



## MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

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### MEETING NOTES OF THE COMFORT LAKE-FOREST LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Present:** Tom Furey, Randy Schumacher, Richard Johnson, Mike Miron

**Others:** Manager Jackie Anderson, Administrator Mike Kinney, Emily Heinz, Aidan Read

#### 1. Watershed Update & New Staff Introduction

Aidan Read, Land Management Specialist, provided an update on watershed activities from the last month. In discussing the shoreline information meetings that are planned for Comfort and Forest Lakes, Tom Furey noted that engagement was good at the Bone Lake meeting, and Mr. Read added that several site visits had been scheduled from that event. Randy Schumacher gave an update to the Committee on conversations he has had with District staff regarding flowering rush on Forest Lake. Mr. Schumacher had discussed with staff the cost-benefit status of flowering rush, and how this is impacting ongoing treatment. One suggestion that came from the conversation was improved oversight of contractors and the herbicide applications. The overall concern with flowering rush is that treatments are not effective, and that the population of flowering rush is growing. Administrator Kinney offered more details on ways staff are ensuring that contractors are applying suitable quantities and contracts are being upheld. Further questions were discussed about the herbicide types and applications, and Mr. Read offered to keep track of the flowering rush situation and report to the Committee as appropriate.

Tom Furey asked additional questions about the Forest Lake alum treatment and asked that the relevant monitoring data be shared as it becomes available.

#### 2. Budget Discussion

Emily Heinz, Planning Coordinator, introduced the District's budget process to the Committee including the budget timeline, process and intent of District staff. Emily Heinz also described the status of the levy, loans, and grants. Aidan Read asked a clarifying question on the anticipated levy and additional details on how the levy amount is determined.

Mr. Schumacher discussed the point that the District Levy has increased more than 150% in the last ten years, while his overall tax amount has only gone up 50%. Mr. Schumacher suggested that this is something to keep in mind as the District explores



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options for office space, or other large capital projects that would require levy increases. Administrator Kinney provided additional details on some of the impact of the levy – citing the high proportion of surface water and wetlands to the District area. Tom Furey added that the levy proportion should also inform the way the District promotes its work and the value of that work. Randy asked about Truth in Taxation hearings, and Administrator Kinney confirmed that the District does hold the hearing in December, and that the hearing is well publicized. Manager Anderson added that the Board has made an effort to keep the levy dollar amount flat for periods of time in consideration of the perception of the levy to the public. The scope of projects implemented by the district has also changed, and we are likely to be entering a stage where large projects will be less frequent, and the levy may reflect that in the future.

### **3. 2023 Progress Report – Emily**

Emily Heinz gave a presentation on the 2023 progress report and summarized the activities of the District throughout the year, as well as an update on progress towards water quality goals.

Randy Schumacher emphasized that the progress report was very well suited towards being presented to the public, and congratulated staff on a job well done.

### **4. Closing & Election of Chair**

Randy Schumacher was elected Chair of the May meeting. Future agenda items were reviewed, and it was agreed that the results of the Saint Anthony Falls Laboratory's Wake Boat study should be shared with the Committee when available. Manager Anderson is scheduled to attend the May 14<sup>th</sup> CAC meeting.