

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization  
Technical Commission (TEC) Minutes  
September 11, 2024  
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Council Chambers  
800 County Road E East, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127**

**Commission Members Present:**

Gloria Tessier	Gem Lake (GL)
Nick Ousky	Vadnais Heights (VH)
Susan Miller	City of North Oaks (NO)
Connie Taillon	City of White Bear Lake (WBL), alternate for Terry Huntrods
Jami Philip	White Bear Township (WBT)
Mike Grochala	City of Lino Lakes

**Absent:** Terry Huntrods, City of White Bear Lake (WBL)

**Others in attendance:** Dawn Tanner, Lauren Sampedro, Brian Corcoran (VLAWMO staff)

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Tessier called the meeting to order at 8:01 am.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Philip to approve the September 11, 2024, TEC agenda. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**III. Approval of Minutes (August 14, 2024)**

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Philip to approve the August 14, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**IV. Administration & Operations**

**A. September Financial Report and Authorization for Payment**

Corcoran summarized the September financial statement as included in the Packet. Notable items include funds received by Ramsey County and the City of Vadnais Heights for the East Vadnais resiliency study, payments in the Goose Lake subwatershed for the spent lime project, and the final payment to the contractor for the Wilkinson deep water wetland project.

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Philip to approve the September Financial Report and authorize for payment. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**V. Programs**

**A. Update on BWSR Watershed Based Implementation Funding Grant Process**

Sampedro presented about the process, highlighting that Jim Hauth with the City of Vadnais Heights and Connie Taillon with the White Bear Lake volunteered to be the two municipal representatives. She said the next step is to schedule the convene meeting, which is anticipated for some time in November.

#### B. Update on BWSR Accelerated Implementation Grant Application

Sampedro presented that BWSR released the RFP in June for this grant program. The purpose is to help applicants get ready for implementation of water quality projects. The ultimate goal is to expedite implementation of projects. Vadnais Heights expressed interest in a large project for 2027 that would focus on exploring the feasibility of a green street model for their Greenhaven street reconstruction project for that year. A green street model includes incorporating multiple types of stormwater BMPs into the reconstruction process along with adding walking or biking trails and reducing street widths. Vadnais Heights and VLAWMO partnered on the grant application that has been submitted. A decision is expected in December.

Commissioner Miller commented on the complexity of green street planning. Commissioner Ousky mentioned that utilities and right-of-way will be important considerations. Commissioner Taillon provided support of green streets and advised including the fire department with planning to make sure emergency vehicles have sufficient access.

#### C. Update on City of White Bear Lake Curb Cut Raingarden Project

Sampedro presented about the project as included in the packet. The project includes five curb cut raingardens that will go in with the City's current pavement rehabilitation project. The grant application to VLAWMO was received after the August TEC meeting.

Final designs have been received for the project. Sampedro highlighted one of the curb cut designs to show more specific details including species that will be included. The project includes a simplified suite of species for improved ease of maintenance and a uniform look.

Commissioner Miller asked if other adjacent homeowners could also add curb cut raingardens once these are installed. Sampedro responded that it depends upon City guidance. Other raingardens probably wouldn't be added right away because the construction will have just been completed. Commissioner Taillon said that the City sometimes allows retrofit curb cut raingardens not part of a City street reconstruction project, but would not cover the cost of the curb cut.

Sampedro presented that three bids were received for the project. The low bid was from Sandstrom Land Management for \$38,533. The Board approved the application at the August 28, 2024, Board meeting.

Commissioner Tessier commented on the low bid and wondered why there was such a difference in bids received. Sampedro discussed VLAWMO's prior experience with Sandstrom and mentioned that part of the low bid may be because they had availability in their schedule. Commissioner Taillon shared that Sandstrom has done a good job on projects with the City previously as well. Commissioner Tessier asked who maintains the curb cut

raingardens once they are completed. Sampedro said that the homeowners are responsible for maintenance for ten years. The maintenance agreement is not declared to the property, but VLAWMO provides educational materials to support maintenance.

## **VI. Projects**

### **A. Tamarack Lake Alum Project Update**

Tanner presented an update that the contract has been signed and the project is underway. A partner meeting at Tamarack Nature Center will be held next Monday, September 16. The project will be divided into phases. Phase 1 is scheduled for completion by October 23, 2024, to accommodate Tamarack Nature Center's schedule. The temporary access agreement with Ramsey County Parks will be extended for additional phases. Additional phase initiation will be dependent upon results on monitoring. Updates will be provided at future meetings.

### **B. Wilkinson Deep-Water Wetland Project Update**

Tanner provided an update that the final request for payment from the contractor was received and paid. Natural Shore Technologies has been working on enhancing the restoration and installed new plants and temporary fencing. Tanner discussed some plant transplant work has also occurred this week to support the restoration. She shared a drone video of the project from Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI).

### **C. Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Update**

Tanner provided an update that HEI has been working on drafting sections of the plan. Plan sections will be provided to the TEC in October for review. In the review process, VLAWMO intends to invite municipal partners to participate. More specifics about the plan for increased input will be discussed at the October TEC meeting. A style guide has been put together that is contained in the packet. Sections 1 and 2 are currently under review by staff and will be provided to the TEC in October. Section 3 is being drafted by HEI. Staff will be providing more regular updates to the TEC.

## **VII. Commissioner Reports**

Taillon presented an update on Otter Lake Road, which is a County road area that has been the focus of a reconstruction project this summer. Construction is currently wrapping up. The City role in the project was to review plans. The County design had to meet rate control and stormwater stipulations. Native seed is included in reseeding areas and vegetated swale. A sump catch basin was built to receive stormwater from curb and gutter that was added as part of the project. An underground filtration system is part of the project. Infiltration is not feasible because groundwater is too high. Commissioner Miller commented on the intricate design. Commissioner Taillon mentioned the trail that has been added on the east side of Otter Lake Road that connects to previously completed trails was also part of this project.

## **VIII. NOHOA**

None

**IX. Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division**

None

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

None

**XI. Public Comment:**

None

**XII. Next Meetings:**

Next TEC meeting October 9, 2024. Next BOD meeting October 23, 2024.

**XIII. Adjourn**

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Grochala to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 am. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled by D. Tanner.