



Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
 Technical Commission Minutes
 February 9, 2018
 Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room

Commission Members Present:

Mark Graham Vadnais Heights (VH)
 Jim Grisim White Bear Lake (WBL)
 Bob Larson North Oaks (NO)
 Paul Duxbury White Bear Township (WBT)
 Gloria Tessier Gem Lake (GL)

Commission Members Absent:

Marty Asleson Lino Lakes (LL)

Others in attendance: Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Jenson, Brian Corcoran, Tyler Thompson, Nick Voss (VLAWMO); Margaret Behrens (Ramsey Conservation District – RCD); Jeremy Erickson Justine Roe (St. Paul Regional Water Service – SPRWS); Kate Winsor (NO Resident); Diane Gorder (NO Natural Resources Cmte)

I. **Call to Order** Chair Graham called the meeting to order at 7.30am.

II. **Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by Grisim and seconded by to approve the February 9, 2018 agenda as presented.

Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

It was moved by Larson and seconded by Duxbury to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2018 meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. **Administration & Operations**

A. Administrator’s report – BWSR Funding

Background: As discussed last month, BWSR is implementing a pilot program in the 7-county metro area to use a portion of the Clean Water Legacy funds available to fund existing Water Plans. \$4.875 million is available in each year of the pilot, 2018 and 2019. Funds are allocated by county according to their area. Ramsey County is 5% of this metro area with \$442,000 available each year of the pilot. Anoka County covers 12% of the 7-county area with \$826,000 available each year. The eligible agencies that have approved local water plans in each county must come up with a ‘Collaborative PTM Implementation Plan’ that meets BWSR criteria by June 30, 2018. (PTM – Prioritized, Targeted, Measurable) Basically the Plan should show how the available funds would be distributed to eligible prioritized projects or programs already identified in our Water Plans. Ramsey County watersheds are discussing distributing Clean Water Fund the Plan moneys by area within the county. However, cities may be eligible too if they have an approved local water plan. Anoka County is just holding preliminary discussions. Potentially:

County	% of Metro	Clean Water Allocation	% of County	VLAWMO possible \$\$	Planned project/program
Anoka	15%	\$826,000	0.3627%	\$2,996	???
Ramsey	5%	\$442,000	13.24 %	\$53,388	???

If there is no agreement among eligible agencies within a county, the available Clean Water funds will revert to a standard competitive grant program. These discussions will be ongoing this winter and into spring. VLAWMO would still do standard grant program administration under the current Ramsey County proposal. We would need to know how we would want to spend the \$53k by this summer. It needs to be a project or program identified in our plan.

Question: That may be more background than you want but here is where the TEC and Board are needed. If the roughly \$53,000 becomes available later this year, where would VLAWMO put it to best use? It needs to be in our current Water Plan and VLAWMO will have to provide at least a 10% match for this grant money.

Stephanie presented a list of possible projects that could be considered. The Board has asked the TEC to come up with about 3 top project contenders.

- Spent lime feasibility study on Goose and Oak Knoll pond with pilot application
- Part of the Goose Lake alum treatment
- Shoreline restoration on Goose Lake (beach area or Polar channel)
- Triple cost-share funds with targeted application (Birch Lake, Goose Lake, Wilkinson)
- Wetland survey & monitoring on targeted wetland complex
- Rough fish removal on Wilkinson and finishing load reduction study
- Complete BMP feasibility study for Hoffman Road commercial area in Gem Lake
- Charley Lake sedimentation study
- Lambert Creek improvement projects (still waiting on engineering study and would require a Plan Amendment)

Discussion

Grisim feels that the County would probably like to see the money going to residents for raingardens and shoreline restorations.

Tessier stated that the study along Scheuneman Rd is being planned already. Tessier thinks it would be wise to put it towards Goose Lake and the cost share program – especially since it was spent so quickly recently.

Discussion about the West Goose shoreline restoration possibility: There are still issues regarding the use of the area by the Ski Otters because the restoration would be on the strip that is utilized during their shows. There are political issues as well as the fact that we wouldn't see much nutrient removal.

