

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization  
Technical Commission Minutes  
November 13, 2015  
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room**

**Attending:**

Paul Peterson	White Bear Township (WBT)
Jim Grisim	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Mark Graham	Vadnais Heights (VH)
<i>Absent</i>	Lino Lakes (LL)
Jim Lindner	Gem Lake (GL)
Bob Larson	North Oaks (NO)

Others in attendance: Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Jenson, Brian Corcoran, Vanessa Strong, Tyler Thompson (VLAWMO); Margaret Behrens (Ramsey Conservation District – RCD); Justine Roe (SPRWS); Kimberly Murray (NOHOA); Diane Gorder (NO Natural Resource Commission)

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

II. **Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Graham to approve the November 13, 2015 agenda as amended. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

It was moved and seconded by Larson & Graham to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2015 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. **Administration & Operations**

A. **Water Plan**

**1. Draft Projects List**

Staff are looking to solidify the project list for the Water Plan so we can move towards determining implementation costs and other needs for the Plan. The TEC received the project list prior to the meeting and were asked to provide input regarding any potential projects that aren't listed. Additionally, 3 questions were raised to receive their feedback on:

- a. The Board was supportive of VLAWMO focusing on 3 of the impaired lakes for the first few years in order to make an impact on reducing their nutrient levels. The 3 lakes proposed for this are: Goose, Wilkinson, and Gilfillan. Is the TEC in agreement with choosing these 3 lakes?
- b. The City of North Oaks is proposing to do a feasibility study regarding the effect on water quality if the SPRWS increases the amount of water being pumped into the chain of lakes. Is this something VLAWMO should partner with to ensure that the lakes outside of North Oaks are taken into consideration as well?
- c. The SPRWS has asked if we could increase the amount of flow monitoring on Lambert Creek. Is this something the TEC is supportive of? It would require the purchase of more equipment and more staff time to collect the information and analyze it.

*Lindner – if we focus on 3 lakes but not ignore the others, it will show we are making efforts. Lindner stated that the retrofit study for Gem Lake has some proposed projects we should consider.*

*Graham – include a description about each lake/subshed in the plan (do a lake fact sheet like the RWMWD example.) Vanessa and Tyler said they could get working on that right away to include in the plan. Graham stated that he thinks there should be plenty of graphics in the plan rather than a lot of just writing.*

## **2. Core Activities**

Four core activity areas have been identified for VLAWMO effort: Study & Monitoring, Education & Outreach, Capital Projects & Programs, and Regulatory Programs. A draft of the Water Plan section describing these 4 core areas was sent to the TEC prior to the meeting. This section of the plan is meant to identify the focus for the watershed to follow for each area. Input on this part of the plan is appreciated.

- a. Study and Monitoring – a table with the schedule for completing Sustainable Lake Management Plans (SLMPs) is proposed. Should we still be writing SLMPs and if so, what order should they be completed?

*Grisim said he feels these are important and we should continue to do them.*

*Agreement among the TEC*

- b. Education & Outreach – VLAWMO proposes 4 targeted E&O areas in the Plan. While all targeted areas will be addressed, the TEC was asked to rank the importance of them to help focus our efforts and funding. The 4 areas are:
  - i. Conduct Workshops, Trainings, & Presentations – includes raingarden workshops, other community workshops, tours for the Board, TEC, and stakeholders
  - ii. Citizen Science and Volunteer Outreach - includes the citizen lake monitoring program, the watershed action volunteers, dragonfly monitoring and invasive species monitoring
  - iii. Schools and Education Centers – working with children about water resource issues
  - iv. MS4 Regulatory Requirements – work with our local government partners on stormwater programs to help them meet their permit requirements

*Linder – where do you think your best potential for outcomes would be? When it comes to schools, is there some system in place to start with the kids when they are young and then revisit with them as they move on through school? Vanessa gave an explanation about the possible outcomes. TEC filled in a sheet ranking the 4 areas. Linder stated that the article he wrote about watersheds for the Audubon Society which received some good response and said he would give Vanessa's name to their committee so she could come speak.*

- c. Capital Projects and Programs – this section is light currently. Many of the components are spelled out in other areas of the Plan such as in the Subwatershed Activities section.

*Grisim asked if we have gotten prices yet for an automated sampler. Brian said he hasn't had time yet but would get on it right away.*

- d. Regulation Program – this section includes our work with the WCA, our ditch authority on Lambert Creek, and local water plan approvals.

**B. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request**

VLAWMO was asked to provide our financials for the last 5 years from a company which analyzes the data and then sells it. Stephanie learned that all the watersheds got the same request.

**V. Projects**

**A. Project Updates**

**1. Deep Lake Channel**

Volunteers from North Oaks went out last week with Kristine to harvest willow and dogwood stakes and then plant them along the channel edge at the restoration site. 200 stakes were harvested from the Rapp Farm area with permission from the North Oaks Company. Bob Larson and Diane Gorder have done a tremendous job with watering at the site, taking care of the plants and trees, and organizing the volunteers.

**VI. Programs**

**A. Monitoring – 2014 Bacteria Source Testing Report**

Brian stated that Burns & McDonnell Engineering had completed the report for the 2014 bacterial source identification monitoring work we've done. This document summarizes the results of the first year (2014) of Lambert Creek Bacterial Source identification Study for dry weather testing in the Oakmede and Cty Rd. F subwatersheds. DNA testing was done for the human marker and bird and culture samples were taken to measure *E. coli* levels. Tests were positive for the bird marker and negative for the human marker and both subwatersheds were below state standards for *E. coli* during dry weather conditions.

