

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization  
Technical Commission Minutes  
May 13, 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)           |

**Commission Members Absent:** Jim Grisim – White Bear Lake, Marty Asleson – Lino Lakes

**Others in attendance:** Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Jenson, Brian Corcoran, Tyler Thompson, Nick Voss (VLAWMO); Diane Gorder (NO Natural Resource Commission); Kimberly Murray (NO Homeowners Association); Bob Larson (NO alternate); Todd Ullom (Sambatek); Mike Brandt (Kimley-Horn); Vince Driessen (The Driessen Group LLC – representing Goodwill)

- I. **Call to Order** Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:33 am.
- II. **Approval of Agenda**  
It was moved by Linder and seconded by Mann to approve the May 13, 2016 agenda as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.
- III. **Approval of Minutes**  
It was moved by Mann and seconded by Graham to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2016 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.
- IV. **Administration & Operations**
  - A. **Introduction of Nick Voss**

Stephanie introduced Nick to the TEC. He started on May 2 as our Education & Outreach Coordinator. Nick provided some of his background and items he plans on working on in the near future.
  - B. **Water Plan Comment Highlights**

The 60 day comment period ended on April 26. We received comments from the MN Dept of Natural Resources, MN Pollution Control Agency, MN Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), City of White Bear Lake, Ramsey County, Metropolitan Council, and City of North Oaks. Overall we were commended on the Water Plan and were given useful suggestions for improvement and clarification. Official responses to the comments will be prepared and there will be some updates made to the Plan which will be considered and hopefully approved by the Board at their May 25 special meeting. Comments and responses will be posted on the VLAWMO website after this meeting. A final draft will be ready for the June 22 Board meeting to receive a final approval before it goes to BWSR.

*\*\*Graham asked if Item VI.E. WCA Updates could be moved up on the agenda since there were visitors present to discuss the topic. Peterson agreed that this item can be moved and will be addressed after IV. Admin & Operations.*
  - C. **Joint Powers/Ditch Authority**

The updated Joint Powers Agreement has been sent out to the communities for ratification. We are hoping to complete this part of the process before the June Board meeting. Our JPA is an appendix to the Water Plan. As you know, BWSR had a

question about whether the process followed when VLAWMO accepted authority for County ditches #14 & #13 was acceptable. The follow-up question of whether VLAWMO should manage the ditches under Ch. 103B (watershed law) or 103E (ditch law) was posed to the attorney. The preliminary answer seems to be that a case could be made for either law. The current Water Plan identifies watershed law as the way VLAWMO will manage the ditches. The new JPA identifies either section of law as the possible authority.

**D. Special Board Meeting**

The Board will meet on May 25 to consider the Water Management Plan comments and responses and other items.

**V. Projects**

**A. Project Updates**

**1. Sucker Channel Update**

Kristine and Stephanie met with Ramsey County Parks and it was agreed that Parks would take the lead in producing plans that meet their standards. Once they have plans developed and an estimated budget, they will come to us to see if we can put money towards the project. We let them know that we would ask the Board to carry over the remaining \$53,700 we have earmarked for the project through 2017 and will determine our financial contribution once we see their plans.

**VI. Programs**

**A. Grants**

**1. Landscape Level 1 Applications**

There are 2 grants to consider this month: 2016-04 is for a shoreline restoration along Birch Lake. The homeowners came to a shoreline restoration workshop previously and are working with Natural Shore Technologies on the project. Natural Shores performed the restoration we spearheaded on the lake and have also done 2 more shoreline restorations on Birch since that first project. The project area is 750 square feet and about 50 feet of shoreline will be restored. Total project costs are estimated at \$3530 and they are requesting a \$2000 grant.

The second grant is 2016-05 which is for a second raingarden at a property that received a grant previously. The second raingarden will capture the overflow of the first one to retain more stormwater on their property. They have attended our workshops and are well-versed in plants. Their project is estimated to cost \$2700 and they are requesting \$2000.

If these two grants are approved, there is just over \$11,000 left in the grant budget this year. Staff recommends approval of the grants.

It was moved by Lindner & seconded by Mann to approve Grants 2016-04 and 2016-05 for \$2,000 each. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**2. Landscape Level 2 – White Bear Montessori**

Kristine reported that the White Bear Montessori School LL2 grant was formally approved by the Board for \$20,000. They will begin the project right after school is let out for the summer and hope to have it completed by mid-July.

**B. Education**

**1. 2015 Annual Report**

The final draft of the 2015 Annual Report was approved by the BOD during the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, for release to BWSR, along with the 2015 Audit. The 2015 Annual Report is using the same format and platform as last year's 2014 Annual Report, and will also be sent out to agency and municipal

partners. Nick will be completing the 2015 Annual Report Summary for availability at summer 2016 community events.

**2. Raingarden Workshops**

Kristine held 2 raingarden workshops over the last two weeks with Nick's help. We had 21 attendees between the 2 workshops. Kristine has done site visits with 3 attendees and will be scheduling more over the next couple of weeks.

**3. Partner Event Dates**

VLAWMO staff were at the White Bear Lake Water Fair on May 7 and will be at the North Oaks Community Fair on 6/4, Landscape Revival on 6/4, Taste of Vadnais on 7/12, and Marketfest on 7/28.

