



Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission Minutes
December 8, 2017
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 TEC alternate)

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

II. **Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by and seconded by to approve the December 8, 2017 agenda as amended. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

It was moved by Larson and seconded by Duxbury to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2017 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. **Administration & Operations**

A. Administrator's report – MAWD Update

Stephanie reported that she and Kristine attended the MN Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) Conference. Our neighboring watersheds won some awards this year. Ramsey Washington won for project of the year for Keller Golf Course and Phil Belfiori, the Rice Creek Watershed Administrator won for District Employee of the Year. They have allowed WMOs to become affiliate members but we haven't done that because we wouldn't have any voting rights.

V. **Reports**

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

It was moved by Larson and seconded by Graham to approve the December Treasurer's report and payment of checks. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. Recommended Fund Balance Carry Over

December is when we need to take a look at the remaining balances in our different budget categories and see where we need to carry over funds to 2018. Otherwise unspent funds go back to the general fund. As of writing this memo, some of the expenditures are still being finalized for the year. There are a few items that we would like your input. We will discuss further at the TEC meeting. The Board will be acting on the carry-over funds at the Dec. 13th meeting.

•	3.330	Community Blue	\$5000	School & church initiatives are under discussion
•	3.420	Lambert Creek	\$106,290	Encumbered for Whitaker Wetlands
•	3.425	Goose	\$60,000	Spent lime study; fund for treatment
•	3.430	Birch	\$4,730	Toward 4 th and Otter filter project
•	3.460	Sucker	\$65,000	Encumbered for Sucker channel restoration

- 3.481 Landscape 1 \$4500 Encumbered for existing Cost-share (LL1) projects
- 3.483 Project research \$18,200 Potential spent lime study; Lambert engineering
- 3.484 Maintenance \$25,700 Growing maintenance fund for installations
 - Total \$289,420

These numbers are not final yet. However I wanted you to be aware of some numbers and have your discussion of others. There are some areas under Operations where we would be carrying over small amounts including IT systems, and equipment. Three of the Capital Improvement areas are for projects that are already underway: Whitaker wetlands, Sucker channel and three cost-share projects, total: \$101,790.

Several areas are intended to start building a fund for a larger effort or provide for maintenance of already installed projects. Goose Lake funds would be carried over to help fund an effort to address the nutrient impairment of the lake. Birch Lake funds could be added to the 2018 budget to help match other funding sources if the iron filter project is to proceed. The Project research budget could go toward the feasibility studies on spent lime or on new Lambert creek projects to suggest two under discussion. The TEC can give us their thoughts regarding the items listed above. Otherwise unspent funds go back to the general fund. The Board, with the TEC’s recommendation can redirect general funds as the watershed needs.

Grisim asked about using Community Blue to help with Landscape programs since we ran out of funds for LL1 by May. Stephanie said it could be an option but it would require Board action. Graham stated that the recommendations by staff seem prudent.

C. TEC Report to the Board

It was moved by Graham and seconded by Grisim to approve the December TEC Report to the Board. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

VI. Programs

A. Education & Outreach

1. Getting to know the Education Outreach Plan

Nick continued his conversation with the TEC regarding the review and update of the E/O Plan. Last month I covered the E/O goals and objectives and touched on the process of reviewing and fine-tuning these on an annual basis. Stepping back, the Education and Outreach Plan puts these goals into three categories, which I’m referring to as “strategies” of low, intermediate, and high. Tactics are the more recognizable program that carries out those goals. This is helpful to me as the E/O coordinator, because it balances my focus if each strategy level contains roughly the same amount of goals and tactics. It keeps VLAWMO’s EO producing short-term, recognizable results while still having long-term foresight. The purpose of sharing this with TEC is that TEC fits into the “high strategies” category. Goals and objectives here are acted on through meetings, planning, and decision making that occurs in BOD, TEC, and staff meetings. Goal 3 especially relates to TEC in terms of key personnel (BOD/TEC) continually seeking to advance knowledge of water resources.

For 2018, this is helpful for TEC to know because TEC also dips into the “intermediate strategies” via Community Blue (see table below). There are 3-5 potential CB grants that are gradually gaining momentum and motivation for 2018. In the case of Community Blue becoming more popular and also competitive, TEC will be an importance source for prioritizing these grants and voting on them.

<p>High Strategies</p> <p><u>Goals & Objectives:</u> 1c, 2a, 3b, 6b, 10a, 10b, 10d</p> <p><u>Tactics:</u> Internal planning, stakeholder networking</p>
<p>Intermediate Strategies</p> <p><u>Goals & Objectives:</u> 1a, 1b, 4a, 4b, 5b, 7a, 7b, 7c, 8b</p> <p><u>Tactics:</u> Community Blue, cost-share promotion, citizen science, school programing, workshops</p>
<p>Low Strategies</p> <p><u>Goals & Objectives:</u> 3a, 4c, 5a, 6a, 6c, 8a, 9a, 9b, 10c</p> <p><u>Tactics:</u> Watershed Action Volunteers (WAV), events, branding, school visits, media, tours</p>

Community Blue applications can be weighted in terms of 1) targeting goals that may be more of a need to certain TEC members' communities 2) if the application targets more than one goal 3) if the application seems to be efficient in completing the goal while being cost-effective 4) if the application is a relevant, engaging, and motivating idea that will pursue the goals in a way that's received by our communities. TEC members are also invited to ask questions and recommendations to mold applications so that they better fit these goals and broader VLAWMO vision.

