



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 December 11, 2019

Attendance		Present	Absent
Jim Lindner, Chair	City of Gem Lake	X	
Dan Jones	City of White Bear Lake	X	
Rob Rafferty, Secretary-Treasurer	City of Lino Lakes	X	
Ed Prudhon	White Bear Township	X	
Kara Ries	City of North Oaks (Alternate)	X	
Patricia Youker	City of Vadnais Heights	X	
Stephanie McNamara	Administrator	X	
Brian Corcoran	Water Resources Mgr.	X	
Dawn Tanner	Program Development Coord.	X	
Nick Voss	Education & Outreach Coord.	X	
Tyler Thompson	GIS Watershed Tech.	X	

Others in attendance: Paul Duxbury (VLAWMO TEC commissioner & rep.); Katherine Kanne (VLAWMO CAC); Melissa King (BWSR); Kurt & Lindsey Carpenter, Scott Schoeneman, Paul Gartzke (WBL residents), Jill Sims (NMMA).

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Chair Lindner.

II. Approval of Agenda

The agenda for the meeting was presented with no changes proposed.

A motion was made by Prudhon and seconded by Jones to approve the December meeting agenda as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. Visitors and Presentations

A. October TEC Report to the Board and December 2019 Finance Report,

Duxbury presented the TEC's operations and recommendations to the Board from November, with TEC recommendation for 2019 budget carry-overs into 2020. McNamara presented the December Finance Report.

B. Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Annual Summary – CAC Chair

Voss gave an overview of the CAC and their involvement in the watershed, and outlined that the CAC is now in a position to interact more with the Board and TEC. Doll presented the minutes and discussion topics from the November 6th CAC meeting and announced she's excited and glad to have this opportunity.

C. Public Visitors

McNamara introduced Melissa King, VLAWMO's BWSR Board Conservationist, who gave an overview of her role and ongoing programs and grant opportunities at BWSR.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the October 23rd, 2019 Board meeting are placed on the consent agenda for approval, as presented.

B. Project update reports

Staff has completed a list updates to report on projects and programs not up for discussion on the Board meeting agenda. These updates were included in the December Board packet and may be discussed if any Directors would so choose.

Discussion: none.

C. Lawns to Legumes Blue Thumb Announcement

The Lawns to Legumes Program that is funded through BWSR and Blue Thumb is coordinating the Individual Support wing of the program. All MN residents are eligible to apply for up to \$350 in cost share funding, though priority will be given to projects in higher priority zones in an effort to target Rusty patched bumble bee (MN state bee) and other pollinator habitat area. All of VLAWMO is within Priority Area 1, so staff will be promoting this to residents. Larger neighborhood grants are being offered between \$20K & \$40K through RFPs to be managed by local governments (including WMOs & WDs) and nonprofits. The deadline for the first round of RFPs is January 10th for these large projects.

A motion was made by Jones and seconded by Youker to approve the December 11, 2019 meeting consent agenda, including the October 23rd, 2019 Board meeting minutes, as presented, and staff project update reports. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

V. Business

A. Administration

1. Goose Lake recommendation update

McNamara explained that there was discussion for the possibility of VLAWMO moving to rescind its recommendation to the City of White Bear Lake regarding a boating ordinance on East Goose Lake, contingent on results of grant funding for an alum treatment. Staff discussed that they recommend VLAWMO's official recommendation stand, based on best available science, ability to achieve Organization's mission, and affirming confidence and following the best-available science on the issue. McNamara explained that staff corrections had been sent to the City Council and the recommendation was sent to the City.

