

Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission (TEC) Minutes
April 12, 2023
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Council Chambers
800 County Road E East, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127

Commission Members Present:

Jesse Farrell	Chair, Vadnais Heights (VH)
Gloria Tessier	Vice Chair, Gem Lake (GL)
Andy Nelson	Lino Lakes (LL)
Terry Huntrods	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Jami Philip	White Bear Township (WBT)
Susan Miller	North Oaks (NO)

Absent: None

Others in attendance: Phil Belfiori, Dawn Tanner, Brian Corcoran, Lauren Sampedro, Nick Voss (VLAWMO staff), Katherine Doll Kanne (VLAWMO Board of Directors), Anne Sawyer (BWSR), Ed Shapland (Minnesota Water Steward/CAC), Julie Hupperts (NOHOA).

I. Call to Order

Chair Farrell called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

Special presentation: Administrator Belfiori and Board member Katherine Doll Kanne presented an appreciation award commemorating Chair Farrell's service as chair of the Technical Commission.

Administrator Belfiori introduced Anne Sawyer from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). Anne is the BWSR representative that serves as VLAWMO's main point of contact and has advisory and supervisory roles regarding VLAWMO's operations and planning.

II. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Commissioner Tessier and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the April 12, 2023 TEC agenda Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes (March 8, 2023)

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the March 8, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. Administration & Operations

A. Financial Report for April and Authorization for Payment

Administrator Belfiori outlined the financial report as included in the April TEC packet. Notable items include income from interest, audit expenses, East Goose Lake spent lime

efforts, and design work for the Wilkinson deepwater wetland. Staff recommends approval for payment.

It was moved by Commissioner Tessier and seconded by Commissioner Nelson to approve the April financial report and authorization for payment. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. TEC report to Board of Directors

Administrator Belfiori summarized temporary access easements were received from several landowners around Oak Knoll Pond, public ditch maintenance inspections are underway in partnership with the City of Vadnais Heights, Wilkinson Lake BMP going forward, a Pleasant Lake carp management presentation, smart irrigation controller potential partnership with White Bear Lake School District, and 2024 budget formation.

It was moved by Commissioner Tessier and seconded by Commissioner Huntrods to approve the April TEC report to the Board of Directors. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

C. TEC representative on 2024 budget subcommittee

Administrator Belfiori brought the 2024 budget Board subcommittee to attention noting that the scheduling of the subcommittee meeting is likely to take place before the next TEC May 10th meeting and a representative to replace Chair Farrell is needed. Chair Farrell further described the role of this subcommittee in that it allows for a special learning opportunity to see how VLAWMO efforts are prioritized and sequenced in the budget.

V. Programs

A. Update on 2022 Annual Report and Monitoring Report

Corcoran and Voss presented the 2022 annual monitoring report and annual report. Corcoran summarized average lake phosphorus levels. This data and past data helps plan future projects and remedy lake impairments. Corcoran outlined the water monitoring highlights included in the report such as carp removal at Pleasant Lake, remote monitoring on Lambert Creek, an update on Lambert Creek flow in 2022 with rainfall almost 7" below normal, sediment sampling at Oak Knoll pond, and a summary of the chloride program that's been running for 13 years.

Voss presented the "Watershed at a Glance", a segment of the annual report that contains project highlights including the Bridgewood raingarden and Whitaker Pond biochar, among others. He also guided the TEC through the project tables from the annual report, explaining that one table is a review of 2022 activities and the other a line-up of goals outlined for 2023. Commissioner Miller congratulated staff on their work.

B. Education update: Spring workshops, prints, website

Voss presented a summary of the spring 2023 workshops with a description of workshops that have taken place and one more remaining, which is Raingardens 101 scheduled for April 20th. Voss also provided a demonstration of the educational print outs that were completed in March and April including cost-share brochures, the watershed at a glance,

a Blue Thumb native plant guide, and a re-print of the VLAWMO “about us” flyer. He noted that the website efforts are currently focused on HDR designing a mock up of the new website.

