

**MEETING NOTES OF THE
COMFORT LAKE-FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, June 13th, 2023**

Present: Curt Sparks, Tom Furey, Ted Hansen, Randy Schumacher

Others: Aidan Read

1. Watershed Update

Aidan Read, Land Management Specialist, gave an update on activities around the District including project updates on the Hwy 61 Wetland and the new IESF project. The update also included a more thorough review of the education and outreach plan for the upcoming Forest Lake alum treatment.

2. Office Space

The update on office space survey and search was moved to the July meeting.

3. Wake Boat Discussion

Mr. Read opened a discussion on the impact of wake boats by summarizing existing research from the University of Minnesota (UMN) and sharing some of the proposed policy solutions in the region. One of these policy solutions that has been enacted is a restriction on personal watercraft speeds within 300 feet of shore by the Lake Minnetonka Conservation District.

Members including Randy Schumacher, Ted Hansen, and Curt Sparks shared that wake boats had become more frequent on the lakes, especially via the public boat launches – not exclusively from lake residents. It was also discussed that boaters are largely unaware of the 150’ statutory minimum distance boats must keep from the shore. Mr. Sparks mentioned that their lake association had coordinated boater education with the local marina to increase compliance with shoreline distance rules.

The discussion moved to the impact of wake boats on lake bottoms. Mr. Read shared proposed legislation restricting wake boats from operating in areas shallower than 15 feet. The Committee discussed the possible implication of wake boats on the upcoming alum treatment in Forest Lake, with the potential disruption of the settled floc in high traffic areas.

Mr. Schumacher asked the committee to formulate some next steps that could be recommended to the Board of Managers. Mr. Hansen noted that the Comfort Lakes Association had contributed funds to the UMN 2022 wake boat study, and that there could be further potential to contribute funds. Mr. Sparks requested more information on existing research on wake boat impacts on lakes, and described his professional experience

surveying boat traffic and lake use as it is relevant to this topic. Tom Furey suggested that the Committee provide a recommendation to review existing literature and begin considering the necessity of policy solutions to address wake boats on District waterbodies. Tom also noted that AIS boat inspectors collect information on types of watercraft, so the District may have data on wake boats entering and exiting area waterbodies.

CAC statement on wakesurf boats:

In consideration of research from the University of Minnesota and the continuing increase in popularity of wakesurf boats throughout the region, the CLFLWD Citizen Advisory Committee recommends that the District investigate the potential impact of wakesurf boats on the health of District waterbodies. Following this investigation, if necessary, policy recommendations should be made to mitigate the impact of wakesurf boats on shorelines, lake bottoms, aquatic communities, aquatic recreation, and personal property. Recommendations should be made as part of a coordinated effort with the District's county, municipal, and lake association partners.

4. CAC Field Day Discussion

Mr. Read provided several options for field trips in the next year. It was decided that an August ribbon cutting event for the IESF and Hwy 61 Wetland would be of interest to the Committee. In addition to the ribbon cutting, Mr. Read was directed to explore the feasibility of a shoreline tour on Bone Lake and report by the July meeting if such an event could be held this year.

5. Closing and Selection of Chair

Ted Hansen will be Chair for the month of July.

Next regular meeting of the Citizen's Advisory Committee will be Tuesday, July 18th at 5:00pm. There is no Manager scheduled to attend the June meeting. The meeting will be held remotely via Zoom.