

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission Minutes
February 12, 2016
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 (alternate)	North Oaks (NO)

Others in attendance: Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Jenson, Brian Corcoran, Tyler Thompson (VLAWMO); Margaret Behrens (Ramsey Conservation District – RCD); Diane Gorder (NO Natural Resource Commission); Kimberly Murray (NOHOA); Terry Bernhardt (White Bear Preserve Condominium Association)

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

II. **Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Graham to approve the February 12, 2016 agenda as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

Change Chris Mann as in attendance

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Larson to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2016 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. **Administration & Operations**

A. **Water Plan**

1. **Draft Water Plan**

A draft Water Plan is complete and the TEC was given the link to access it prior to this meeting. Staff met with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on January 29th to get input before publishing the draft that is now available. While changes to the draft are on pause for the moment, we expect some possible updates after the 60 day comment period. . At this point, we are looking to the TEC to recommend to the Board to approve the draft Plan for distribution and to start the 60 day comment period.

It was moved & seconded by Lindner & Graham to recommend the approval of the draft Water Plan to the Board for distribution and to start of the 60 day comment period. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

2. **Education & Outreach (E&O) Plan**

We have the draft of the E & O Plan available on the website for review. This plan is referenced frequently in the Water Plan and we will be looking for a formal approval in conjunction with the Water Plan approval process. We will be keeping the E & O Plan separate for the overall Water Plan so that we can update it over time without having to go through a formal amendment process with BWSR.

V. **Projects**

A. **Project Updates**

1. **Whitaker Wetlands**

Brian provided an update. The work plan has had multiple revisions and has been submitted to the LCCMR staff in preparation for the Legislative session.

An additional monitoring component to be done by the University of Minnesota was required by the LCCMR. The monitoring will check for additional pathogens over 2 seasons. The \$30,000 cost for this monitoring will be taken out of the existing budget. We do not know what the constructions costs will end up being but we are moving forward and will keep you updated as things progress.

VI. Programs

A. Grants

1. White Bear Preserve – Community Blue Grant

Tyler presented the application for a Community Blue Grant from the Rice Lake Project Committee (RLPC) of the White Bear Preserve Condominium Association (WBPCA) submitted a Community Blue Grant application for the requested amount of \$9,858 for biological control of purple loosestrife on Rice Lake. The RLPC is proposing to use the DNR's recommended method of biological control with the introduction of beetles that feed upon the plant: the black margined loosestrife, and the golden loosestrife beetle. The project is not projected to eradicate the purple loosestrife, but it is hoping to reduce the population by at least 50%, and up to 80% over the course of 3 years-increasing biological diversity and ecosystem health within Rice Lake. The proposed project includes plans for the DNR-recommended 3 years of beetle catch & release treatment, yearly monitoring, and several education and outreach activities. There are several education and outreach components included in the project. Mailings will be sent to surrounding residents 4 times during the project timeframe of 3 years to educate and inform about purple loosestrife, brief and update about the project's progress based on monitoring results. Two 36" by 30" signs educating on purple loosestrife and the project on Rice Lake, with comment boxes will be placed at two locations near Rice Lake, and local newspapers will be contacted for involvement. An informal survey of WBPCA residents will be conducted "to determine their understanding about purple loosestrife as an invasive species, the Rice Lake Project, and the value of biodiversity." The RLPC will be working with Birch Lake Elementary to develop education of purple loosestrife and project involvement with the Rice Lake Project. Along with Community Blue Grant funding from VLAWMO, RLPC has secured additional funding from Keller Properties to provide materials and staff for mailing of informational letters. The RLPC is also seeking funding from Water Gremlin and Xcel Energy in the amount of \$1,250. If funding is granted by both Water Gremlin and Xcel, the \$9,858 grant request from VLAWMO will be reduced by \$1,250 to \$8,608. The project also budgets 110 hours of in-kind volunteer time, totaling \$2,750 valued at VLAWMO's rate of \$25/hr.

Staff recommends approval of the requested amount of \$9,858 for the Rice Lake Purple Loosestrife Project.

Discussion about the effectiveness of this sort of project. Grisim said that they've used this on Birch Lake and it helped the first 5 years but loosestrife has started to come back and they will evaluate to see if another treatment would be necessary. Behrens asked how many beetles will be used. Burnhart stated that the consultant (Fortin) estimate that 2000 beetles will be released each year for the next 3 years. Peterson asked if there are any detrimental effects to using these beetles. Terry and Tyler stated that there is nothing to suggest that. Graham recommends approval and asks that they come back in a year or two to give us an update regarding the effectiveness.

