

## 2026 CANDIDATE STATEMENTS FOR FLMWC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **CHRIS KELLY, INCUMBENT**

Dear Neighbors,

As I run for re-election to the FLMWC Board of Directors, I've been reflecting on what makes Forest Lakes such a special place to live. It is the resilience we showed during the CZU fires and the way we continue to look out for one another. It is that same spirit of community that I bring to my work on the Board.

Over the last four years, I have worked to apply my professional background in nuclear engineering and system design to the challenges of our water infrastructure. Having served as Vice President this past year and currently as Interim Treasurer, I have gained more of an understanding of both the operational and financial health of our company.

However, I believe that technical expertise is only half the battle. A successful Board must be approachable and compassionate. I believe we should always err on the side of kindness toward our shareholders, ensuring that every member of our community feels heard, respected, and supported.

My family—Angela, Brendan, and I—love this community deeply. Whether I am hosting a stargazing party or reviewing a budget, my goal is to ensure that Forest Lakes remains a place of security, charm, and mutual support.

I ask for your vote to continue serving as a steady hand and a kind voice on your Board of Directors.

Sincerely,

Christopher Kelly

Proud Forest Lakes Homeowner

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### **DEVON PATTILLO, INCUMBENT**

Dear Forest Lakes neighbors,

My name is Devon Pattillo. I am completing my first two-year term on the FLMWC Board and would be grateful for your vote to serve again.

Over the last two years, I have come to better understand the breadth of the company's responsibilities. We are fortunate to be in a strong position in many ways, including reliable water supply and quality. But our community-owned company also faces important work ahead: maintaining roads and infrastructure, using our resources wisely, improving communications, and preparing for wildfire and extreme weather events.

I believe FLMWC should function efficiently while keeping community at the center. Our sense of community is one of our greatest strengths, and I support continued community events, volunteer involvement, and shareholder engagement.

I hope you will support me for another term, and I look forward to seeing you at community events or on a committee.

## **CHRIS SPRAGUE**

A Vision for a Modern, Efficient Forest Lakes

To the Residents and Shareholders of Forest Lakes,

I am writing to formally announce my candidacy for the Board of Directors. I am running because I care deeply about our community's future, the sustainability of our resources, and the financial well-being of every household in Forest Lakes. As a software professional and entrepreneur, my daily work revolves around finding smart, practical ways to use technology to help organizations run smoothly and transparently. I want to bring those exact skills to our local water board to ensure Forest Lakes is as efficient, cost-effective, and public-facing as possible.

Forest Lakes Mutual Water Company does incredibly important work keeping our community running. As we look to the future, I believe we have an amazing opportunity to build on that foundation. By introducing modern, data-driven tools, we can make our systems more resilient, make our operations more cost-effective, and provide our neighbors with unprecedented clarity into how the Forest Lakes Mutual Water Company works for them.

### **Building on Our Strengths through Modernization**

Every public utility faces the challenge of balancing rising costs with the need to maintain aging infrastructure. In my view, the best way to protect our environment and our pocketbooks isn't just to manage things as they've always been done—it's to innovate.

By taking a fresh, collaborative look at our existing processes, we can identify areas where modern software and IT can lend a hand. This approach is built on three constructive pillars:

#### **1. Proactive Maintenance through Smart Technology**

Right now, our utility infrastructure relies on a "react-and-repair" cycle. By gradually introducing smart monitoring sensors and data analytics to our distribution network, we can shift toward proactive maintenance. Finding a minor pressure drop or a small leak early prevents major water waste and avoids expensive emergency repairs as well as decreasing the time required to read the meters. This protects our water supply and keeps emergency costs off your monthly bill.

#### **2. Friendly, Accessible Transparency**

True accountability means making information easy to find and simple to understand. I advocate for the creation of a clear, user-friendly public dashboard. This platform would share regular updates on our progress, including water quality metrics, water conservation milestones, and

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major project budgets. When data is open and accessible, it builds trust and allows all of us to stay informed about the resources we depend on.

### 3. Enhancing Administrative Efficiency

Every dollar saved on administrative overhead is a dollar that can be reinvested into upgrading our water pipes and treatment facilities. By updating our internal IT tools and streamlining routine software tasks, we can free up staff time and reduce operational overhead. These efficiencies are a vital tool for keeping our rates stable and affordable over the long term.

### **A Vision of Stability and Collaboration**

In my professional career, I've learned that the best technical solutions are those that bring people together, provide clarity, and create a sense of calm. I am not interested in technology for its own sake. I am interested in clean, stable, and practical solutions that deliver real peace of mind to our community.

When you think about our local water board, you should feel confident that Forest Lakes water is being managed with professional precision, forward-thinking stewardship, and a deep respect for the public budget.

