

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization  
Technical Commission Minutes  
September 9, 2016  
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room**

**Commission Members Present:**

Paul Peterson	White Bear Township (WBT)
Mark Graham	Vadnais Heights (VH)
Jim Lindner	Gem Lake (GL)
Chris Mann	North Oaks (NO)
Marty Asleson	Lino Lakes (LL)

**Commission Members Absent:**

Jim Grisim	White Bear Lake (WBL)
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**Others in attendance:** Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Jenson, Brian Corcoran, Tyler Thompson, Nick Voss (VLAWMO); Margaret Behrens (Ramsey Conservation District – RCD); Bob Larson (NO Natural Resources Commission); Kimberly Murray (NOHOA); Jeremy Erickson, Justine Roe (SPRWS)

- I. **Call to Order** Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:31am.
- II. **Approval of Agenda**

Stephanie asked to add item IV.C to discuss the date of the November TEC meeting which falls on a holiday (Veteran’s Day).  
It was moved by Mann and seconded by Graham to approve the September 9, 2016 agenda as amended. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.
- III. **Approval of Minutes**

It was moved by Graham and seconded by Mann to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2016 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.
- IV. **Administration & Operations**
  - A. **Water Plan Update**

Stephanie and Kristine attended a meeting on 9/8 with the BWSR Central Committee to ask for their recommendation to the BWSR Board to approve the Water Plan. The Committee unanimously recommended the approval of the Plan to the BWSR Board. The BWSR Board meets on 9/28. And if given their final approval, our Board will adopt the Plan at their October meeting.
  - B. **Boundary Change Update**

After much ado, the BSWR Board approved VLAWMO’s petition for a boundary change August 24<sup>th</sup> that will transfer our ‘lost 96 parcels’ in White Bear Lake from Rice Creek Watershed District to VLAWMO. We will be following up with Ramsey County and RCWD to make sure we can certify Storm sewer utility (SSU) fees in 2017. The new area will bring in a little over \$9000 based on 2017 SSU rates recently passed by the Board.
  - C. **November TEC meeting**

The date of the November TEC meeting falls on Veteran’s Day which is a holiday. Stephanie requested the meeting be moved to November 18. Linder may not be here for that meeting but the others stated they could make it.
- V. **Projects**
  - A. **Project Updates**
    1. **Kohler Streambank Restoration**

The bids that came in for this project came in higher than the engineer's estimate. Our budget was at \$65,000 and the lowest estimate came in at \$98,000. The Board approved working with Outdoor Labs on this project. Brian has been working with Outdoor Labs and RCD to find ways to cut costs to bring it closer to the budget. The original design called for 2 rows of bio-D blocks along the creek edge and it has been reduced to 1 row. Additionally, the City of Vadnais Heights will be helping with the project and will be working with the contractor to extend the tree removal and grubbing as far downstream from project as possible. The current plan is to start construction the end of October when creek is drier. When a start date is set we will be contacting the neighbors via a letter explaining the work to be done as well as having an open house here at city hall for residents to ask questions and comment on the project.

**2. Whitaker Treatment Wetlands**

Brian is currently working with White Bear Township on a contract between VLAWMO and the Township for use of Columbia Park for this project. Site topographic survey along with geotechnical & hydrogeologic characterization will be completed this fall. Construction of the wetland system will begin fall of 2017.

**VI. Programs**

**A. Education & Outreach**

**1. WAV Action Plan**

Nick included information in the TEC packet and will be having a meeting September 28 and plans to continue them every other month to keep momentum.

**2. Surveys**

Nick stated that the summary of the community surveys is available and is incorporated with the Education & Outreach Plan. Nick is now gathering responses for surveys sent to schools and our MS4 partners.

**3. Schools**

Nick is working with the Academy for Sciences and Agriculture (AFSA) on piloting a macroinvertebrate program. Nick was on Lambert Creek yesterday scouting out macroinvertebrate sites and is hoping to expand the program to other schools and possibly a volunteer monitoring program.

**4. Slideshow + video**

Nick presented a slideshow showing the winners of the contests we did this year, photos and information that have been used this summer. Nick also shared a video about the White Bear Montessori project which is now complete.