It was moved & seconded by Graham & Grisim to approve the RLPC Community Blue Grant for up to \$10,000. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. Education

1. Position posting

Stephanie stated that we plan to be posting the job at the end of the month. She will have a Policy & Personnel Committee meeting to determine what we want this position to encompass. Stephanie has been contacted by numerous people who are interested in this job.

C. Monitoring

1. Annual Report part 2: Charley, Deep, Gilfillan and Wilkinson Lakes

Brian reviewed the 2015 monitoring data for four of the lakes in the watershed.

Wilkinson saw a sharp increase in nutrients. We are hopeful that using the automated sampler will help us to determine the sources. Past grab samples have indicated that the highest source of nutrients are coming from the northern part of the subwatershed.

In 2015, Gilfillan's TP was below Standard but ChIA was above throughout the whole year. Augmentation in 2012 has helped reduce the nutrient levels however we see the levels starting to rise again. We will continue to monitor to see how the nutrient levels continue to trend.

Deep Lake's nutrient levels were slightly higher in 2015 and are above State Standard. Charley Lake's nutrients were slightly lower in 2015 and hover near State Standard.

2. 2016 monitoring program updates

The VLAWMO monitoring cost will increase by an estimated \$5000 in 2016. This increase is due to adding ChIA samples to Lambert Creek so the MPCA can evaluate for nutrient impairment. Adding additional testing for SRP and Iron to lakes with internal loading issues will help to determine implementation projects. For iron testing, we need to collect samples from the bottom of the lake. A Van Dorn water sampler will be purchased for approximately \$250 to do this. Additionally, the samples we will start collecting from storm events will cost approximately \$100 each for analysis. Monitoring costs will be approximately \$22,000 in 2016 not including wet weather E. coli monitoring, we have \$28,500 budgeted.

3. BLID Request

The Birch Lake Improvement District (BLID) has been an active partner in the management and protection of Birch Lake. We are recommending VLAWMO continue with another year of chloride monitoring with the BLID covering the lab costs. They are also very interested in targeting the NE inlet to Birch Lake for additional storm sample monitoring. Staff has suggested grab samples for a year ago at the 4th and Otter Lake Road area which may be something the BLID choses to pursue.

Grisim stated that there had been a meeting at the site and there had been support for an auto sampler and the BLID wished to pursue this. VLAWMO has stated most recently that they don't have the funds to purchase a second one and are now saying they don't have the time either. The BLID feels concerned that their needs are not being met. Grisim understands that VLAWMO has to look at the watershed as a whole but the BLID wants VLAWMO to consider a sampler within the next couple of years.

Brian stated it isn't that we don't want to help with BLID but we want to make sure we know how to use these tools and the information we receive is

accurate before investing money and time at further sites. Stephanie stated that her communications with Dale Bacon (BLID) were not meant to be intended as a dismissal. Kristine stated that the consultant helping us with the Water Plan was hesitant about us getting a sampler for Wilkinson because she feels we will get the information we need with grab samples. An auto-sampler requires specific conditions to operate effectively and that is why we want to only try it at one spot to see if it operates correctly and gets us the information we need before we invest more money and time in pursuing this at other sites.

D. GIS Mapping Efforts

Tyler has been doing maps for the water plan and has also been making depth maps and is putting them up on the website.

VII. Reports

A. Financial Report for February 2016 & Authorization for Payment

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

B. TEC Report to the Board

It was moved & seconded by Linder & Grisim to approve the TEC Report to the Board. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

VIII. Commissioner Reports

Graham stated that information came out a couple weeks ago regarding the possible augmentation of White Bear Lake. The costs are around \$100 million. The WBL Preservation Group immediately came forward and stated that the information was not correct. However the information has been reviewed by separate technical experts who agree with the current information. Graham stated that 2 billion gallons of water would be pumped over 8 months to bring WBL to its desired level. The report didn't state if this will work for the long term because the scientific research isn't complete. The scientists want more information before pursuing it but the general public wants water in the lake. Diane Gorder stated that people in 8:54North Oaks are concerned because the increased pumping could have detrimental effects on the Chain of Lakes in the City. They already have issues with their shorelines because of the water levels going up and down and have invested money to try to protect the resources

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

X. Ramsey Conservation District (RCD) Report

Margaret stated that the RCD is having a public event about the health of the lakes in Ramsey County. It's free and will be held in March.

XI. Public Comment

XII. Next Meetings

TEC: March 11, 2016; Board: February 24, 2016

XIV. Adjourn

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Graham to adjourn at 8:54am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.