

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization  
Technical Commission Minutes  
July 14, 2017  
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room**

**Commission Members Present:**

Mark Graham	Vadnais Heights (VH)
Dale Bacon	White Bear Lake (WBL) - alternate
Bob Larson	North Oaks (NO)
Gloria Tessier	Gem Lake (GL)
Paul Duxbury	White Bear Township (WBT)

**Commission Members Absent:**

Marty Asleson Lino Lakes (LL)

**Others in attendance:** Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Jenson, Brian Corcoran, Tyler Thompson, (VLAWMO); Margaret Behrens (Ramsey Conservation District – RCD); Jeremy Erickson, Justine Roe (St. Paul Regional Water Service – SPRWS); Diane Gorder (City of North Oaks)

I. **Call to Order** Chair Graham called the meeting to order at 7.30:am.

II. **Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by Graham and seconded by Larson approve the July 14, 2017 agenda. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

It was moved by Graham and seconded by Larson to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2017 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. **Administration & Operations**

A. Administrator's report

We had a Board meeting on Wednesday night. Stephanie distributed the 2018 budget which they approved that evening. The Board added money to the budget to fund ditch management work and another \$20,000 to go towards further study on alum dosing and spent lime treatment on Goose Lake. They also directed the staff to study the other options we have to fund capital improvement projects such as assessing fees to benefitting areas for specific projects.

V. **Projects**

A. Project Updates

1. Wilkinson & Goose Lakes Project Study

Kristine organized two meetings with partners to discuss what our next steps should be for Goose Lake's nutrient reduction. Barr Engineering's report states that alum treatments in both basins would give us large reductions in phosphorus. Alum treatments are not inexpensive and therefore we needed input from partners to determine if they would support this sort of treatment and be able to assist with funding. Healthy discussion was had about the effectiveness of this sort of treatment given Goose Lake's unique characteristics and uses but in the end, the partners were supportive of VLAWMO pursuing grants to help with costs. Barr Engineering would be needed to help with some further calculations in order to have a competitive BWSR Clean Water Fund grant application and this work would cost \$10,000. The \$10,000 would be used for the following:

1. Collection of 6 sediment cored from both East and West Goose Lake basins and analysis for phosphorus fractionations.
2. Alum dose determinations and project cost estimates involving one or more treatment combinations for the two lake basins.
3. Technical memo summarizing the results of the first 2 tasks.
4. Preparation of supporting information for BWSR grant application submittal.

VLAWMO asked the partners if they could help with half of this cost. SPRWS came forward and said they would give \$5000 towards this endeavor. We asked the Board at their July 12 meeting for approval for the other \$5000 and they agreed with that. However, the Board directed staff to not apply for Clean Water Fund grants this year. Additionally, the Board approved \$10,000 for Barr to help us further study the possibility of spent lime treatment as a nutrient reduction option.

2. Birch Lake – 4<sup>th</sup> & Otter Lake Road

Barr delivered the technical memo regarding a project for this site. Their proposal calls for a detention chamber near the outlet and iron-enhanced sand filters which they predict will capture 8.1 pounds of total phosphorus per year. The Board gave approval to go for a Clean Water Fund grant and Kristine will submit an application before the August 9<sup>th</sup> deadline. Kristine will be talking with partners about helping to meet the match if funded and/or how we can move forward if we don't receive a grant.

3. Whitaker Treatment Wetlands

On April 26, 2017, the Board gave authorization to proceed with the RFP for the Whitaker Treatment Wetlands construction and to have staff bring a contractor recommendation to the June 28, 2017 Board meeting. Six bids were received for the project ranging from \$217,250 to \$354,000. The engineer's estimate of probable cost was \$247,000. Staff asked our engineer's, Burns & McDonnell, to conduct an evaluation of the bids received and to give a letter of recommendation for the lowest qualified bidder.

VLAWMO staff, along with our engineer Burns & McDonnell, recommend approval of Belair Builders, Inc. as the Whitaker Treatment Wetlands construction contractor.

The Board approved the awarding of this project to Belair Builders.

4. Lambert Creek – Branch Ditch #5A Maintenance

Moving forward on the Lower Lambert drainage subject, the City of Vadnais Heights is moving to begin maintenance on Branch Ditch #5A of Lambert Creek in the form "ditch repair." As the drainage authority, under MN Statute Chapter 103E, VLAWMO is providing technical assistance where it can. As a "repair", under Section 103E.701 "Repairs", Subdivision 1: *"The term "repair," as used in this section, means to restore all or a part of a drainage system as nearly as practicable to the same hydraulic capacity as originally constructed and subsequently improved"*

The anticipated purpose of this work is to potentially restore the Branch Ditch to its former capacity, and to relieve high water, and equalize the upstream. The City of Vadnais Heights has offered to pay for the repair, and has solicited a contractor for an estimated project cost. Graham stated that not only do we need to think about our big projects, we also need to think about the smaller projects and working with residents about the issues they may have in backyards (ditches and wetlands).

