

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization  
Technical Commission (TEC) Minutes  
February 11, 2026  
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Council Chambers  
800 County Road E East, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127**

**Commission Members Present:**

Erin Spry (alternate)	Vadnais Heights (VH)
Gloria Tessier	Gem Lake (GL)
Susan Miller	North Oaks (NO)
Jami Philip	White Bear Township (WBT)
Tom Hoffman	City of Lino Lakes (LL)

**Absent:** Nick Ousky (Vadnais Heights); Terry Huntrods (City of White Bear Lake (WBL))

**Others in attendance:** Phil Belfiori, Brian Corcoran, Dawn Tanner, Lauren Sampedro, Angela Hugunin (VLAWMO staff); Jeremy Erickson (SPRWS), Ed Shapland (WAV).

**I. Call to Order**

Vice Chair Tessier called the meeting to order at 8:15 am.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by Commissioner Philip and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the February 11, 2026 TEC agenda as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**III. Approval of Minutes (January 14, 2026)**

It was moved by Commissioner Philip and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the January 14, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**IV. Administration & Operations**

**A. February Financial Report and Consider Authorization for Payment**

Administrator Belfiori summarized the February financial statement as included in the TEC packet. He highlighted income from the final SSU revenue for 2025 from Anoka and Ramsey counties, which was the allotment from December. He also highlighted payments to the consultant for the new website, Incarnation Lutheran Church for grant reimbursement, and to consultant engineers for initial work to develop concept designs for the Wilkinson Phase 2 project.

Administrator Belfiori recommended approval of the February financial report and payment of the bills.

It was moved by Commissioner Philip and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the February financial report and authorize for payment. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

#### B. TEC Report to Board for February

Administrator Belfiori presented some of the highlights from the TEC Report to the Board for the February 25<sup>th</sup> meeting. These included staff continuing to work with the City of Vadnais Heights on feasibility work and data collection for the next project phase of the City Hall resiliency project and partnering on the whole city resiliency study. The Communication and Outreach program was busy with the Get Gritty campaign, annual report development, and Rotary Nature Preserve sign development. The grant programs have started being active with grant applications and preparation for the Turf Alternatives workshop. He also highlighted the annual field visit for the 2025 audit started today and the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) is being considered for submission to BWSR at the February 25<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

Administrator Belfiori recommended approval of the February TEC report to the Board.

It was moved by Commissioner Philip and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the February TEC report to the Board. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

### V. Programs

#### A. Watershed Awards – Updated Deadline for Nominations

Hugunin shared that the nomination deadline for the Watershed Steward Award has been extended, and nominations will now be accepted through March 1<sup>st</sup> in efforts to get a more robust nomination pool for the TEC's review. She encouraged the TEC to consider submitting a nomination. Hugunin shared that staff hope to have nominees ready for the TEC's consideration by the March TEC meeting.

#### B. Website Update

Hugunin stated that the new website is now live. She shared that some of the Google functionality is still being set up and it can take Google search engines a few weeks to catch up to the new website links. She added that if the TEC are searching for a document through Google, it may not be available yet but should be accessible on the VLAWMO website directly. She thanked the TEC for their support and assistance in the development of the new website.

#### C. Spring Workshop Announcement: Turf Alternatives

Hugunin shared that an in-person Turf Alternatives workshop, a partnership with Blue Thumb, will be held on March 4<sup>th</sup> from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Vadnais Heights City Hall. She said this workshop is in response to a lot of community interest from our garden tours, conversations at events, and grant applications. There is so much interest in turf alternatives. Hugunin said that VLAWMO's grant programs will be shared at the end of the workshop. She shared there are flyers about the workshop available to take today and invited the TEC to attend or to help spread the word.

Commissioner Miller asked if the event has been posted on the VLAWMO Facebook page. Hugunin confirmed that the first promotional post would go live that afternoon and said it will be part of a series of Facebook posts. Commissioner Miller responded that she would share it with North Oaks community members. Hugunin added the event will also be posted in the North Oaks weekly e-newsletter.

Commissioner Philip stated that she printed the workshop flyer and posted it in White Bear Township's Town Hall, the Town website, and on social media.

Alternate Commissioner Spry asked if there is a need to coordinate with the local government units to ensure their website links are updated with VLAWMO's new website. Hugunin confirmed and responded they will be hearing from her soon.

## **VI. Projects**

### **A. Consider Recommendation of WMP 90-day Draft**

Tanner presented that staff are happy to have the final draft of the WMP included in the packet. She explained this is the 90-day review draft that will need to be sent to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for approval. A public hearing for the WMP will be held on Feb 25, 2026. She noted the hearing was publicly noticed in Press Pubs last week and this week. She provided an update on the WMP process since December, including that the review agency and staff comments were addressed in this draft of the WMP. She stated that one of the main comments BWSR requested was adding more priority criteria to the WMP, with six main comment areas.