Duxbury suggested to include Spent Lime be included as well and Wilkinson load reduction study.

TEC top 4 are:

Goose Lake shoreline restoration

Spent Lime study

Increase Landscape Grant program

Wilkinson Load study

B.

V. Reports

A. Financial Report for February & authorization for payment of checks.

It was moved by Grisim and seconded by Tessier to approve the February Treasurer's report and payment of checks. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. Monitoring Report – Part 1

Brian presented the 2017 monitoring results for some of the lakes studied in 2017.

Amelia – seeing downward trends for nutrients and are below state standards.

Birch - in 20 years of monitoring, Birch has never gone above state standards. There was a spike this year in nutrients but it is still well below standards. The spike could have been due to the lower lake levels. The year round chloride sampling showed a highest reading of the lakes in the watershed but is still below standard. The State is considering lowering the standard and there is still the issue of what do we do to counteract chloride effects of chloride inputs in a lake. The automated sampler at 4th & Otter captured 4 storm events in 2017 and those resulted in very high TP levels which supports the upcoming BMP at the site.

Gem – historical data shows a downward trend for nutrients and remains below state standards. It will be removed from the Impaired Waters list in 2018.

Wood Lake/Oak Knoll Pond – 5 weeks of data were collected in late summer – early fall. Nutrient levels were well above standards. This info is being studied by Barr Engineering to help with assessing BMPs for the Goose Lake subwatershed. There is a large drainage area that empties to this site and is surrounded by homes – many of which have lawns without any buffer.

East and West Goose Lake – both lakes are still well above state standards. Brian stated that it appears that the Saputo has reduced or stopped their water pumping (possibly due to construction or maybe from environmental pressure). We will be interested to see how the reduced clean groundwater input affects nutrient levels.

Tamarack – still is consistently well above standards. The floating island has not a positive effect on nutrients but it has been an educational tool for visitors to the nature center.

VI. Programs

A. Education & Outreach

1. Spring Workshops

Workshops are now scheduled and being promoted. Facebook events for sharing and printed flyers are available to post around town – thank you for any assistance in getting the word out. Events and registration are also on the VLAWMO web calendar.

2. Community Blue Application Consideration

The application received at the end of 2017 required planning with the WBL school district to move forward. With this step complete, the application is now ready for review. See attachment for application and supplemental program description, and contact Nick for any questions. Pages 9 and 10 in the supplemental attachment contain the application's program description. This grant is unique in that it works with WB schools (Birch, Central, Willow, and Oneka). With this, some schools available for summer programming are outside of VLAWMO's boundary (Willow and Oneka). School district service areas are attached to the TEC packet for reference. Although we're supportive of partnering with the school district, we're also restricted by policy and board guidance to fund programs within the VLAWMO boundary.

Therefore VLAWMO staff recommends two options for this grant: 1) fund the program in it's entirety, including all schools proposed, and document student attendance and home addresses of students attending at schools outside of VLAWMO (Willow and Oneka) or 2) Fund Birch Lake, Central Middle School, and Willow portions of the grant (Willow's service area overlaps VLAWMO).

Discussion – maybe we fund it this year and Nick goes to the schools to see how the program works. Tessier said that including Oneka is worthwhile because it is very possible that VLAWMO residents will bring their children to Oneka.

It was moved by Grisim and seconded by Graham to approve the \$5000 Community Blue grant for this project. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. Monitoring – lab analysis proposals and recommendation

Brian sent out RFP's for 2018-2019 monitoring analysis. Three companies responded. Ramsey County Labs no longer does commercial analysis so they did not provide a proposal. We did receive proposals from Pace and RMB. Analysis will be for both our regular monitoring program as well as the wetland treatment pilot project. Brian summarized the proposals. RMB is trying to get new business and have come in substantially lower than Pace for costs in 2018 – it would be about half of what we paid Pace in 2017 (\$11,000 vs \$20,000). The chosen company would also do the analysis for Whitaker Treatment Wetlands. Lorin Hatch would be our contact with RMB. Lorin has worked throughout the Twin Cities and is now heading up the RMB office in the Cities. Their bid would cover 2018 and 2019.

