

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS – JUNE 25, 2025, REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Attendance		Present	Absent
Jim Lindner, Chair	City of Gem Lake	X	
Rob Rafferty	City of Lino Lakes	X	
Krista Wolter	City of North Oaks	X**	
Ed Prudhon	White Bear Township	X	
Bill Walsh	City of White Bear Lake	X**	
Katherine Doll Kanne	City of Vadnais Heights		X*
Phil Belfiori	Administrator	X	
Dawn Tanner	Program Development Coord.	X	
Brian Corcoran	Water Resources Mgr.	X	
Lauren Sampedro	Watershed Tech & Program Coord.	X	
Angela Hugunin	Communication & Outreach Coord.	X	

*= with prior notice

**= alternate

Others in attendance: Rachel Olm (Houston Engineering, Inc.); Troy Gilchrist (VLAWMO Attorney).

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Lindner.

II. Approval of Agenda 🐦

The agenda for the June 25, 2025 Board meeting was presented for approval.

A motion was made by Director Rafferty and seconded by Director Prudhon to approve the June Board meeting agenda. Vote: all: aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes 🐦

The minutes from the April 23, 2025 Board meeting were placed on the agenda for approval, as presented. No comments from the Directors.

Director Rafferty asked for clarification on if Directors can approve meeting minutes if they did not attend the meeting. Chair Lindner confirmed they can.

A motion was made by Director Prudhon and seconded by Director Rafferty to approve the April 23, 2025 minutes. Vote: Linder: aye; Prudhon: aye; Rafferty: aye; Walsh: abstained; Wolter: absent. Motion passed.

IV. Visitors and Presentations

A. TEC Report to the Board for June & Finance Report

TEC Member Susan Miller provided an overview of the June TEC Report to the Board. She highlighted three items: 1) The East Vadnais Lake Subwatershed Resiliency Study and the City of Vadnais Heights' whole-city Resiliency Study. She said the TEC are excited by these studies and that they are a perfect example of how local communities can access funding for needed planning through partnering with VLAWMO. 2) VLAWMO's Education and Outreach and Grant Programs. Miller noted these programs have been busy. She has seen an

increasing number of people coming to VLAWMO to convert their yards to pollinator gardens and create water storage areas. She said all types of property owners in our communities need to be involved to improve how properties handle runoff and more rain events. She recommended the Board of Directors connect community members and developers with VLAWMO to incorporate more resiliency projects and increase the number of people we are reaching. 3) 2027-2036 Watershed Management Plan. She highlighted that the planning process is in the final stages and the TEC recommended VLAWMO move to the formal 60-day review. She commented the plan drafting process was transparent and liked how the comments were tracked.

Chair Lindner complimented Miller's report. He added that property owners take pride in their projects, and if more adjoining property owners can work together, there is a greater effect.

B. Public Visitors - Non-agenda items

None.

**V. Consent Agenda **

Chair Lindner asked if any Board members wished to take items off of the consent agenda for discussion.

Consent items on the agenda and included in the June Board packet were as follows:

- A. Consider Draft MOU for Partnership with City of Vadnais Heights for City-Wide Resiliency Study Development
- B. Consider Draft MOU for Partnership with City of Vadnais Heights for East Vadnais Lake Subwatershed Stormwater Improvement Project Design
- C. Consider Rotary Park Wetland Restoration Project Contract and Scope of Work with NST
- D. Consider Authorizing Phase 3 of Tamarack Lake Alum Project and Engineering Scope of Work
- E. Consider EPA 319 Grant Remaining Scope of Work for Phase 1
- F. Consider LMCIT Liability Waiver Form
- G. Consider Ramsey County GIS User Group 2026-2030 JPA Renewal
- H. Update on Recent LCCMR Grant Application Process
- I. Update on Community Blue Grant for Incarnation Lutheran Church
- J. Update on Recent Outreach Activities
- K. Update on Carp Management & Birch AIS

A motion was made by Director Walsh and seconded by Director Rafferty to approve the consent agenda. Vote: all: aye. Motion passed.

