MEMORANDUM
Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

To: Board of Managers
From: Mike Kinney
Subject: Banta Property

Date: October 15, 2019

Background/Discussion

The Banta Property Assessment Results Report was discussed at the December 13, 2018 regular board meeting: https://www.clflwd.org/documents/Agendaitem6h-BantaPropertyAssessment_000.pdf. One of Emmons & Olivier Resources’ (EOR) recommendations in the report was: “If interest is apparent for any of the options, the CLFLWD should consider a feasibility level analysis which will define costs/benefits and set the stage for potential grant applications if the project is deemed appropriate.”

The Watershed Management Plan indicates the following under the Land Acquisition and Management section (5900 Series), page 66a:

Before committing funds to acquire a fee or easement interest, the Board of Managers will consider the following:

- The potential suitability of the property for a capital project or other project identified in the Plan.
- The potential for the land rights to facilitate the District’s pursuit of water quality, flood management or other water resource goals identified in the Plan, with respect to specific waterbodies or more generally.
- The market value of the rights to be acquired, by means of appraisal or other valuation as the Board of Managers determines appropriate for the transaction.
- The water resource value of the acquisition.
- Consistency of the District’s acquisition with the city’s or township’s land use classification and plans and potential for collaboration on use of the property.
- The extent to which the water resource purposes of the acquisition may be achieved without the District’s spending public funds, due to physical, regulatory or similar constraints on use of the property.
- Ongoing property management costs.
- The District’s ability to dispose of its property interests if its potential use for a capital or other project fails to materialize.

In order to address the items above, staff can work with local partners and the District Engineer to understand the options for such a property and to work with EOR to develop a scope to enhance the project feasibility review, particularly for a broader (multi-parcel) project involving, e.g., the Ducharme property.

In parallel to all of this, another factor is the CWF grant application that staff submitted this year for a project tied to the District’s adjacent land to this parcel. The results of the application will be known in December.

Recommended Action

Staff recommends that the Board direct the Administrator to work with EOR to develop a land acquisition project feasibility review scope of work.