Discussion: Lindner opened the discussion to the Board. Jones explained that he does not believe the City will not pass the boating ordinance. He also explained he thought it was unlikely grant funding would be rejected for an alum treatment, contingent on boating restrictions. Jones continued that all partners are trying to come together for the benefit of the Lake and is asking the Board to rescind the previous recommendation to White Bear Lake for motorized boating. Lindner asked for more comments. Rafferty asserted that Jones is speaking on behalf of the City of White Bear Lake and that he agrees it should be rescinded, if that is Jones recommendation. Prudhon asked Tanner where we would stand with the alum treatment if the recommendation would be rescinded. Tanner answered that if boating is allowed and the alum treatment may be compromised, and VLAWMO would be financially responsible for the second round of alum treatment; Melissa King confirmed this. Rafferty asked King if alum treatments have been funded before without boating restrictions and how many alum treatments have been funded with boating restrictions. King answered that most of the funding proposals are deep lakes that don't necessitate boating restrictions, and couldn't speak to grants for alum treatments with boating restrictions, as she didn't have those figures with her. Rafferty addressed that he feels a boating restriction on East Goose Lake is asking too much of residents, that he supports rescinding of the August Board recommendation to the City of White Bear Lake and to continue to pursue grant funding for an alum treatment. Prudhon asked how East & West Goose are connected and if a filtration device could be installed for nutrient treatment. Tanner addressed that the largest nutrient loading is in the sediments, and treatment into or out of the Lake would have little effect. Jones made the point that he still supports an alum treatment, and to proceed with the grant if funds are awarded, as an alum treatment is the largest means to accomplish goals. Lindsey Carpenter (resident) addressed that the homeowners would like to move forward as partners on management of East Goose Lake, asked the Board to rescind their recommendation to the City, and urged the watershed to hear the concerns of its citizens.

Carpenter also mentioned that the grant application language is inferring that boating restrictions would be placed on the Lake. Carpenter insisted East Goose does not have excessive boat traffic, and that the reported good health of the fish population in the Lake is false. VLAWMO staff clarifies the alum grant application was using fish population data and assumptions from the 2017 fish survey, and was submitted before the 2019 fish survey showed an increase in the bullhead population. In reviewing grant applications for alum treatments, Carpenter could not find an example where boating restrictions were put in place. She urged the residents to remain partners with the Watershed. Jill Sims (NMMA) asserted her contacts with the DNR have not recommended a boating restriction as part of an alum treatment and expressed concern for setting a precedent, and thanked Commissioner Jones for his recommendation. Lindner thanked staff for the use of proper research and science, but the recommendation for a boating restriction has had an unintentional outcome of the issue that has arisen. Jones expressed his frustration with the DNR and the agency's position. Prudhon expressed he has no interest in pushing the issue of a boating restriction any further.

A motion was made by Rafferty and seconded by Jones to rescind the recommendation from the October 23rd Board meeting to the City of White Bear Lake regarding boating restrictions. Vote: all aye, Ries abstains. Motion passed.

2. Approval of 2019 fund balance, Res. 08-2019

McNamara outlined a fund balance for transferring leftover 2019 funds into the 2020 budget for upcoming projects and programs, going down the line of transfers into the New Year. McNamara mentioned that Wilkinson will be going for feasibility study in 2020. **Staff is recommending approval of the carry over funds from 2019 into 2020.**

Discussion: Youker questioned whether funds have been allocated for Lambert Creek and dredging Ditch 14. McNamara addressed that this is not in the budget, but that it may be brought back before the Board for discussion and any possible action on future projects or funding. McNamara and Jones outlined the Lambert Lake meander project and that this project will aim to create even more storage capacity. Corcoran gave an overview of VLAWMO's involvement in ditch management, including recent studies and maintenance. Youker asked the last time the Branch ditches were dredged. McNamara addressed that it has been some time, and that VLAWMO is happy to work with the City as a partner, going forward towards targeted maintenance, utilizing the recent Ditch modeling, surveying and repair recommendations.

RESOLUTION 08-2019

Of the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO)

December 11, 2019

The Board of Directors of the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization met in a regular meeting at the Vadnais Heights City Hall on Wednesday, the 11th day of December, 2019 at 7:00 o'clock p.m.

The following members were present:

Kara Ries (alternate), City of North Oaks

Patricia Youker, City of Vadnais Heights

Ed Prudhon, White Bear Township

Dan Jones, City of White Bear Lake

Jim Lindner, City of Gem Lake

Rob Rafferty, City of Lino Lakes

The following members were absent:

Director Rafferty introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption. Director Jones seconded the motion.

A RESOLUTION FOR COMMITTING THE FUND BALANCE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization, does hereby find as follows:

WHEREAS, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board’s Statement No. 54 defines committed fund balance as amounts that can only be used for specific purposes pursuant to constraints imposed by formal action of the Board,

WHEREAS, Board action is required before year end to formalize the commitment of fund balance to specified purposes,

WHEREAS, those committed amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the VLAWMO removes or changes the specified use by taking the same type of action it employed to previously commit those amounts.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the VLAWMO, that the specific portions of fund balance in the identified funds are committed as follows:

Committed

Fund	Description	Purpose	Amount
General	Information systems	Purchase of IT equipment & help	\$2,000
General	Legal assistance	Project contracting assistance	\$2,500
General	Training	Staff, TEC & Board training	\$1500
General	Misc. & mileage	Mileage reimburse, mtg. expense	\$800
General	Admin-Payroll	Assist with staffing adjustment;	\$62,000
General	Monitoring & Equipment	Survey equipment	\$10,000
General	Education & Marketing	Program materials & swag replacement	\$1,000
General	Community Blue	Ongoing projects	\$2,000
General	Lambert Creek	Lambert maintenance project	\$63,275
General	Goose Lake	Fund for implementation; Alum treatment & WBF project	\$150,316
General	Birch Lake	Match & grant funds for iron filter project	\$39,067
General	Gil, Black, Tam, Wilkin	Wilkinson feasibility	\$50,000
General	Pleasant Charley Deep	Implementation funding SLMPs	\$9,000
General	Sucker Vadnais	Sucker channel & others	\$10,000
General	Landscape 1 cost-share	Approved projects not complete	\$11,500
General	Landscape 2 cost-share	Approved projects not complete	\$11,361
General	Facilities Maintenance	Ongoing maintenance of creek	\$29,176

		and VLAWMO installations	
	Total		\$455,496

The Board of Directors of the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization, Minnesota this 11th day of December, 2019 passed the foregoing resolution.

CHAIR (or authorized): _____ Date: _____

ATTEST: Signed: _____ Date: _____

Vote: all aye.

Resolution 08-2019 was declared passed and adopted.

3. Approval of Auditing proposal for 2019 & 2020 Audits

Staff had issued a Request for Proposal for professional financial reporting and auditing services for fiscal years 2019 & 2020. In response, 2 proposals were received; one from Clifton Larson Allen LLP (CLA, current audit services), and one from Abdo Eick & Meyers (AEM, past audit services). The CLA proposal was the least expensive by more than \$1,000 for both 2019 (not to exceed \$6,893) & 2020 (not to exceed \$7,025), and staff has worked with each firm in the past and have good experience with both.

Staff recommends proceeding with Clifton Larson Allen for auditing & financial reporting services for 2019 and 2020, according with their Request for Proposal, and to schedule VLAWMO’s 2019 audit.

Discussion: None.

A motion was made by Youker and seconded by Jones for Board authorization of staff to select Clifton Larson Allen for auditing & financial reporting services for years 2019 (not to exceed \$6,893) & 2020 (not to exceed \$7,025), and to schedule VLAWMO’s 2019 audit.

Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

4. VLAWMO grant policy updates

Voss & Thompson outlined proposed policy updates and changes for the Landscape Cost Share Program and Community Blue grant Program. The changes proposed for the Landscape Cost Share Program are specific to the Level 1 program, and include raising of the funding cap from \$2,000 to \$4,000 for proposed projects in target volume reduction zones (TVRZs) that infiltrate at least 40% of a property’s runoff volume; reducing match amount from 25% to 10% for projects in target habitat priority zones (THPZs) for project amounts up to \$750; allowing projects that have already begun some preliminary work (specified) to be funded, though these preliminary costs before grant approval will not be eligible for funding. Possible changes to the Community Blue grant Program include proposed coverage limits (coverage %, match % and funding cap), based on project type and applicant category. A new scoring chart has also been devised for review, and it is being questioned if the Board grant review threshold amount, currently \$5,000, is still suitable.

Staff recommends to the Board the policy changes for the Landscape Level 1 Cost Share Program, as well as recommended changes for the Community Blue Grant Program, including coverage limits, scoring chart for funding selection, and Board grant review threshold amount.

Discussion: Prudhon asked how much interest this might stir with an application, altering the grant amount the Board reviews. Linder noted he is comfortable with keeping Board review of funding amounts at \$5,000.

A motion was made by Rafferty and seconded by Youker for Board authorization of the above VLAWMO grant policy updates, as well as a Board review threshold of \$5,000 for Community Blue grant applications. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

5. HSA Policy Change

McNamara reviewed that VLAWMO has offered a small group health insurance plan to employees for the last few years, being high-deductible, low-premium plan. VLAWMO covers premiums for employees and contributes \$1,000 to each employee in an HSA, annually. Plan options are limited with an employee pool of 5. The insurance plan deductible is rising to \$4,000/year per individual and \$8,000/yr per family policy. **The Policy & Personnel Committee recommends increasing annual VLAWMO HSA contributions to \$2,000 annually, per employee for 2020. This budget impact of \$5,000 would be covered by the fund balance carry over amount under Employee Liability.**

Discussion: Prudhon mentioned this is a must if VLAWMO wishes to maintain staff, especially moving forward and seeking to attract a new administrator.