VI. Business

A. Projects and Studies/Plans

1. Consider Resolution 04-2025 Regarding Initiating the "60 day" Draft VLAWMO Watershed Management Plan Review

Administrator Belfiori thanked the Board for their review of the draft Watershed Management Plan over the last 20 months and noted that the planning process is in its final steps. He thanked staff and the lead plan consultant, Rachel Olm, for their work.

Rachel Olm with Houston Engineering, Inc. presented an overview of how the draft plan came together. She described that it began with a 60-day notification to gather information from plan review authorities on their priorities for VLAWMO's plan, and a public engagement campaign followed to gather local and stakeholder feedback. The plan was drafted in sections with collaboration from staff, the TEC, and the TEC+ with several opportunities to review and comment.

Olm summarized the content included in each of the draft plan sections: 1) Introduction, 2) Land and Water Resources, 3) Priority Issues and Goals, 4) Implementation, 5) Plan Administration.

She highlighted that 14 issues were prioritized in section three of the plan. She stated there are no low priority issues within VLAWMO. Any issues that were not identified as high priority are still addressed in the plan and designated as plan themes. Measurable goals were identified for addressing each priority issue and were intentionally labeled with "partnership-grant dependent measure" for transparency. She clarified the types of projects and programs that VLAWMO implements are largely dependent on partnership engagement and external grant funding. Olm noted that section three of the plan directly corresponds with the projects identified in the implementation plan section.

Olm highlighted that VLAWMO's implementation activities are not solely focused on projects but also include implementing VLAWMO's core programs, which together help VLAWMO make progress towards its measurable goals. She said the most visible implementation activities for partners are the project technical work and capital improvement projects, which are organized by subwatershed in the implementation section.

Olm described the subwatershed pages contained in the implementation section and noted that the subwatershed activities described in these pages were compiled into the implementation Table 4-5, along with VLAWMO's core programs. She summarized the content contained in Table 4-5 and highlighted that toggles were added to indicate if an implementation activity directly or indirectly benefits a measurable goal. A dark green toggle flipped to the right assumes an activity is directly connected to a measurable goal.

Administrator Belfiori added that Table 4-5 was closely reviewed by community partners and the Board Subcommittee during the 2026 proposed budget planning process. He noted many projects span multiple years and the Subcommittee wanted to ensure they considered how the long-term projects can continue having momentum through this proposed Watershed Management Plan, starting with the proposed 2026 budget.

Director Rafferty asked who is on the Board Subcommittee. Administrator Belfiori responded Chair Lindner, Director Doll Kanne, and Director West are on the committee. Chair Lindner added the Subcommittee thoroughly reviewed the projects on the implementation table.

Olm stated VLAWMO is on the last step of the Watershed Management Plan process, which is presenting the plan for submission to plan review authorities to start their 60-day formal review. Administrator Belfiori introduced the proposed resolution 04-2025 and recommended approval.

Discussion:

Director Prudhon motioned and Director Rafferty seconded to approve Resolution 04-2025 which authorizes staff to send the draft Plan to required agencies and partners for 60-day

review and comment according to Minnesota Statutes §103B.231 Subd. 7. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Resolution to Initiate the Formal Review (of at least 60 days), as required by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) pursuant to MS 103B.231 Sub. 7, for the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization's (VLAWMO) Watershed Management Plan

Resolution 04-2025

WHEREAS, VLAWMO has previously approved and adopted a comprehensive Watershed Management Plan ("Plan") as defined by Minnesota Statutes §103B, and Minnesota Rules §8410; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes §103B.231 requires the Plan to be updated every 10 years; and

WHEREAS, VLAWMO has identified the need to update its Plan dated (2017-2026), amended (2019, 2021, 2022); and

WHEREAS, VLAWMO must prepare a Plan and/or update in accordance to Minnesota Statutes §103B, and Minnesota Rules §8410; and

WHEREAS, VLAWMO completed the required steps as specified by BWSR to Initiate an updated Plan, which included (but is not limited to):

- Consulted with VLAWMO's BWSR Board Conservationist (November 13, 2024);
- Engaged with committees;
- Established a formal Advisory committee (VLAWMO's Technical Commission/TEC) (VLAWMO Board, December 13, 2023);
- Notified the required review agencies of the 60-day response period regarding Plan initiation (December 14, 2023);
- Conducted an Initial planning meeting (April 24, 2024);
- Developed and implemented a Public input process that included a public meeting (Implemented January-May 2024);
- Performed an Assessment (self-assessment to evaluate progress on current Plan)
- Reviewed relevant plans and programs
- Identified priority issues (VLAWMO Board, June 26, 2024).

