2019 the District focused on public outreach and gathering input from partners and stakeholders. In spring/summer 2020 the District is discussing issues and goals prioritization and communicating with partners regarding shared priorities in overlapping boundaries. Summer 2020 will involve drafting the plan, with a target of publishing the draft plan for 60-day review and comment period in November. The District aims to go through the final review with the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) next spring and finalize the plan by next summer.

4. Issue Areas in the Context of Coordination between CLFLWD and Scandia

Ms. Heinz presented an overview of the District boundaries overlapping with city boundaries, with City of Scandia comprising the southeast quadrant of the District and the Scandia Village Center located just outside CLFLWD boundaries.

a) Lakes (Bone Lake): water quality/quantity aquatic invasive species, shoreland preservation

Ms. Heinz provided an overview of water quality and other issues for Bone Lake, the top residential and recreational lake in the overlapping boundary area. Bone Lake is meeting its 2020 goal for water quality metrics (phosphorus concentration, Secchi depth/clarity, and lake water quality letter grade). Bone Lake is also meeting the current 2030 goal, but as part of the 10-year plan update, the District plans to revise this goal to make it more aggressive; the 2040 goal will essentially become the new 2030 goal which includes a 5-year summertime average phosphorus concentration of 30 parts per billion. Water quantity is also an issue, as the District monitors lake elevation and reports to the City so the City can enforce its no wake ordinance when necessary. Aquatic invasive species are also an issue with the recent introduction of zebra mussels to the lake. Shoreland preservation is another important issue which is addressed through a variety of programs.

Councilmember Ray indicated shoreline erosion on Bone Lake is exacerbated by wakeboard boats causing large waves. She asked if the District is monitoring this. Administrator Kinney explained the District is not specifically monitoring wakeboard boating, but it can work with shoreline landowners to measure shoreline erosion and plant deep-rooted native plants on the shore which will help prevent erosion. He noted that with cleaner water, Bone Lake will start having more native aquatic plant growth as well. Emergent native plants, such as bulrush, in the water near the shoreline help buffer wave action and protect the shoreline. Councilmember Ray noted recent water levels seem higher than in previous years. Mr. Kinney explained how the District has recently modified the outlet fish barrier so that it is not holding back any water. Stop logs in the barriers hold back water, but they are also key to preventing migration of smaller carp. Grates are still present when stop logs are removed to let more water through, and they still prevent larger carp from getting through. Mr. Kinney indicated since 2014, the region has seen above average precipitation each year, with one recent year setting a record high. He explained that restoration of wetlands throughout the watershed will store more water and prevent flooding in the lakes downstream.

There was discussion about zebra mussels in Bone Lake. Mr. Kinney explained that, despite the rapid response eradication attempt last spring, it seems that zebra mussels are well established in Bone Lake. Organizations around the state are still learning a lot about the species; eradication attempts like this one provide a good learning experience for those involved as well as others in the state. Councilmember Ray asked about road salts' impact on Bone Lake, especially on the stretch of Lofton Avenue running close to the lake. Mr. Kinney indicated best practices can be followed to reduce salt usage, and it is hard to treat chlorides once they are on the road because they dissolve in the water. Administrator Cammilleri noted the City is looking at this issue as well and uses sand in some cases instead of salt.

b) Stormwater Management: rules/ordinances, operations & maintenance responsibilities

Stormwater management and regulations were discussed. Councilmember Kronmiller indicated the City has multiple watershed districts to work with and asked if the rules could be aligned to make it easier to coordinate across boundaries. Mr. Kinney indicated the District compared its rules to other watershed districts and Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) a few years ago. As a result, it revised its rules in a number of ways to align closer, but did not align fully because it would have meant reducing the standards for waterbody protection in some cases. Each watershed district has a unique landscape and resources, which may require specific standards in order to protect the resource adequately. Mr. Kinney suggested that alignment can extend beyond the rules as well, such as standardizing site inspection forms. Councilmember Kronmiller asked if wetland setbacks and buffers could be aligned. He suggested if rules are easier to understand, it will be easier to gain compliance. Mr. Kinney indicated a uniform buffer rule could fall short in some cases or be too much in other cases. There was discussion about operations and maintenance coordination. Mr. Cammilleri suggested executing an agreement or MOU to document roles and responsibilities. Mr. Kinney agreed and noted the District recently hired a Project Coordinator who will help manage operations and maintenance.