Tessier worries about the quality of service given the low costs. Brian stated that Pace had a monopoly with water quality testing because there were no other local businesses that offered these types of services and RMB will now be competition so the rates may stabilize between the testing companies.

RMB is doing 5 other watersheds water quality analysis.

Staff recommends and looks to the TEC to provide the Board with an official recommendation.

It was moved by Graham and seconded by Grisim to recommend to the Board that RMB be hired for water quality lab analysis. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

VII. Projects

A. Birch Lake Project

Kristine has asked Barr Engineering to provide a proposal to complete the final engineering for the Birch Lake project. Kristine has coordinated with WBL to have their engineering staff complete final topography survey work necessary for the project's construction as well as manage the utility locate at the site. Finally, Kristine is finishing the work plan which is due to BWSR by mid-March as part of the grant process. The work plan will be reviewed at the Feb 28 Board meeting and will then be submitted to BWSR. If everything goes well, we should have the go-ahead to start spending money on this project in April.

B. Lambert Creek

1. Ditch Cleaning Open House and Letter

Along with the approval to use Institution Community Work Crews (ICWC) for the cleaning and clearing of debris on Ditch 14, the Board also approved a public meeting to take place at the regular VLAWMO Board meeting, February 28, 2018 at 7pm at the Vadnais Heights City Hall Council Chambers. Prior to the meeting, letters will be mailed out to property owners along the Creek where the work will be taking place this spring informing and inviting them to the public hearing, as well as explaining the project and the ICWC program.

2. Engineering Project – Ditch Survey

In addition to the main Ditch 14/Lambert Creek survey that was completed the second week in January 2018, the survey of Lambert Creek's branches 2, 3, 4, and 5 was completed on January 24th and 25th. Funding for the survey of the branch ditches (\$6,036) was provided by the City of Vadnais Heights. The survey of the branches will not only make the Hydrologic & Hydraulic (H & H) modeling of the drainage system more accurate, but will help determine repair and improvement options down the road. Now that the survey has been completed, the next step will be beginning the H & H modeling.

C. Sucker Channel

The planting portion for this project is now out for bid. Responses are due February 23 with the hope that planting will occur in mid-May, depending on weather.

VIII. Commissioner Reports

Graham has been working with Ramsey Washington Watershed regarding the improvements for water flow at Grass Lake. There will be road restrictions/closures as they work on the culverts to allow water to flow more freely.

Graham did an extensive ditch cleaning along County Road F this past year and it was surprisingly expensive – about \$100,000.

Graham also mentioned the issues with the White Bear Lake lawsuit is going to result in a residential watering ban for lawns within 5 miles of the lake which includes Vadnais Heights. Graham stated that it will be an issue for how this is regulated but that it will be a problem because commercial, industrial, and City properties CAN water their lawns. Graham stated that when the City Council discusses this issue, he will propose that the City will NOT irrigate. Duxbury asked where they measure the level of the aquifer. Graham stated that he can connect Duxbury with Perry Jones who works on this project and is a WBL resident.

Tessier expressed the concern for how this ban can be enforced and the time and money required to follow through on this sort of activity.

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

Jeremy and Graham have been discussing goose management for a couple of properties. A management plan is required by the DNR and they have been going through the process and soliciting public comment. The plan is now complete and they will be utilizing deterrent methods such as coyote silhouettes and fencing beginning this summer.

Justine stated they will have an open house May 7 from 2-7. There will also be a study of the conduits that exist in Centerville to use for water service. A meeting regarding this will be on 2/23

X. Ramsey Conservation District (RCD) Report

Behrens stated that the article in the paper this week was inaccurate. Behrens and Supervisor Buggs filed a complaint last year and it is being investigated. Any disbanding of the Board will be on hold until the complaint investigation is completed.

XI. Public Comment

Gorder stated that the North Oaks News published a story about the Capstone Project and articles by Nick were also included.

XII. Next Meetings

TEC: March 9; Board: February 28

XIII. Adjourn

It was moved by Tessier and seconded by Duxbury to adjourn at 9:05 am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.