WHEREAS, VLAWMO completed the required steps as specified by BWSR to conduct the Draft phase, which included:

- Developed an Outline and a Draft of each section in the Plan;
- Conducted Informal review with the TEC+ (TEC with the addition of invitations extended to all review authorities specified by BWSR) (In-person meetings held November 13, 2024; January 8, 2025; and April 9, 2025);
- Discussed comments received and developing a comment response sheet for tracking and

- response made to comments received;
- Revised draft of the Plan considering and or incorporating review comments received for consideration by the Board to initiate this 60-day review.

And WHEREAS, VLAWMO now seeks to Initiate Formal Review of the draft Plan for 60-day review and comment according to Minnesota Statutes §103B.231 Subd. 7.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the VLAWMO Board of Directors approves the draft Plan dated June 25, 2025, for filing and authorizes staff to send to the draft Plan to required agencies and partners for 60-day review and comment according to Minnesota Statutes §103B.231 Subd. 7.

The question was on the adoption of the resolution and there were 5 yeas and 0 nays as follows:

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<i>Bill Walsh (Alt.)</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Ed Prudhon</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Rob Rafferty</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Krista Wolter (Alt.)</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Katherine Doll</i>	☐	☐	X
<i>Kanne</i>			
<i>Jim Lindner</i>	X	☐	☐

Adopted this 25th day of June 2025.

BY THE VLAWMO BOARD

Chairperson

Attest:_____

Administrator

2. Consider Resolution 05-2025 Regarding Authorizing the Distribution of the Updated VLAWMO JPA to Member Communities for Adoption

Administrator Belfiori and Troy Gilchrist, VLAWMO Attorney, presented a revised resolution 05-2025 that was passed out at the meeting. The recent changes were allowing for an intermediary step of having BWSR provide a precautionary review before the JPA is sent to the member communities.

Administrator Belfiori provided a history of the JPA. It establishes VLAWMO's existence and defines its authorities. All member communities need to sign and authorize the JPA. He said the current JPA was last signed by members in 2016 in conjunction with the previous Watershed Management Plan. He noted that two amendments to the JPA occurred since 2016, which were to allow VLAWMO to be eligible for the League of MN Cities' insurance program and allow VLAWMO to take on debt service for the Lambert Lake sheet pile loan.

Administrator Belfiori stated the current JPA expires in 2026 and needs to be updated. To update it, VLAWMO worked with legal counsel to merge the previous JPA and the two 2019 amendments with current VLAWMO procedures and State statutes. He noted the goal of the update was to better align the JPA with how VLAWMO currently operates.

He described that the draft JPA was provided to member communities for comments and comments were received from the Cities of Vadnais Heights, Lino Lakes, and White Bear Lake, and White Bear Township. From the comments, six substantive changes were made to the draft JPA that was provided to the Board at its April 23, 2025 meeting. The changes were brought forward to the Board Subcommittee on June 5, 2025 and the Subcommittee unanimously recommended the revisions along with one addition. He summarized the JPA revisions, which were incorporated in the proposed JPA provided in the packet; both clean and redlined versions. Administrator Belfiori recommended approval of the revised resolution 05-2025.

Discussion: Chair Lindner noted Board members will have a chance to see the impact of the JPA in their communities.

Director Prudhon motioned and Director Rafferty seconded to approve Resolution 05-2025, which resolves that the Board hereby approves the attached JPA be distributed and recommended:

1. The enclosed draft is hereby approved for distribution to BWSR for review and any edits BWSR may recommend shall be reviewed and approved by the Board's Chairperson.
2. Once the JPA is in final form, the Board authorizes staff to distribute the JPA, together with a sample staff memo and adoption resolution, to member communities with the Board's recommendation that the governing body of each member community review and approve it.
3. The letter sent to member communities asking them to adopt the JPA shall indicate the date by which the member communities are requested to act on the JPA and return their executed signature page to VLAWMO to help facilitate the review and approval of the updated VLAWMO Watershed Management Plan.

Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE
DISTRIBUTION OF THE UPDATED JOINT POWERS
AGREEMENT TO MEMBER COMMUNITIES FOR ADOPTION**

WHEREAS, the Vадnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (“VLAWMO”) has worked with member communities over the last several months to update the expiring Vадnais Lake Area Water Management Organization Joint Powers Agreement (“JPA”);

WHEREAS, the VLAWMO Board of Directors (“Board”), after reviewing the initial draft of the updated JPA, voted at its April 23, 2025, meeting to authorize staff to distribute it to member communities for their review and comment;

WHEREAS, VLAWMO received several comments and worked to address them in the updated JPA;

WHEREAS, the VLAWMO Subcommittee reviewed the revised JPA at its June 5, 2025, meeting, made one edit, and voted to forward it to the Board with a recommendation that it be approved for distribution to the member communities for final adoption;

WHEREAS, review of the JPA by BWSR is recommended before distribution to member communities as BWSR must determine the JPA complies with its rules before it will approve the updated VLAWMO Watershed Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Board considered the updated JPA at its June 25, 2025 meeting and determines it is in the best interests of VLAWMO and its members to recommend that the governing bodies act to adopt the JPA to provide for the continued operation of VLAWMO.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the VLAWMO Board of Directors as follows:

1. The enclosed draft is hereby approved for distribution to BWSR for review and any edits BWSR may recommend shall be reviewed and approved by the Board’s Chairperson.
2. Once the JPA is in final form, the Board authorizes staff to distribute the JPA, together with a sample staff memo and adoption resolution, to member communities with the Board’s recommendation that the governing body of each member community review and approve it.
3. The letter sent to member communities asking them to adopt the JPA shall indicate the date by which the member communities are requested to act on the JPA and return their executed signature page to VLAWMO to help facilitate the review and approval of the updated VLAWMO Watershed Management Plan.

The question was on the adoption of the resolution and there were 5 yeas and 0 nays as follows:

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<i>Bill Walsh (Alt.)</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Ed Prudhon</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Rob Rafferty</i>	X	☐	☐

<i>Krista Wolter</i> <i>(Alt.)</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Katherine Doll</i> <i>Kanne</i>	☐	☐	X
<i>Jim Lindner</i>	X	☐	☐

Adopted this 25th day of June 2025.

BY THE VLAWMO BOARD

Chairperson

Attest: _____

B. Budget

1. Consider Proposed 2026 Budget – Resolution 06-2025

Administrator Belfiori thanked the Board of Directors and the Board Subcommittee for their vision and leadership in the development of the 2026 budget.

Director Rafferty asked when the budget is due and if it's due at the end of September. Administrator Belfiori responded it is due next month because of the proposed revised SSU charges.

Administrator Belfiori provided a presentation as included in the Board packet. He noted the Board Subcommittee unanimously recommended the proposed 2026 budget as presented at the June 5, 2025 meeting.

Administrator Belfiori described the 2026 budget development process, which included creating a long-range project partnership table that was provided to 11 partners for discussion in February and March of 2025. The table was then provided to the Board of Directors for review and feedback.

Director Prudhon asked if North Oaks Company was involved in the review because they are significant property owners. Administrator Belfiori confirmed and stated they were involved with projects like the Wilkinson Deepwater Wetland project and the potential projects for the EPA 319 funding.

Administrator Belfiori noted that draft 2026 budget was developed from the long-range project partnership table and the Board of Directors reviewed and discussed the draft 2026 budget at the April 23, 2025 meeting. The Board Subcommittee reviewed and discussed the budget at a June 5, 2025 meeting and unanimously recommended to approve the proposed 2026 budget

as presented today. He said the recommended budget in the meeting packet attempts to balance the necessary momentum to implement the large-scale partnership projects and anticipated state and federal budget reductions with the fund balance management needed for project implementation. The budget includes a proposed 11% SSU increase for 2026, which would be \$75/year for the single family home residential 1-3 unit land use classification.