She explained the six high-priority comment areas: first, the recommendation to identify priority resources for focal efforts over the next 10 years; second, the request to clearly provide measurable goals and quantifiable measures and identify more goals that can be measured (she shared examples of new measurable goals for Birch Lake and Tamarack Lake that were added to address this); third, checking the timing for WMP approval and if budget information needs to be added for 2026 (was determined the current plan goes through 2026 and the budget can begin at 2027); fourth, adding priority wetland areas; fifth, adding water quality monitoring data trends (she explained Trophic State Index (TSI) data was added to address this); and sixth, clarifying the degree to which the WMP can be adopted by reference by member communities (she said

this was addressed by adding that communities can only adopt data and maps by reference from the WMP).

Tanner presented the next steps of the WMP process including bringing the WMP to the February 25, 2026, Board meeting to hold a public hearing and recommend approval of the WMP, and submittal of the WMP to BWSR for their 90-day review after the meeting.

Staff recommended the TEC provide a recommendation to the Board to approve the 90-day draft WMP.

Alternate Commissioner Spry congratulated staff and stated she especially appreciated the call out boxes and measurable goals.

Commissioner Tessier stated the WMP is very comprehensive and recognized staff's work to put the plan together.

It was moved by Commissioner Philip and seconded by Commissioner Miller to recommend to the Board to approve the 90-Day BWSR Review Draft WMP and submit the approved WMP to BWSR for inclusion on the agenda at the BWSR Metro meeting on April 6, 2026.

#### B. Update on 319/Wilkinson Lake Phase 2 Project

Tanner provided an update that documents for phase 2 of the Wilkinson Lake project are underway to be ready for the next Board meeting. She stated that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is under review by project partners and Houston Engineering has been working on an updated project design that will be ready to present soon.

Tanner explained that the project involves the same partners as the first phase of the Wilkinson deep-water wetland project. She stated the MOU and maintenance agreement are now a single document and the agreement will be signed this coming Friday. She added that the updated project design will be an exhibit in the MOU and maintenance agreement. She explained a temporary easement document is underway, and the Minnesota Land Trust (MLT) needs to be a signatory on the easement due to having an easement on the conservation area. She said staff's goal is to have the MOU signed and ready to bring to the February 25, 2026, Board meeting. MLT has provided an email of support for the temporary easement that will be included in the Board packet, while staff and partners continue to work on the easement.

#### C. Consider Recommendation on Invasive Common Carp Removal 2025 Report

Tanner shared that a 2025 report is now available from Carp Solutions. She highlighted that the biomass is now at a density of 14 kg/ha. She noted that when the carp removal project started, the biomass density was at 273 kg/ha. Tanner added that Carp Solutions has estimated that the

current population stands at around 500 individuals. Staff are not seeing successful reproduction of the carp because they are unable to access the areas where the eggs and young can survive.

Commissioner Miller asked where the carp are able to successfully spawn, and if the carp cannot spawn in the channel between Deep Lake and Pleasant Lake because of the primary fish barrier. Tanner confirmed and explained that the carp are trying to go to shallow waterbodies. They used to go to Wilkinson Lake to spawn, but the Wilkinson carp barrier has prevented that. Carp are still trying to get to that area to spawn but are unable to and can only spawn in areas like Deep Lake where there is more predation. She added the carp removal work is now moving to the maintenance phase. Commissioner Miller stated there is a heavy flow of water through the channel from Charley Lake to Pleasant Lake and asked if the carp have issues navigating that. Tanner responded that the carp can still go through it. Commissioner Miller asked if there are plans to add a barrier at Charley Lake. Tanner replied Carp Solutions considered that option, but a barrier system would likely not be effective due to the flow. She added that trap netting could be effective there in the future, if needed.

Staff recommended that the TEC provide a recommendation to the Board to accept and share the 2025 year-end report from Carp Solutions.

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Philip to recommend to the Board to accept and share the 2025 year-end report from Carp Solutions.

## **VII. Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner Philip stated she will not be able to attend the March TEC meeting and will find an alternate.

## **VIII. NOHOA**

None.

## **IX. Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division (RCSWCD)**

None.

## **X. St. Paul Regional Water Services**

None.

## **XI. Public Comment**

None.

## **XII. Next Meetings**

TEC meeting: March 11, 2026 at 8:15 am; Board meeting and WMP Public Hearing: February 25, 2026 at 7:00 pm.

## **XIII. Adjourn**

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Philip to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 am. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.