

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS – JUNE 17, 2026, REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Attendance		Present	Absent
Jim Lindner, Chair	City of Gem Lake	X	
Rob Rafferty	City of Lino Lakes	X	
Sara Shah	City of North Oaks	X	
Ed Prudhon	White Bear Township	X	
Andrea West	City of White Bear Lake	X	
Jerry Moynagh	City of Vadnais Heights	X**	
Phil Belfiori	Administrator	X	
Dawn Tanner	Program Development Coord.	X	
Brian Corcoran	Water Resources Mgr.	X	
Lauren Sampedro	Watershed Tech & Program Coord.	X	
Angela Hugunin	Communication & Outreach Coord.	X	

*= with prior notice

**= alternate

Others in attendance: Susan Miller (TEC)

I. Call to Order

The regular Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Board Chair Lindner.

II. Approval of Agenda 🐦

The agenda for the June 17, 2026 Board meeting was presented for approval.

A motion was made by Director Shah and seconded by Director West to approve the June Board meeting agenda as presented. Vote: all: aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes 🐦

The minutes from the April 22, 2026 Board meeting were placed on the agenda for approval, as presented.

A motion was made by Director Rafferty and seconded by Director West to approve the April 22, 2026 minutes. Vote: Lindner: aye; Rafferty: aye; Shah: aye; West: aye; Prudhon: abstained; Moynagh: abstained. Motion passed.

IV. Consent Agenda 🐦

Chair Lindner asked if any Board members wished to take items off the consent agenda for discussion.

Consent items on the agenda and included in the June Board packet were as follows:

A. Consider VLAWMO Water Management Policy

- B. Consider VLAWMO 2027-2029 Salary Structure Table
- C. Consider VLAWMO Records Retention Schedule
- D. Consider Standards of Conduct regarding Conflict of Interest Policy
- E. Consider Administration of SSU Fee Policy
- F. Consider LMCIT Liability Waiver Form
- G. Consider Rotary Park Wetland Restoration Project Scope of Work #2
- H. Consider Cooperative Agreement for Maintenance of Vadnais-Snail Regional Park Restoration Project
- I. Update on EPA 319 Grant – Proposed Project #2
- J. Update on City of Vadnais Heights LCCMR Proposal and Award

A motion was made by Director Prudhon and seconded by Director Shah to approve the consent agenda as presented. Vote: all: aye. Motion passed.

A. Public Visitors - Non-agenda items

None.

V. Visitors and Presentations

A. TEC Report to the Board for April & Finance Report

Susan Miller, TEC Liaison to the Board, provided updates on behalf of VLAWMO's Technical Commission (TEC). She stated that there are numerous causes for celebration at tonight's meeting. She began by sharing that the TEC is pleased to recommend that the Board approve the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) for 2027-2036. She stated that this document will guide the organization's work for the next ten years and noted staff and consultants' efforts in assembling the WMP over time.

Chair Lindner asked about the length of the development process. Administrator Belfiori responded that it had been approximately three years including strategic planning prior to WMP development.

Commissioner Miller highlighted the TEC's recommendation that the Board approve a Landscape Level 2 grant application from the City of Vadnais Heights. This recommended grant will support innovative stormwater BMPs during the street reconstruction project along Greenhaven Drive.

Finally, Commissioner Miller described the regional resiliency project with the City of Vadnais Heights, noting that the proposed project behind City Hall will be the result of long-term planning. Funding has officially been awarded to the City of Vadnais Heights by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota's Resources. She noted that this project will treat a large amount of stormwater from the nearby commercial area, protect the area from flooding, and create a recreational area for the surrounding neighborhoods. Administrator Belfiori and Chair Lindner thanked Commissioner Miller for sharing.

