

Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission Minutes
May 15, 2009

Attending:

Paul Peterson	White Bear Township (WBT), Chair
Neil Franey	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Mark Graham	Vadnais Heights (VH)
<i>Absent</i>	Lino Lakes (LL)
<i>Absent</i>	Gem Lake (GL)
John Youngstrom	North Oaks (NO)

Others in attendance: Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Lampert, Brian Corcoran, Kathryn Smith, VLAWMO; Marty Long, NO City Council and VLAWMO Board Director; Tom Wesolowski, City of Shoreview; John Blackstone (SPRWS)

I. Call to Order Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

II. Approval of Agenda

Replacement of Item 5. E. – Remove Drinking Water Revolving Fund and replace with Cost Share Program to decide on 2 grant applications that arrived. It was moved and seconded by Graham & Youngstrom to approve the agenda as amended. Vote: all aye. Motion Passed.

III. Minutes

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Youngstrom to approve the minutes of the April meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. Introduction of Intern

V. New Business

A. Zebra Mussel presentation – Tom Wesolowski, City of Shoreview

Wesolowski described the genesis of the Snail Lake Improvement District (SLID). Under a permit from the DNR the SLID pumped water from Sucker Lake (VLAWMO) into Snail Lake until 2007 when zebra mussels were found in Sucker Lake. The DNR pulled their augmentation permit and required SLID to figure out a way to remove the mussels from the water before it goes into Snail Lake. When zebra mussels first come into a lake water clarity improves because of the filtering capacity of the mussels. However, the mussels change the ecological balance over time and water degrades time because they compete with small fish for food and increase weed growth and algae blooms. They reproduce quickly and attach to pipes, boats, docks and cause major damage. SLID will be doing a screening facility within an overlook area at Vadnais-Snail Lake Regional Park, on the east side of intersection of Rice Street and Snail Lake Boulevard. This has become a multi-jurisdictional project. Project consists of: underground concrete pit, automatic self cleaning strainer/filter equipment designed to remove zebra mussel larva (villagers), metal grating placed over equipment for protection and easy access, and a shelter constructed over the equipment which will match picnic shelters in the County Park. The project will be bid on June 4, 2009 with

construction to start mid July and be complete in the fall so that the augmentation can start again next year. Project will cost about \$500,000. At this point, no zebra mussels were found in Snail Lake. It was asked if SPRWS will sell their water for other lakes in VLAWMO such as Gilfillan and ponds. Blackstone said it opens up a lot of sticky questions and the history of Snail Lake should be researched and SPRWS has restrictions for how much they can pump. VLAWMO will write a letter acknowledging that Wesolowski came to do a presentation and asking to be kept up to date on this project.

B. Gilfillan Lake – request to discontinue small appropriations permits

A request from an individual property owner came via email (as well as verbally by 2 other property owners) to discontinue a small appropriations permit for people to take water from the lakes for non-essential activities. The City was concerned that this was just a single request rather than through a lake association. Stephanie said we could recommend setting an elevation minimum where small appropriations should not be allowed. Blackstone asked the TEC to consider that if they aren't drawing surface water, they will be drawing from groundwater as well as how much is being taken; that there are more impacts than just the surface water. TEC hesitates to make a motion on anything today. Stephanie explained some historical context – when the permit was created, it was considered that the amount being allowed, it is not going to harm the health of the lake. Motion by Graham & Franey that TEC will table this pending further information. A response will be made to the property owner.

C. Approval of Annual Agreements

1. Wetland Conservation Act 2009 subgrant from BWSR through RCD Franey/Graham move to approve. Passed.

2. ESRI Annual License – GIS software for Kris Graham/Franey move to approve. Passed.

D. Delineator Certification Training

VLAWMO would like to have another staff person trained on this. Brian Corcoran would do it the first week of July. There is a scholarship to pay for half of the training cost. A motion was made by Franey/Youngstrom to authorize the scholarship request. Motion passed.

E. Cost Share Program – Kris reviewed the first two applications for the 2009 cost-share grant, Ronna Smitherman and Ryan & Vanessa Strong.

Graham/Franey moved to approve. Motion passed.