The SPRWS has helped with our analysis of samples. Our samples have been under standards at the two sites. All the samples were negative for human and all were positive for avian. The samples are preserved so if we want to sample for canine if the TEC would like to spend the money on that. Brian stated the report will be up on the website later today. The goal is to find BMPs to help address ecoli levels. At this point, in dry weather, we have no ecoli problems. Our work we have done at Oakmede is believed to have helped with this subshed. To test for canine, it would cost about \$100 per sample. It appears the majority of our ecoli issues stem from wet weather. Behrens asked if there was a marker for deer. Brian said he thinks there is and that may be more likely to get a hit since they are so close to the water. Vanessa stated that studies have shown that while deer and raccoons are near the water, their population is relatively small so it wouldn't be enough of a source to cause ecoli problems.

**B. Grants**

**1. LCCMR Whitaker Wetlands – update and work plan request**

Staff met with LCCMR representatives to discuss if we were still able to move forward with the treatment wetland project at Whitaker with the reduction in recommended funding. Staff and engineers are confident the project will still be successful with the cut in budget. The only major change to project will be the size of the treatment wetlands, project will still function as originally designed.

**Authorization recommendation:** The consulting firm of Burns and McDonnell is who we have been working with for the Bacteria DNA source monitoring

program the last 2 years. Their engineers and technical staff have also been absolutely critical in securing the half million dollar grant from LCCMR to install treatment wetlands adjacent to Whitaker pond. To keep this grant recommendation, VLAWMO must produce a detailed Work Plan and budget by the beginning of December and we absolutely need the engineers help. The design and cost estimates would be coming from them. They have requested funding to help them cover their time to develop the detailed Work Plan. Keep in mind the original proposal has to be resized as LCCMR has offered us half the funding, so some of the original work they did for free will need to be redone. There is money in the Project Research & development budget if it split between 2015 (\$9,300) and 2016 (\$5,500).

**Recommendation:** Approval of a general engineering services agreement with Burns and McDonnell \$14,800 to produce a 2-page background and project update piece by November 20<sup>th</sup> and a detailed Work Plan and budget by December 4<sup>th</sup>.

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Grisim to approve the general engineering services agreement with Burns & McDonnell for \$14,800 to produce a 2 page background and project update by November 20<sup>th</sup> and a detailed work plan and budget by December 4<sup>th</sup>. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

## **2. MN Drive storm pond test**

VLAWMO has been approached to partner on a new grant application through a program called MN Drive. This grant program tries to foster innovative clean water BMPs in a partnership with businesses, academia and possibly local government. They asked us if we had storm ponds to clean up. We provided a list of 12 possible storm ponds which might benefit from floating island treatments. Peterson mentioned a pond near Cub at Hwy 96 as a good option. Tyler said he included that one in the list he submitted.

## **C. Education**

The winter e-newsletter will be going out in December.

## **D. WCA/Plan-site review – 35E ditch & Lambert Creek; Vadnais South**

35E ditch & Lambert Creek - Staff had a meeting with MNDOT representatives and the project contractor (Shafer construction) about remedies to the erosion control blowout at this site from the 9/17/15 3+ inch rain event. The TEC received information about the remedies prior to the meeting. There was no sediment plume that could be removed. Shafer sent an illicit discharge report to the PCA. Shafer has agreed to do a temporary fix to the scour hole to protect the site from more erosion but it hasn't been done yet. We asked them about doing soil amendments to increase infiltration but the contractor said it wasn't needed. We asked them about providing money to do some downstream improvements and they said they will check into that.

Vadnais South - A proposed storage unit may be going in on two adjacent parcels just south of Structural Wood Inc. on Labore Rd. in Vadnais Heights. Both the Vadnais North and Vadnais South parcels have one large wetland covering portions of both properties. Before any plans can be finalized a decision had to be approved on the boundary and type of the wetlands on the parcels. The TEP agreed with the delineator on the boundary and type of the wetland on the Vadnais North parcel. The TEP did not agree with the boundary line on the Vadnais South parcel due to fill that had been placed over a portion of the wetland years ago which caused an atypical situation. Delineator followed the edge of the fill as the wetland line, TEP disagreed with that. The delineator then updated the boundary edge. They will now work on

their plans knowing that there needs to be a 20 foot buffer and if they request a variance, it would likely come in spring 2016.

**VII. Reports**

**A. Financial Report for November 2015 & Authorization for Payment**

It was moved & seconded by Lindner & Grisim to approve the treasurer's report and October payment of checks. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**B. TEC Report to the Board**

Due to the timing of the Board meeting in December, staff requests the TEC consider delegating the completion of the December TEC report to the Board which would be done after Thanksgiving.

It was moved & seconded by Lindner & Graham to delegate completion of the next TEC Report to the Board. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**VIII. Commissioner Reports**

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

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

The next meeting is November 30<sup>th</sup> at 10am. The State of the Waters meeting went well last month.

**XI. Public Comment**

**XII. Next Meetings**

TEC: December 11; Board: December 9

**XIV. Adjourn**

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Larson to adjourn at 8:40am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.