VI. Business

A. Budget

1. Consider Proposed 2027 Budget Resolution 03-2026

Administrator Belfiori presented the VLAWMO Subcommittee's recommended proposed 2027 budget for the Board's consideration. He noted that, compared to the previous Watershed Management Plan, this budget continues a more comprehensive project implementation approach over the next several years per the recently approved VLAWMO WMP and the approved WMP implementation partnership project table. He stated that the proposed budget he would present was unanimously approved the Board Subcommittee—consisting of Chair Lindner, Director Doll Kanne, Director West, and TEC Representative Huntrods—at their May meeting.

Administrator Belfiori began by outlining the development process for the budget. In February, the 10-year project partnership implementation table from the now BWSR-approved WMP was sent to partner staff at numerous entities. VLAWMO staff then held separate meetings with each partner staff member to go through the 10-year implementation table and incorporate their priority projects, programs, or partnerships into the budget.

Administrator Belfiori explained that the recommended 2027 budget continues progress towards implementation of numerous high-impact, larger capital improvement type partnership projects throughout the watershed. He stated that the proposed Subcommittee-recommended budget includes an 8% increase in SSU rate when compared to the 2026 rate.

Administrator Belfiori noted that some of the larger 2027 projects have a high level of uncertainty, especially given the partnership components and joint funding. This timing and other factors will require later budget revisions and updates and will potentially influence future fund balance predictions.

Administrator Belfiori outlined budgets for each of VLAWMO's programs including water quality monitoring and studies, cost share programs, education and outreach, and special studies and analysis. He stated that the projected carryover fund balance generally aligns with the approved fund balance policy.

On May 20, 2026, the VLAWMO Subcommittee met to review the draft 2027 budget. Staff provided a summary of specific funds and program budgets. After this discussion, the Personnel Subcommittee approved the budget for salary adjustments and benefits for VLAWMO employees based on the recommended 2027-2029 salary structure table. Upon further discussion, the Subcommittee came to unanimous consensus to recommend and approve the 2027 budget included in the current discussion.

Staff recommended that, consistent with the unanimous 2027 Budget VLAWMO Subcommittee recommendation from their May 20, 2026 meeting and the discussion provided by the Board members at the 2027 preliminary draft budget discussion and the BWSR approved WMP including the WMP's 10-year project implementation table, the Board approve the 2027 VLAWMO budget as presented.

Discussion:

Chair Lindner stated that the Personnel Subcommittee was the same group of people as the general May Subcommittee who reviewed the budget, minus the TEC Representative.

Director Rafferty inquired about the salary structure table. He asked for clarification regarding the length of time of the table and whether it spans three years. Chair Lindner affirmed this and added that this work has been done by a particular consultant, Gallagher, in recent years.

Director Rafferty asked about annual salary adjustments as proposed and how that aligns with other Watershed Management Organizations (WMOs). Administrator Belfiori replied that, similar to VLAWMO's processes, other WMOs also conduct market analysis with the goal of offering competitive compensation and benefits to employees. Director Rafferty expressed his appreciation for the effort put into this process so that staff can be supported.

Chair Lindner stated that part of the challenge with the consulting process is that they look at other public entities but don't look at private industry, so an individual may still be enticed to look elsewhere if interested in going beyond the public sector.

Director Rafferty inquired about the benefits offered to employees and whether they are competitive. Administrator Belfiori stated that the Personnel Subcommittee has increased benefit offerings in recent years to ensure staff has options for competitive health benefits.

Director Shah affirmed that these offerings make sense to ensure that VLAWMO works towards the goal of maintaining competitive in the labor market. Director Prudhon echoed this and added that the ability to maintain consistent staffing minimizes potential disruption to an organization. He asked whether Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a factor in these analyses. Administrator Belfiori stated that he did not believe so, but rather that these analyses aim to assess the market value for similar positions in the region.

A motion was made by Director Rafferty and seconded by Director West to approve Resolution 03-2026 related to approval of the 2027 VLAWMO Budget. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Administrator Belfiori thanked the Board and Subcommittee for all their leadership through this process.