F. Draft 2010 budget worksheet – At the request of the Board staff produced a zero increase budget as well a list of suggested 'low-hanging-fruit' budget line items that would be the first recommended for reduction if necessary. TEC reviewed the original proposed, a possible zero-increase budget and potential line item trims. Franey thinks that since VLAWMO added another staff person, it is inherent that we would be doing more work and therefore have an increase in the budget. McNamara reminded the TEC that the rent will have increased from \$3600 in 2008 to \$9600 in 2010. Peterson/Graham moved that the TEC recommends the Proposed 2010 at this point but will review the budget further. Passed.

- G. Report to Board/Change of Meeting Dates** – Currently the TEC meets after the Board meeting in month. It may be wise to change the meeting dates so that TEC meets the week prior which would be the 2nd Friday of each month rather than the 3rd Friday. Franey/Youngstrom – moved to change date. Passed. Graham will not be at the June meeting.
- VI. Programs & Projects – possible action**
- A. Lambert Creek**
- a. TMDL – Workplan Update**
Waiting to hear from the state regarding funding for our TMDL.
- b. Creek Assessment with Wenck and RCD**
VLAWMO will be moving forward on this project. A letter will be sent to homeowners along Lambert Creek to inform them of this project since staff will be walking the creek to assess the slope and health of the creek.
- B. Monitoring Program Report**
The training session with VLAWMO volunteers and MN Waters was held May 2 at Tamarack Nature Center. 2009 monitoring has started.
- C. Public Education Program**
- a. Citizen’s Advisory Committee**
- 1) Earth Day & Governor’s Fishing Opener** VLAWMO had several volunteers at each and there were many an opportunities to interact with the public.
- 2) Raingarden Workshops** – A videotape session is being done by CAC volunteers with some expense for videotaping.; A 102 Raingarden Design class was requested at the first workshop and is scheduled for June 18th.
- 3) Watershed Tour – June**
Tentative date is June 24th from 4:15 – 6:15pm. Looking for availability from TEC, BOD, CAC to confirm.
- b. Blue Thumb Partnership**
- D. Policy Implementation – Community Workshop June 3**
A Workshop with City Engineers and City Planners to go over the new Water Management standards Policy and Memo of Understanding.
- E. Whitaker Pond Project – Update**
Contract has been signed with EOR to do the design. Our plan is to have the drawings completed and have another meeting with the stakeholders to get their commitment.
- F. Sustainable Lake Management Plans**
- 1) Birch Lake** – The revised edition is complete and is on the web.
- 2) Tamarack & Fish** – Kristine will work on getting a draft done so a meeting can be held with the stakeholders to review and comment.
- 3) Gilfillan** – Brian reported that there was a meeting with homeowners with lake level being the primary concern. VLAWMO sent out a survey and have gotten a strong response. Wenck is putting together a water budget and memo. Brian is concerned that the homeowners will assume that VLAWMO will be able to solve the water level problems. By the next meeting, Brian will have a summary of the results. Stephanie said

that doing the water budget has been more complicated than expected and the TEC may have to increase our approved expenditure to cover the additional costs. A recommendation will be available for the next meeting.

VII. Reports

A. Financial

1. May Report: Stephanie reviewed the May report.

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Franey to accept the May report and authorize checks for payment. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. WCA Activity – we have an enforcement action on the Buckley property where there has not been any action to restore his wetland or apply for a WCA wildlife habitat exemption application The property owner will be given a deadline for compliance.

VIII. Commissioner Reports – Graham brought up an article in the Star Tribune on Wednesday regarding how the City of Ramsey has repealed their wetland buffer standard due to the City Council concerns that the buffers could be considered a property taking. Graham stated that it is something that VLAWMO may see happen.

IX. Administrator Report – Watershed boundary update: We have our new legal description which will be reviewed by our legal.

X. Public Comment – Blackstone stated that SPRWS will be having an open house May 28th from 2-6pm. Blackstone also stated that the USGS is also continuing their study of flow at Lambert Lake.

XI. Adjourn

It was moved & seconded by Franey & Graham to adjourn at 9:21 am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by KL/ SMc.