**C. Monitoring**

**1. 2015 Recap for Lambert Creek and E. coli sampling**

Brian gave a summary of the nutrient data along the creek. Total Phosphorus at the Goose Lake sampling point does not meet state standards for creeks as well as Total Suspended Solids. Brian noted that the TSS meets state standards in the spring but once West Goose Lake is used for the Ski Otters, the TSS does not meet standards. Once the waterski season is done (Labor Day weekend), the TSS starts to go down again. At Whitaker Pond, the data shows that the pond is still exporting TP so the treatment options have not been successful there. At Oakmede, County Rd F, and Kohler Rd, the TP does not meet standards but there is no TSS detected in any of those samples which is a good thing. Chloride samples are collected each spring and results vary from year to year but overall it meets standards. E. coli sampling in 2015 focused on dry weather conditions. The results at Oakmede show that it is below the chronic standards and there is no indication of any human source for the bacteria which means there are no sewer or septic system issues in this area. At County Road F, the chronic levels met standards and the source testing showed all the sources were avian. Sampling at Whitaker Pond resulted in the bacteria meets standards. Sampling at Goose Lake also resulted in meeting standards. One sample site had higher readings (the corner of West Goose that enters Lambert Creek). Additional samples were collected around this site to narrow down the source. All source testing in the area indicate avian sources as well as mammal (dog, cat, raccoon, deer). There is no human source detected. Sampling in 2016 will focus on wet weather.

**D. GIS**

Tyler reported that the Community Blue project at Rice Lake has started. He helped them capture beetles at Rotary Park in White Bear Lake 2 days this week. When they were at the site yesterday, they noted that the beetles that were released on Monday were already eating purple loosestrife. There is no expectation that the beetles will eradicate all the purple loosestrife but they will help control it.

**E. WCA –Goodwill Mitigation Proposal, Meadowlands enforcement**

Goodwill Site - Brian reported that this site is a 4.3 acre property with two delineated wetlands. One type 1 (PEM1A) seasonally flooded basin (0.14 acres) and one type 3 (PEM1Cd) shallow marsh wetland (0.75acres). The property is located south of highway 96, west of Interstate 35E and east of Centerville Road (across from Culvers). The developer is proposing a Goodwill Store.

In order for development of the Goodwill 0.43 acres of wetland will be impacted (filled). This impact does not qualify for a de minimis or no-loss exemption. There are concerns that on-site mitigation success will be an issue after 5yrs and the applicant

will ultimately have to buy banking credits outside of the watershed due to the quality of the mitigation site. Current VLAWMO policy is to mitigate on site. Sequencing was addressed and no viable sites within the watershed were available for wetland mitigation. VLAWMO also does not have any banking sites within the watershed for the applicant to buy credits. The City of White Bear Lake has the site zoned for commercial development. Underground water treatment is proposed on the site along with a stormwater pond. On site mitigation was addressed but the number of large trees on site are considered significant to the City and would require replacement if removed. Because the City wants to maintain the appearance of the landscape as it currently exists along I-35E, and that they want wetland mitigation areas to provide functions and values similar to that of stormwater ponds, the applicant is proposing to provide wetland mitigation in form of wetland bank credits. Staff would like discussion on the replacement plan options and a possible recommendation to the Board. At the development occurring at the Alliant site to the north of this project, we required at least 1:1 on site mitigation along with the 2:1 purchase of banking credits when facing similar situations.

**Discussion:**

Brandt discussed the process that was undertaken to choose the particular site for the Goodwill store. The plans currently call for the building sitting on the northern end of the site. 20,000-21,000 square feet of wetland impact is estimated. The City wants them to keep as many trees on site as possible. They have several stormwater treatment projects on site. Providing wetland mitigation on site is very limited due to the trees and ordinances. With all the possible mitigation on site, it would only equal 7500 square feet, would require the clearing of all the trees, and would likely be filled with invasive plants (reed canary grass and buckthorn). They propose to buy wetland credits which they feel is the better environmental option. If they are able to do that, the wetland that is still on site would receive treated stormwater and would retain the woods around the wetland. The banking credits would be bought at a 2:1 ratio in Carver County. There are no available wetland banks in Ramsey County. The property owner of this site clear cut the site numerous times and filled wetlands. They feel they are trying to save as much of the wetland as possible and that their proposed stormwater treatment projects would enhance the land. Mann asked if they looked into permeable parking lots. Brandt stated that the soils are not conducive to this. Their proposed underground filtration system is trying to replicate the nutrient removal that exists currently. Graham stated that Vadnais Heights has encountered similar situations and that he feels this plan makes sense to him. Brian asked if the amount of parking can be negotiated. Brandt stated that it is negotiable but all the other Goodwill stores find that they need at least 90 parking spaces. They would like to have over 100 spots. The current design has 94 spots. Brandt feels the current design provides the most minimal impacts yet meets the needs for Goodwill. Graham stated that we should make sure that there is a maintenance plan for the site to ensure the stormwater treatment projects are effective. At this point, Brian is looking for the TEC's thoughts with the current plan. Graham feels that they are very close to a Plan that works for the site. Mann stated that the site has been abused for so long that if anything they do improves what is there, then that is good.

**VII. Reports**

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

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

**VIII. Commissioner Reports**

Graham stated that White Bear augmentation is being discussed at the Legislature and he will report back on any decisions made.

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

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

Margaret reported that there will be a Low Impact Landscaping and Green Cities Forum on May 18 from 2-4pm and all are invited. The RCD Board is up for re-election this year and they will all be filing for candidacy on Tuesday.

**XI. Public Comment**

Diane stated that Stephanie came to a North Oaks Natural Resource Team meeting and they walked around a spot at Pleasant Lake to look at the shoreline. SPRWS has lowered the water level in the lake right now because of maintenance on the water pipes and they were able to see the undercutting along the shore.

**XII. Next Meetings**

TEC: June 10; Board: May 25

**XIII. Adjourn**

It was moved by Mann and seconded by Lindner to adjourn at 9:11am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.