c) Wetlands and Open Spaces: WCA roles, yard waste, greenway corridors, parks

Councilmember Ray explained she is on the Parks and Recreation Committee for the City which is planning a park near the Bone Lake public boat launch. The park entails wood chip trails and potentially an elevated boardwalk and/or bridge. About 28 Bone Lake Association members have volunteered to help work on the trails. Mr. Cammilleri noted efforts will be taken to reduce impact to natural resources. Manager Anderson indicated this could fit with the District's education and outreach planning, and the District and City could collaborate on educational signage. Councilmember Ray indicated the Parks and Recreation Committee would be open to working with the District on this project, and she would discuss this with the Committee. Mr. Kinney noted the District's updated hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) model will identify other high priority natural areas, wetlands, etc. for protection. Manager Anderson added that restoration and protection of natural areas will also be helpful to protecting the lakes. Mr. Kinney explained how the District received a Clean Water Fund grant to restore several key wetlands around Bone Lake. The District has already implemented one restoration project and is now designing the second one.

d) Groundwater: Lake Keewahtin, key recharge areas

Ms. Heinz presented a map of groundwater recharge and vulnerability areas. Lake Keewahtin is a groundwater-dependent lake and is surrounded by key recharge areas that should be protected. Manager Anderson suggested the District can be a technical resource for this type of information. Mr. Cammilleri noted that the City owns a

shoreline parcel on Lake Keewahtin off Kirby Avenue and would be open to using it for conservation efforts. Mr. Kinney noted that the District could utilize a consistent access to Lake Keewahtin for monitoring and survey efforts. Manager Anderson suggested enhancing educational and informational signage at the access point, so those using the access for fishing can learn more about the value of natural shorelines, native vegetation, etc.

e) Floodplain: floodplain assessments

Ms. Heinz displayed a map of the 100-year area and explained the District can be a technical resource for flood information as well so that the City has sufficient data to continue to implement its floodplain ordinance appropriately. Councilmember Kronmiller indicated there is still a lot to learn about how various water resources (groundwater, wetlands, etc.) are connected.

f) Resiliency Planning: risk assessment, climate adaptation

Ms. Heinz explained how the District is putting more emphasis on resiliency planning as part of the 10-year plan update. The District is interested in being a useful partner to local municipalities in times of need, such as the tornado that hit Bone Lake last summer. She explained the District is also looking at reviewing the boundary area between Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District and Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District. It appears the hydrologic maps have been updated in recent years, and the political boundaries no longer reflect the hydrologic boundaries as closely as they should.

There was discussion about the gravel mining operation in the border area between the two watershed districts. Councilmember Ray asked if the District was monitoring the site. Mr. Kinney explained the District does not monitor the site specifically but will be looking at it more closely as it moves forward with reviewing the boundary area for a potential update. Mr. Cammilleri explained the site has a permit with the City and is responsible for monitoring test wells. So far there have not been any concerning findings. The DNR has a high capacity well permit for the site as well. The site is responsible for providing water usage data to the DNR each year.

5. Closing Remarks

President Spence thanked the City Council for meeting and indicated the District is always looking for ways to collaborate, especially with cities since they are in tune with development plans. Mayor Maefsky thanked the District Board for their time. She noted it was helpful to hear this discussion about how these issues impact the City, and that she is looking forward to future collaboration.

Ryan Goodman noted that the City Comprehensive Plan has two large chapters concerning natural resources and that the City received comments from the District on its recent Local Water Management Plan update. He explained that a review of the gravel mine permit will

be enlightening, as the site has had to meet a lot of requirements. Mr. Goodman also noted that the City is planning road repairs on Melanie Trail North and 238th Street North within the next 5 years and may collaborate with the District on how to go beyond minimum stormwater treatment requirements.

6. Adjourn

a) Next regular board meeting – June 25, 2020

Manager Schmaltz moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Dibble. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent
Jon Spence	X		
Jackie Anderson	X		
Stephen Schmaltz	X		
Jen Oknich			X
Jim Dibble	X		

Jen Oknich, Secretary _____