### **My Promise to You**

If elected, I will bring an open mind, an analytical perspective, and a collaborative spirit to the Board. I will work alongside our dedicated staff and fellow board members to ask the constructive questions that move us forward:

- How can we use modern data to protect our local water supply from drought?
- How can we optimize our digital tools to make interacting with Forest Lakes Mutual Water company staff easier for shareholders?
- How can we design our public reports to be as clear and accessible as possible?

I view your water rates as a vital investment in our community's future, and I am committed to making sure that investment is managed wisely. My background in software and IT gives me a unique toolset to help guide Forest Lakes into its next chapter—one defined by innovation, accountability, transparency, and fiscal responsibility.

I would be honored to have your support and your vote as we work together to build a modern, reliable, and community-focused Forest Lakes.

Warmly, Chris Sprague – Candidate for Water Board Director

## **BENJAMIN CHARPY**

I'm applying for the Board of Directors because I care about our Forest Lakes community. I worked in water-pump machining giving me practical insight into engineering and system maintenance and have managed large projects in international settings, strengthening coordination, planning, and communication. As a parent I am aware that the lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure forces families and children to walk and play in the roadway.

My priorities are :

- **Road safety** = Proposing improvements to road conditions and pedestrian/bike infrastructure.
- **Maintenance catch up** = Understanding and helping to establish preventive and curative plans.
- **Planning and transparency** = Improving communication to the stakeholders around current projects and investment needs.
- **Fire resilience** = Working with the different committees and neighbors to mutualize resources (ie:landscaping services).

I want to work with the board to make choices that protect our families and our shared infrastructure.

Benjamin Charpy.

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### CHRISTINA BARAUSKAS

Since I became a FLMWC shareholder, I have attended most Board meetings in order to understand the ever evolving bureaucracy, and stay informed of the latest permits and rules for rural water utilities. And to find ways to address the lack of trust our elected volunteer Board are inevitably rewarded with for their long hours of jumping through hoops to keep our water running, bills paid, and our private roads open.

How bad can it get when no one sees the need to volunteer anymore?

In 2012, when I finally owned my own cabin, I had been living most my life in the vast stretches of the interior US that has no piped utilities. But these communities have rich social lives, and like all able bodied young, I gained a lot of water experience, as I drove the water barrels pickup trucks over long unpaved tracks to fill up the small tanks of our elders. So, naturally when I moved here so my kids could access to a college education, I jumped right in to help.

I started with addressing heated disputes by restarting the **Forest Lakes News**, both printed and online. Submissions were encouraged at [forestlakesnews@hotmail.com](mailto:forestlakesnews@hotmail.com). To get more participation, I made the first "Forest Lakes Community" Facebook page, submit your address to join. But Directors were worried at first that it was "Airing out our underwear in public." So I turned it over for them to moderate it.

Shareholder anger erupted over the hostile office situation. The office was off limits to non water operators and their friends, and billing was selective. The treasurer had asked me to write the minutes for the Board. The meetings were outside, or at someone's house. When the Treasurer asked me to help with the internal financial review, I pointed out we needed bank statements, bills, or other ways to verify cryptic spreadsheets of the monthly reports. When the office manager called the office to provide these, The office manager instead disappeared with all keys and codes. Upon forcing the door. We couldn't even find a record of his address.

During the Christmas rains, a resident found file boxes were found in a gully off Quarry. So, Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> I volunteered to sit in the office, collect the assessments and enter them, and bills into new Quickbooks. And answer the phone. Directors did the daily January bank runs. and the one remaining water operator helped me understand the basics of FLMWC and to piece the surviving files back together. Newly elected Directors got more involved in the office, and I was very grateful to step back, because of when I sat in the office, I experienced being the target for the anger because of previous neglect. They found and hired Dawana, a real office manager!

I had far more fun organizing and playing in live music shows, and putting on dance classes for all ages on the basketball court. And I did a CERT Map the Neighborhood to encourage Firewise participation, just in time to weather the 2020 fires aftermath. And all long I pulled acres and acres of accumulated scotch broom every year, choking all our fire roads and escapes.

We live in a redwood forest where are lucky to own water rights and the minerals below our homes. But it has been a fight to keep our fire fighting lake for 12 years now, and now, all those

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new high rises being build nearby will need a larger share of limited water. Our redwoods will dry to tinder without our lake, that sits strategically at the foot of a dangerous "fire chute" into the whole canyon. Before 1985 very canyon had such a reservoir, but most lost them to the water need of the Santa Cruz County beach towns growing into one long city.

We see a lot of new talent making their homes here now, so I hope to bring more resident input into our Board decision making.

I will be available at [forestlakesnews@hotmail.com](mailto:forestlakesnews@hotmail.com) to make it easier for residents who see a problem, and will ask for a committee meeting to address it so it does not have to wait a month. To fix things faster, before it festers.