VI. Projects

A. Wilkinson BMP/319 Update

Tanner updated the TEC, including stating that WCA and Army Corps of Engineers permitting is complete. VLAWMO staff will be attending the North Oaks City Council toward completion of any needed City permitting on April 13th. VLAWMO staff, with Houston Engineering, held a community meeting on March 22nd in North Oaks presenting the 60% design stage. Recent publications include March and April North Oaks News articles. Tanner described these activities using the project dashboard and referenced the funding status to date.

B. Spent Lime Oak Knoll Pond/Wood Lake update

Tanner stated that the project team (VLAWMO staff, City of WBL staff, and Barr Engineering) has completed the temporary easement acquisition effort for spent lime application. Following mailings and communication with residents living around the pond/lake, VLAWMO received 10 easements out of 23 parcels around the lake/pond, granting temporary access for the possible project. Tanner noted that a packet will be presented to the Board for requested authorization at the April VLAWMO Board meeting.

C. Pleasant Lake carp removal update

Tanner explained that project coordination is underway for a spring common carp removal in the Pleasant Lake system. Carp Solutions has secured the necessary permits from MN DNR for the temporary barrier and removal. VLAWMO staff, with assistance from UMN community-engaged learning students, have been checking carp locations with the remaining functioning active telemetry tags. VLAWMO is looking forward to another season of carp removals with Carp Solutions.

D. Birch Lake AIS removal MN DNR grant/BLID partnership update

Tanner explained that project coordination is underway for the second year of Eurasian watermilfoil and Curly-leaf pondweed removal in Birch Lake in partnership with BLID. The effort is part of a 2-year AIS removal grant from MN DNR. RCSWCD will be working with VLAWMO staff to conduct the required pre/post delineations. MN DNR will approve the permit for this work when they receive the pre delineation. Hand removal is expected again this year, working with Dive Guys, LLC. Tanner and Commissioner Huntrods verified that BLID and membership are update to date on upcoming plans for the 2023 season.

E. Vadnais-Sucker Lakes Regional Park restoration update

Sampedro said Minnesota Native Landscapes (MNL) completed the first phase of invasive species removal work in the upland sections of Vadnais-Sucker Lakes Regional

Park as part of the restoration project. This area was almost 20 acres in size. MNL will be returning in the fall for the first phase of follow up foliar treatment. They will begin cutting the next area of the project the following spring, which will be within wetland areas.

Commissioner Miller asked about the total acreage being restored, Sampedro responded about 40, but she will double check.

F. East Vadnais Lake subwatershed resiliency study update

Sampedro summarized staff applied for a MPCA Community Planning Grant for stormwater resiliency to help protect drinking water, reduce runoff rates and volumes, and reduce chronic flooding at the intersection of Centerville Rd and Edgerton St. in the East Vadnais Lake subwatershed. Sampedro updated the TEC that the MPCA grant was not selected, however the application partnership with the City of Vadnais Heights, Ramsey County, and SPRWS is proceeding in lieu of the grant. The next step to continue the effort includes MOUs for each partner and a Request for Services that will be used to collect bids for the study.

Chair Farrell noted that a project that has four major partners is an impressive collaboration. The application partners are working on a study for the Centerville Rd/Edgerton St flooding near the future site of Big Wood Brewery and sees the resiliency study efforts as complimentary.

I. Commissioner Reports

Chair Farrell acknowledged and welcomed new Commissioner Susan Miller for the City of North Oaks. Commissioner Miller noted how much the City and North Oaks Home Owner's Association appreciate working with VLAWMO, and that VLAWMO provides a knowledge base to the community.

Commissioner Philip provided that spring activities at White Bear Township includes installing erosion control and stormwater inlet protections.

Huntrods notes that BLID is curious and anxious to see if there was any fish kill on Birch Lake this winter but is yet to see as the ice melts.

Chair Farrell reports active street sweeping in the City of Vadnais Heights. Only one sweeper is currently operating due to the high need for pothole patching.

II. NOHOA

None

III. Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division

None

IV. St. Paul Regional Water Services

None

V. Public Comment

None

VI. Next Meetings:

Next TEC meeting May 10th. Next BOD meeting April 26th.

XIII. Adjourn

It was moved by Commissioner Tessier and seconded by Commissioner Huntrods to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 am. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled by Nick Voss.