A motion was made by Prudhon and seconded by Jones for Board authorization of increasing the annual HSA contribution to \$2,000.00 per employee, beginning in 2020. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

6. Personnel Committee update

McNamara addressed that she has been talking about it for a long time, and has mentioned the time has come for her to retire, setting the date for April 1st, 2020. She will help facilitate with staff changes to make them as smooth as possible. Lindner proposed composing a committee for the hiring of a new VLAWMO Administrator, and Jones voiced having a recommendation for the Board ready for the February meeting should be a goal.

B. Wetlands

1. MCC grant proposal

Last year staff applied for a MCC grant to complete restoration at the 4th & Otter site, though the area was likely too small to deem funding. This year, staff is proposing submitting an application for restoration of 20 acres at the Vadnais Heights City Hall. Time commitment for application completion is low and the deadline for submittal is December 15th. **Staff and TEC are requesting Board approval to submit the MCC grant proposal for 2020.**

Discussion: None.

A motion was made by Jones and seconded by Ries for Board approval to submit the MCC grant application for the VH City Hall site for 2020. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

2. Survey Work for 2020 from RCSWCD

Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division authored a proposal, sought by VLAWMO staff, for lake surveys on East Vadnais and Sucker Lakes. Tasks in the Proposal include: surveying aquatic macrophytes, bathymetry, and shoreline vegetation. Both East Vadnais and Sucker are on the docket for SLMP completion in 2020, and these surveys play an important role in their direction for lake management. **Staff is requesting allocation of funds for these surveys in the total amount of \$15,488; \$6,880 for Sucker Lake, and \$8,608 for East Vadnais.**

Discussion: None.

A motion was made by Rafferty and seconded by Jones for Board authorization of funds in the amount of \$15,488 for the RSWCD to complete Lake Surveys on East Vadnais & Sucker Lakes in 2020. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

C. Education and Outreach

1. 2020 Education and Outreach Plan, 2019 Summary

Voss provided a summary on the 2019 EOP review, as well as changes and goals for the 2020 EOP, moving into the New Year. The Education & Outreach Plan (EOP) addresses Priority Issue #3, in VLAWMO's 2017-2026 Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Voss says a new Watershed Stewardship award is a way to formally congratulate and recognize outstanding projects from citizens, volunteers, cities, or associations on an annual basis.

D. Projects

1. Birch Lake – 4th & Otter: authorization for 2nd round of bidding

Thompson reported the revised project specifications and bid documents will be ready for re-release of bid for the January 6th, 2020 and will be open until January 30th, 2020 for sealed bid openings at the Vadnais Heights City Hall at 10:00 am. This bid re-release comes after project specs being reworked by Barr Engineering in hopes to get bid prices in the range of the project construction cost estimate of \$90,000. Bids solicited and returned in August 2019 came in substantially higher than estimated, and were deemed infeasible and all bids were rejected at the August 28 VLAWMO Board meeting. **Staff is recommending the Board authorize the project for bid re-release in January 2020.** After sealed bids are opened on January 30th, 2019, bid results will be reviewed and recommended for action by Barr Engineering and staff recommendation will be brought to the February TEC meeting, and then for action at the February 26, 2020 Board meeting.

Discussion: Prudhon questioned if plans and specs are being reworked to address the discrepancies of the 1st round of bidding. Thompson confirmed this.

A motion was made by Ries and seconded by Jones to authorize staff approval to release the 4th & Otter IESF for a second round of project bidding in January 2020. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

VIII. Discussion

Lindner mentioned upcoming Board positions and elections for 2020 will take place at the February meeting, and to ponder these. Rafferty mentioned with the beginning of the New Year, Rafferty would like to see the VLAWMO Board to try and rework towards funding better healthcare for staff, especially with staff changes coming, and addressing this as a Board.

IX. Administration Communication

1. Water Matters – February 2020

McNamara proposed and sought Board direction for another Water Matters presentation for the February 26, 2020 regular VLAWMO Board meeting. One of the topics coming up could be the MPCA regarding issues at Water Gremlin that specifically relate to VLAWMO.

X. Adjourn

A motion was made by Jones and seconded by Ries to adjourn at 8:45 pm. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Tyler Thompson.