B. Projects and Studies/Plans

1. Consider VLAWMO Watershed Management Plan – Resolution 04-2026

Tanner provided an overview of the 10-year Watershed Management Plan (WMP) progress since the April Board meeting. She explained that, at the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) meeting on April 22, 2026, VLAWMO's WMP was authorized by BWSR. That was accompanied by a letter and order to adopt the WMP. Consistent with Minnesota

State Statutes, VLAWMO has 120 days to officially adopt the new WMP. At the TEC's June meeting, they recommended Resolution 04-2026 to the Board.

Tanner explained that, following the June Board meeting, Houston Engineering will prepare the final WMP, which will include incorporating the order from BWSR and Resolution 04-2026. Once VLAWMO receives that final package, it will be shared by VLAWMO with partners and local and state agencies. It will also be posted on VLAWMO's website as required by BWSR.

Staff recommended that the Board approve the TEC recommendation to implement the Plan by adopting the "Resolution to Adopt the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization's (VLAWMO) Watershed Management Plan," authorize staff to share the completed WMP with local and State agencies and partners, and authorize the additional services request with HEI for \$2,800 to provide a version of the WMP that complies with accessibility standards.

Discussion:
None.

Director West moved and Director Rafferty seconded the TEC recommendation to implement the WMP by adopting the "Resolution to Adopt the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization's (VLAWMO) Watershed Management Plan," authorize staff to share the completed WMP with local and State agencies and partners, and authorize the additional services request with HEI for \$2,800 to provide a version of the WMP that complies with accessibility standards. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

2. Consider Landscape Level 2 2026-01 Grant Application for City of Vadnais Heights Greenhaven Drive Stormwater BMPs

Sampedro presented an overview of a Landscape Level 2 application from the City of Vadnais Heights for stormwater best management practices (BMPs) along Greenhaven Drive as part of a street improvement project. Sampedro explained that the proposed project proposes seven tree trenches and four filtration swales on approximately 1.4 miles of Greenhaven Drive from Highway 96 to Centerville Road. While the City is required to include water quality treatment in this project, nine of the eleven proposed stormwater BMPs will provide more treatment than is required. Sampedro clarified that this grant application is specifically for the BMPs that exceed water quality treatment requirements, consistent with VLAWMO's grant policy.

Sampedro explained that the proposed BMPs are the result of a feasibility study that VLAWMO and the City partnered on to gauge whether Greenhaven Drive would have potential to implement a "Green Street" as part of the City's existing plan to undergo a street improvement project. This work was part of a Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Accelerated Implementation Grant.

Sampedro explained that the City received six bids for the Greenhaven Street Improvement Project as a whole. Sampedro stated that the low bid cost for the eligible “above and beyond BMPs” was \$151,906.48.

Staff recommended that, consistent with VLAWMO Landscape Level 2 policy, VLAWMO fund 90% of the eligible costs at \$136,715.83. Staff are proposing the use of funding from the Lambert Creek subwatershed fund as this Board-approved fund currently designates \$150,000 for partnership on Green Streets implementation projects. Sampedro noted that the TEC reviewed this application and approved it at their June meeting. Staff and the TEC recommend that the VLAWMO Board of Directors approve funding for the LL2 2026-01 City of Vadnais Heights Greenhaven Drive Stormwater BMPs grant application not to exceed \$136,715.83 in accordance with staff recommendations and VLAWMO grant program guidelines.

Discussion:

None.

A motion was made by Director West and seconded by Director Shah to approve the Landscape Level 2 grant application 2026-01, not to exceed \$136,715.83 in accordance with VLAWMO staff’s recommendations and established grant program guidelines. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

VII. Discussion:

Director Rafferty voiced his appreciation for the Directors, staff, and all their efforts.

Director Prudhon shared that White Bear Township will be hosting the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in August at Polar Lakes Park. The White Bear Lake Historical Society secured this and expect that 12,000-15,000 people will visit. It will run for 12 days, 24 hours a day in the first week of August.

Administrator Belfiori thanked the Board for all their support through the big processes.

XI. Adjourn

A motion was made by Director Prudhon and seconded by Director Rafferty to adjourn at 7:36 pm. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.