The proposed 2026 SSU rate for all other classifications, such as commercial, industrial, and institutional, would be approximately \$109.70/acre. He noted that the SSU percentages may change a little due to the recent boundary change with Rice Creek and Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed Districts, but said more information on how that affects the SSU amounts will be provided at the August Board meeting.

Administrator Belfiori highlighted some of the partnership projects the proposed 2026 budget would support. He stated \$180,000 in external grants and partnership income is expected in 2026, in addition to the SSU income, and the projected year end 2026 fund balance range is \$800,000 to \$1,300,000 consistent with the Board's fund balance policy. He also highlighted the proposed 2026 budget includes recommended adjustments to employee payroll and benefits based on the Personnel Subcommittee recommendations and Board salary policy.

Administrator Belfiori provided a detailed summary of each section of the proposed 2026 budget. He noted the proposed 2026 budget anticipates using a range of between \$300,000-800,000 of the projected fund balance. He stated the Board Subcommittee reviewed the proposed 2026 budget in detail at their June 5, 2025 meeting, and the Personnel Subcommittee met afterwards. The Personnel Subcommittee approved the proposed salary and benefits adjustments. The Board Subcommittee unanimously recommended approval of the proposed 2026 budget as presented today.

Discussion:

Chair Lindner commented that we try to focus on activities that reduce flooding because Lambert Creek moves a lot of water and has flooded in the past. He added that the proposed budget has something for each member community. He said that one of the Subcommittee's goals for the budget is to try to prevent VLAWMO needing to make future dramatic decisions of eliminating things or having significant SSU increases.

Director Rafferty commented that in the past the Board tended to be more reserved, but it resulted in VLAWMO getting behind and needing to take drastic measures. He said as long as the budget is reasonable and ensures VLAWMO doesn't fall behind he supports that. Chair Lindner added the Board also wants to ensure staff are appropriately compensated and Director Rafferty agreed.

Director Rafferty motioned and Director Prudhon seconded to approve resolution 06-2025, approving the 2026 budget. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Resolution 06-2025 Of the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO) Approving the 2026 Budget

Resolution 06-2025 was moved by Director Rafferty and seconded by Director Prudhon:

Whereas, the Board of the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization has considered the 2026 Budget as recommended by the 2026 VLAWMO Subcommittee and the attendant information. The 2026 budget and footnotes are attached to this Resolution, and

Whereas, Total revenue for 2026 is projected at \$2,687,245 of which \$1,335,000 is from the VLAWMO Storm Sewer Utility and the remainder of the revenue being from a State of MN grants, partnership from local communities/partners, VLAWMO funds /fund balance carryover from 2025, and fees/investment income.

Whereas, the total expenditures for 2026 is projected at \$2,687,245 which will be paid utilizing: 1) \$2,507,245 of VLAWMO funds/ carry over funds from 2025, and 2) \$180,000 of loans, grants and partnerships funds.

Therefore be it resolved that the 2026 Budget, dated 6-25-25 is approved.

The question was on the adoption of the resolution and there were 5 yeas and 0 nays as follows:

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<i>Bill Walsh (Alt.)</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Ed Prudhon</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Rob Rafferty</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Krista Wolter (Alt.)</i>	X	☐	☐
<i>Katherine Doll</i>	☐	☐	X
<i>Kanne</i>			
<i>Jim Lindner</i>	X	☐	☐

_____ Board Chair Date

_____ Attest Date

- VII. Discussion/Administration Communication – August 5, 2025 VLAWMO Annual Project Board Tour**
Administrator Belfiori passed out the proposed map for the August 5, 2025 board tour. He described there are four proposed stops and attendees will drive separately. He said they can stop at any project or see all four projects.

Chair Lindner said the TEC members and Board alternates are also welcome to attend the tour.

XI. Adjourn

A motion was made by Director Rafferty and seconded by Director Walsh to adjourn at 7:52 pm.
Vote: all aye. Motion passed.