

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE
WATERSHED DISTRICT
Monday, January 6, 2020**

1. Call to Order

President Spence called the January 6, 2020 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.

Present: President Jon Spence, Vice President Jackie Anderson, Secretary Jen Oknich, Treasurer Steve Schmaltz, Manager Jim Dibble.

Others: Mike Kinney, Peter Brennhofer (CLFLWD staff).

2. Setting of Meeting Agenda

Manager Schmaltz moved to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Manager Anderson. Upon a vote, the motion carried 5-0.

3. Workload Analysis – Firm Presentation and Board Discussion

Chris Meehan, Lisa Tilman and Todd Hubmer gave a presentation on Wenck and Associates' workload analysis proposal. Each explained their experience doing engineering work for watersheds. Ms. Tilman noted her past experience as the CLFLWD Engineer and drafting the CLFLWD Watershed Management Plan (WMP). Mr. Meehan explained that Wenck has a lot of knowledge about and experience with watersheds, it is collaboration focused, and it is financially focused. Wenck has 300 employees, including a water resources team of 65 employees (34 of which are engineers). It has experience determining office space and staffing needs for Coon Creek Watershed District and Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. There was discussion about watershed district phases and needs over time, project implementation and cost-benefit, and planning. Wenck's evaluation experience includes defining objectives and goals, evaluating resource options, and resources needed for achievement. Public relations with regard to projects and office space needs were discussed; each community requires different things from its watershed district. Wenck has expertise in public outreach, but also sometimes brings in subcontractors if that is what's needed. Mr. Kinney explained the idea of cost-benefit analysis guiding whether the District can maintain its services with less spending or increase its services with the same amount of spending. It's not always about reducing the cost but being able to provide a high quality of services. Wenck recommended that the WMP update process will inform the workload analysis and future District needs. Partnering with the local communities can help gain public support for future plan activities. There was discussion about ongoing collaboration including board and council liaison attendance at meetings and monthly inter-staff coordination. Wenck noted its experience coordinating with Technical and Citizen

Advisory Committees (TACs and CACs). There was further discussion about office space needs including storage, community partner engagement, building maintenance, and expansion in future years beyond the initial construction of a building. Wenck described its experience with land acquisition for the purpose of conservation and preemptive protection in the face of projected urban development. There was discussion about the scope of Wenck's proposal including three components: determine the role of the watershed versus the role of stakeholders, project how much of each of those are going to be needed (i.e. what is the capacity of each to accomplish necessary tasks), and what facilities are needed.

Mr. Kinney furthered described the District's emphasis on cost-benefit analysis and measurement of progress for its projects and other services. Mr. Meehan noted how important it is to tell the District's story. Manager Anderson indicated that, while many are excited about the projects completed to date, residents' top complaint is that progress isn't being made fast enough. Communication is important in order for stakeholders to understand how projects fit together and have additional benefits downstream. Mr. Meehan indicated that environmental systems are harder to understand than other public services such as a road improvement project. Natural systems take years to show results. Manager Anderson explained that in the District's early years it did not have taxing authority and was limited in the funds it could spend and the projects/studies it could accomplish. Once the District gained taxing authority it was able to move much faster and start making progress toward goals.

There was discussion about the timeframe on which the analysis should cover. It was clarified that the District requires a long-term analysis as part of its 10-year plan update as well as a short-term analysis in order to decide on an office space location prior to the current lease ending. Manager Schmaltz summarized that the District's growth needs will be influenced heavily by the surrounding communities' population and development growth projections. Projected needs for staffing should be part of the workload analysis. Manager Anderson suggested starting by looking at the current WMP and what hasn't been done. Additionally, considerations should include services that municipalities may want to delegate to the District, land that has been or could be acquired for conservation, contracted versus in house project management staff. Mr. Hubmer suggested the final product might be like a menu of options; if the District wants to take on a certain task, it will know how many full-time employee equivalents are needed for that task. Mr. Hubmer suggested that the analysis start by projecting staffing needs in order to meet the planned activities that are required by statute. Then that framework would be taken to meetings with community partners to figure out how staff sharing might help achieve these goals. Managers Anderson and Schmaltz agreed that having a framework with specific projects and activities would be useful in communicating with community partners.

[Manager Oknich left the meeting.]

There was discussion about the timeline of the analysis. Creation of a building plan would take at least 18 months. Ms. Tilman indicated that Wenck would provide a scope spanning about 5 months, and if it needs to expand into a phase 2, then can happen as well.

4. Adjourn

a) Next regular board meeting – January 7, 2020

Manager Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Manager Schmaltz. Upon vote, the motion carried 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Jen Oknich, Secretary _____