**B. GIS – Grant Mapping Project**

Tyler showed the map he's been working on which shows all the projects that have been installed with the help of State funding. The map and associated information will be on the web shortly.

**C. Landscape Level 1 Status**

Kristine stated that the funds are used up for the year. The remaining funds are going toward the RCD Professional Services Contract to be used for their staff to help property owners with landscape design on potential LL1 grant projects.

**D. RCD Professional Services Agreement 2016-2017 recommendation**

This agreement between VLAWMO and RCD allows them to provide technical assistance to us, especially for small project designs and lake vegetation studies. We have the standard \$5000/ year in this agreement along with another \$4000 for

homeowner designs. The total contract for the 2-year period would be \$14,000. Staff requests TEC consideration & recommendation to Board at their next meeting.

It was moved by Graham and seconded by Mann to recommend the Board approve the RCD PSA. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**E. Pennington Section of Lambert Creek**

Residents attended the August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Board meeting to discuss their concerns about why Lambert Creek/Ditch 14 has been flooding their backyards recently. The section in question is just up-stream from Edgerton St. in Vadnais Heights. This section of ditch is wetland and historically it was a lake. Fill was most likely brought in to construct the housing development. Houses are not flooding but backyards along the creek are. Residents believe that this section of ditch is silting up and the down trees in the ditch and culvert/storm water drains are aiding the problem. The Board directed staff to follow up on this concern and report back at the October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Board meeting. Based on all the information we have and visual inspection, the area is a wetland and has historically been a lake and any “fixes” will likely be expensive. VLAWMO staff is prepared to recommend to the Board that a feasibility study would be the next proper step if the Board would like to move forward with this flooding issue. Brian stated over the last 5 years, there hasn’t been any changes to the area and satellite images don’t show any changes. He says the creek/ditch is flowing and it takes time for water to move when we have a wet year. The State Climatologist stated just this morning that this is the 4<sup>th</sup> wettest summer on record in MN. Brian stated that their homes are above the floodplain area and that half of their yards are dry. Staff can’t see how dredging or re-meandering would help the situation. In fact, dredging would not be feasible because you would have to dredge the entire creek and wouldn’t solve the issues. The creek is flowing fast and has been flowing all summer. Their property is on a floodplain, this is the 4<sup>th</sup> wettest year on record and there may not be anything that “fixes” the situation. Trying to maintain a yard may not be realistic on the low lying area.

Whether it is a ditch or a creek, the water is moving as expected. The work we have done upstream was done after a large diagnostic study and addresses other issues (erosion, phosphorus).

Discussion included the never ending issues regarding natural resources (White Bear Lake, Snail Lake, Gilfillan Lake water levels), wet years, dry years, etc. It was questioned why we would have to pay for a feasibility study for something that we already know the answer to. Mann stated the feasibility study would mean spending about \$25,000 to satisfy 3 people and that doesn’t make sense. There was discussion about the WCA implications. Brian gave the homeowner information about having a wetland delineation done on his property. Graham suggests VLAWMO staff write a letter regarding the various steps that are their options and state that it is the resident’s responsibility to handle it.

Peterson asked staff to bring a list of options.

Stephanie stated that we could bring costs to the next TEC meeting for a study.

**VII. Reports**

**A. Financial Report for September 2016 & Authorization for Payment**

It was moved by Lindner and seconded by Mann to approve the treasurer’s report and September payment of checks. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**VIII. Commissioner Reports**

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

Jeremy Erickson introduced himself and is a Water Quality Specialist for SPRWS and started a year ago. He stated that he will be attending TEC meetings regularly, along with Justine Roe. His background aligns with much of the work VLAWMO is involved with. He has done

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research on landscape effects on water resources and knows a lot about GIS. His email is: [Jeremy.erickson@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Jeremy.erickson@ci.stpaul.mn.us) and mentioned a website that he helped develop: [mnwetlandrestore.org](http://mnwetlandrestore.org)

Justine said there would be an open house on October 6 at the treatment center and at the Highland water tower

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

Margaret stated that they will be meeting at the Capitol to work on their budget this month.

**XI. Public Comment**

**XII. Next Meetings**

TEC: October 14; Board: October 26

**XIII. Adjourn**

It was moved by Mann and seconded by Graham to adjourn at 8:37am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.