

1 **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE**
2 **COMFORT LAKE–FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT**
3 **Thursday, July 13, 2023**
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5 **1. Call to Order**
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7 President Schmaltz called the July 13, 2023, regular board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
8 at 44 Lake Street South Forest Lake and via online video conference.
9

10 **Managers Present:**

11 Steve Schmaltz, President
12 Christopher Loth, Vice President
13 Jackie Anderson, Treasurer (Virtual)
14 Dave Bakke, Secretary (virtual)
15 Douglas Toavs, Assistant Treasurer (virtual)
16

17 **Staff Present:**

18 Mike Kinney, Administrator
19 Bobbie Law, Office Manager
20 Emily Heinz, Planning Coordinator
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22 **Others Present:**

23 Mike Talbot, Emmons & Olivier Resources
24 Cecilio Olivier, Emmons & Olivier Resources
25 Chuck Holtman, Smith Partners
26

27 **2. Setting of Meeting Agenda**
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29 Insurance Premium Payment Approval was added to the agenda.

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31 Manager Toavs moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Manager
32 Bakke. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.
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Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Dave Bakke	X			
Christopher Loth	X			
Doug Toavs	X			
Jackie Anderson			X	
Stephen Schmaltz	X			

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35 **3. New Business**

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a) Insurance Premium Payment Approval

Manager Bakke moved to make a one-time payment to the League of Minnesota Cities for the District's property/casualty insurance coverage premium in the amount of \$15,856. Seconded by President Schmaltz. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-0.

Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Dave Bakke	X			
Christopher Loth	X			
Doug Toavs	X			
Jackie Anderson			X	
Stephen Schmaltz	X			

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4. Old Business

Manager Anderson joined the meeting.

a) Floodplain Vulnerability Assessment

Mr. Kinney introduced the topic noting that Mike Talbot with Emmons and Olivier Resources and Planning Coordinator Emily Heinz were available at the meeting to take any questions regarding the floodplain vulnerability assessment. Mr. Kinney, Mr. Talbot, and Ms. Heinz reviewed the questions and answers posted in the meeting packet. Mr. Talbot explained how the District's hydrologic & hydraulic model and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) play into the assessment. He explained how the District has completed flood *hazard* mapping, and the proposed assessment will go a step further by assessing flood *vulnerability* (i.e., not simply where water pools, but what areas in the watershed are at greatest risk in terms of infrastructure, homes etc.)

Ms. Heinz explained how the proposed floodplain vulnerability assessment involves a thoughtful community engagement element. She explained potential outcomes of the assessment including identifying potential projects or other opportunities for collaboration with partners. Ms. Heinz recommended that the District focus on opportunities for partnerships when it comes to adding flood storage and increasing community resiliency to flooding; the District doesn't have to construct and own every project. She indicated that culvert resizing in key locations could increase flood resiliency, and the District would need to work with its municipal and county partners to do such things. Ms. Heinz suggested that this effort could dovetail into the District's greenway corridor effort.

72 **5. 2024 Budget Discussion**

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74 Ms. Heinz recapped that various managers posed several questions at the last budget
75 workshop. While Mr. Kinney partially addressed those questions during the last workshop,
76 it was agreed that staff would prepare a presentation to fully answer the questions at
77 the July 13th workshop. The purpose of this presentation is to answer the managers’
78 questions and reach a shared understanding of the proposed 2024 budget.

79
80 President Schmaltz summarized his thoughts on the 10-year Watershed Management
81 Plan as it relates to the Greenway Corridor effort. He recommended the District focus on
82 water quality and sustainability. He suggested conservation/habitat benefits as a
83 secondary priority. President Schmaltz recommended that the District evaluate
84 recreational opportunities with an understanding that recreation components will be led
85 by municipalities/counties.

86
87 Ms. Heinz presented a proposed strategy for the Greenway Corridor initiative including
88 two major focus areas: shoreland and watershed. She explained how the District has
89 recently dedicated more resources to shoreland preservation through cost-share grant
90 offerings, education & outreach, and shoreline inventories. She noted that shoreline
91 protection and restoration will serve the greater Greenway Corridor initiative by
92 addressing conservation in the high-priority near-shore area. With respect to areas
93 elsewhere in the watershed, Ms. Heinz recommended the District approach a Greenway
94 Corridor idea through the lens of floodplain resiliency. She summarized the numerous
95 data collection efforts that the District has completed to date and explained how this
96 data will inform implementation activities. The floodplain vulnerability assessment is the
97 last major data collection activity that will help prioritize the District’s efforts to achieve
98 the goals from the Watershed Management Plan.

99
100 Manager Bakke asked the estimated cost of the floodplain vulnerability assessment. Ms.
101 Heinz explained that the 2024 budget contains \$55,564 for this effort under 3013
102 Watershed Planning & Resiliency. She recommended the District apply to the MN
103 Pollution Control Agency Resiliency Planning grant in early 2024 for this effort but be
104 prepared to fund from the levy/reserve if needed in order to complete the effort in 2024.

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106 Manager Anderson inquired about the possibility of creating a contingency fund in order
107 to have unrestricted funds on hand in case of unexpected costs. She expressed concern
108 about tree clearing in the shoreland area around District lakes. She suggested that the
109 District budget for a PR firm in 2024.

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111 Manager Bakke noted the funding agreement between the District, Forest Lake Lake
112 Association, and City of Forest Lake for aquatic invasive species management on Forest
113 Lake. He suggested the District build relationships with other cities and lake associations
114 to promote lake management. Mr. Kinney highlighted the recently created senior

115 program manager position and noted that it has helped the District in working with
116 partners in a successful manner. He explained that partnerships are currently being
117 coordinated more actively and thoughtfully than ever before.

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119 Managers discussed the total expense budget for 2023 compared to 2024. There was
120 general consensus to reconvene on July 20th to hold a follow-up workshop to consider
121 potential budget revisions.

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123 6. Project Update

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125 Mr. Kinney provided a brief overview of active projects including the Sunrise
126 River/Highway 61 Wetland Enhancement, County Road 50 Iron Enhanced Sand Filter,
127 Moody Lake Capstone Projects, WJD-6 Western Tributary Wetland Enhancement, and
128 Little Comfort Lake Subwatershed Enhancement.

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130 7. Summary and Approval of Board Direction

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132 Staff will prepare materials for a July 20th budget workshop in order to review potential
133 budget revisions.

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135 8. Adjourn

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137 a) Next special board meeting – July 20, 2023, 4:00 pm

138 b) Next regular board meeting – July 27, 2023, 6:30 pm

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140 Manager Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by President Schmaltz.
141 Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:47
142 p.m.

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Manager	Aye	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Dave Bakke	X			
Christopher Loth	X			
Doug Toavs	X			
Jackie Anderson	X			
Stephen Schmaltz	X			

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145 Dave Bakke, Secretary _____