**Discussion:** Larson asked about who owns the ditches. Graham stated that it varies. Some are within easements and some aren't. Behrens stated that in Maplewood she encounters residents with issues as well and praised VLAWMO staff and the City of Vadnais Heights for how they work with the residents here and that they are appreciated. Stephanie stated that we are the drainage authority for Ditch 14 and its branches and we will work with our communities to manage these issues.

Duxbury stated that it would be very important that we work with those within benefitting areas if we are going to assess them so that we have buy-in before they suddenly get a new tax. Stephanie said that would definitely be part of the process.

VI. Programs

A. Cost Share

Kristine informed the TEC that the Board approved one of the two Landscape Level 2 (LL2) grants that the TEC recommended at their June meeting. They approved the grant for the townhome association in North Oaks to install irrigation sensors which will reduce water usage. They denied the grant to Cabin 61 (owned by the Ski Otters).

**B. Education & Outreach**

1. State of the River Reports are available for TEC members. Please use this resource to be familiarized with issues concerning regional water quality. Sections from the report that relate to our work in VLAWMO are flow, bacteria, phosphorus, nitrates, chloride, and sediment.

2. Three macroinvertebrate workshops have taken place this spring with school groups and summer programs. TEC members can find the printed flyers for upcoming public macroinvertebrate events at the TEC meeting – your assistance in dispersing these flyers in your networks around town is greatly appreciated!

3. New materials are available explaining VLAWMO’s buffer recommendations, derived from the VLAWMO water policy. A series of three documents are available under “outreach materials” on the “local government” tab on the website: <http://www.vlawmo.org/agencies/>. These documents are tools for cities and townships to better understand wetland and storm pond buffer measurements, and why they’re an asset for the watershed. TEC members can help carry out VLAWMO’s water policy by utilizing these documents when applicable. We aspire for the public, developers, and municipalities to see the water policy recommendations as attainable and approachable, while knowing that VLAWMO is here to answer questions and provide assistance.

Additional notes:

4. Nick is searching for houses and demonstration actors to help with a summer lawn care video. Please contact Nick if you’d like to utilize your yard, tools, or narrate a portion of the video (on or off camera options are available). A table of tasks and filming goals is printed for the TEC meeting.

5. Please see the latest summer 2017 E-newsletter for further updates on Education and Outreach.

Gorder passed around a flyer Nick made about a phenology educational event for the City of North Oaks. The event will be on July 19<sup>th</sup> from 7-8:30pm.

**C. WCA – Incidental wetland review**

Brian discussed an Incidental Wetland Review on a 2 acre parcel just northwest of Birch Lake. Property is owned by Betsy Larey. A delineation was performed in 2013 and two wetland boundaries were identified and marked. Homeowner requested that the notice of decision not be issued so that the disturbed site could be studied further to better define wetland boundaries. Wetland basin 1 contained buried carpet, asphalt and rock. Basin 2 receives discharge from a stormwater detention pond located adjacent to the west. Due to the landscape being altered, buried debris and constructed berms in area, property owner and delineator are requesting that some of the wetland on site is incidental wetland and not regulated by WCA. Ground water monitoring, aerial imagery review and onsite inspection of property were used to back up findings. The property owner would like to see the area developed into a “pocket neighborhood”.

**VII. Reports**

**A. Financial Report for July 2017 & Authorization for Payment**

It was moved by Larson and seconded by Graham to approve the treasurer’s report and July payment of checks. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**VIII. Commissioner Reports**

**IX. St. Paul Regional Water Service (SPRWS) Report**

Roe stated that this weekend is the Highland Fest so the old water tower will be open for tours. Erickson stated they are pursuing a green infrastructure grant with Met Council to see if Lambert Lake is still functioning and to do an overall wetland assessment to determine if the area is still working to reduce phosphorus. Roe said they have also submitted grants to incentive homeowners to change out their lead pipes as well as for leaky systems. Also they would like to do an assessment of the conduits from Centerville that enter Deep Lake to see if they still let water into the lake. Gorder stated that she lives right there and she does not see any flow coming from that conduit. She invited SPRWS staff to come see it.

**X. Ramsey Conservation District (RCD) Report**

Behrens passed around flyer regarding meetings about soil health and about a new aquatic invasive species called starry stonewort and how to identify it.

**XI. Public Comment**

Gorder introduced Jerry Hinderman to the TEC. He serves on the NEST committee.

**XII. Next Meetings**

TEC: August 11; Board: August 23

**XIII. Adjourn**

It was moved by Graham and Bacon to adjourn at 8:21am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.