To support this task of being the drivers of Community Blue, we can see that goals 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 relate to the intermediate strategies and therefore Community Blue. The order they're listed doesn't signify VLAWMO's priorities, as this is where the voting comes in between TEC members and staff input from administration and other departments. These are (summarized):

- 1a, b:** Educational stormwater efforts such as trainings and guest speakers, MS4 improvements *(example: special MS4 trainings such as fertilizing best practices)*
- 4a, b, 5b:** Place-based watershed education through networking and synchronizing teacher needs with VLAWMO's activities and on-the-ground projects such as raingardens. School initiatives will reach parents and come full circle to encourage parents to interact with VLAWMO's cost-share program on their own properties. BMP's at schools will have clarity in maintenance responsibility and procedure and will act on them accordingly. *(Example: a school program to build a raingarden and provide the mechanisms to use it and maintain it long-term)*
- 7 a, b, c:** Broader public to increase their knowledge on our watershed and general water resource issues. Raingarden outreach, innovative, fun events/videos/newspaper articles, and visuals that take the larger theme of water resources and break it into a series that's digestible to the public. *(Example: an ice cream social event that has an informal guest speaker or movie screening on relevant topics)*
- 8b:** Building a sense of place that fosters ecological awareness and community reflection. Efforts in citizen science and community service that are valuable to VLAWMO, encourage an improvement in watershed behavior/awareness, and most importantly, useful to the broader community (i.e. scouts having an outlet to engage with the community). *(Example: picture posts and stormdrain stenciling).*

2. Signage Preview – Sucker Channel and Whitaker Wetlands

Nick showed the drafts of the signage that will be installed at both project sites next year.

B.GIS Project web tour

Tyler showed an interactive web map that he has been created using ESRI's ArcGIS online server. He has listed all the projects VLAWMO has completed, including surveys and studies. Some of them

have links back to our website. It is a nice way to visualize all the projects that have occurred in VLAWMO.

C. 2017 Report Card

VLAWMO has a 2017 Work Plan and it's time see how we did. What got done, what didn't, how well did things turn out and of course, how do we want this to guide our 2018 Work Plan?

So here's a fill-in-the-blank table. Your help is needed with the blanks.

Capital Improvement Projects	Measurable outcome (2017 project goals)	Outcome (2017 project goal completion)
Sucker Channel	Work with 3 partners; install most	
Whitaker wetlands	Install wetlands; comply w/grant	
Lower Kohler restoration	Plant and install final elements; monitor	
Studies		
Goose Lake feasibility	Complete study; action plan w/partners	
Wilkinson feasibility	Complete study; action	
Birch – 4th & Otter project	Complete study; action plan w/partners	
Cost – share		
Landscape 1	Install 10 projects; remove .25 lb TP	
Landscape 2	1 project; remove .25 lbs. TP	
Community Blue Education grant	1 project; 2 applications	
WAV	2 vol help @ event; 5 mtgs; 3 stenciling events; 1 video	
Workshops	25 participants; 3 follow-up installations	
Community events/ Communications	5 events; 200 rainbarrel entries; 3 news articles; 4 city news; 200 website views	
K-12	Reach 10% of school pop	
Monitoring Lake / Creek	Chemistry on 12 lakes; 6 site crk	
Chloride monitoring	Annual lakes & creek; Birch	
E. coli & special monitoring	4 th year	

Budget & SSU	Stay within budget; establish 2018 SSU		
Regulation: WCA/Standard	Respond to applications- comply		
Charlie Lake SLMP	complete		

VII. Projects

A. Charley Lake SLMP

As part of our on-going goal of producing Sustainable Lake Management Plan each year, a draft of the SLMP for Charley Lake is available for review. We invite the TEC to read through the SLMP and provide feedback. We will also send it out for review to the City of North Oaks and other partners. Grisim asked if there are standards for what a SLMP should include and look like. He stated that he talked to the DNR and they didn't acknowledge SLMPs for their needs. Kristine stated that she did research as to what should be included when we first started writing them 10 years ago and has gone with that template since then. The DNR gave us a grant for the Birch Lake shoreline restoration project, which was developed because of the SLMP but it may depend on what you are trying to get from the DNR. They have a specific lake vegetation management plan process so that would likely be different than our SLMPs.

B. Lambert Creek RFP

At the last meeting, the Board directed that two efforts be pursued for Lambert Creek. One would be to pursue more possible costs for removing the debris that has accumulated in some sections of Lambert Creek. The other was to see what it would take to understand what it would take to better understand the hydrology and condition of the creek, as well as the structures along the creek and how they affect the system. The focus of the study would be to better identify what VLAWMO should be doing as the ditch authority in terms of a management plan, as well as possible needed repair and maintenance.

As far immediate maintenance, clearing debris from the creek, at the suggestion of Director Prudhon on account of WB Township's experience with the program, staff have explored a community corrections crew assist in the clean-up. This looks like it could be an effective and very frugal solution. Pending Board approval at the December meeting, we plan to proceed with this in the spring.

About the time the RFP was set to go out, the DNR reached out to local watersheds as part of grant work they are doing to update sections of the floodplain (FEMA) maps in the Twin Cities metro area. Some of the work they are doing would dovetail with what VLAWMO intended to do along the Creek anyway. Both VLAWMO and the FEMA (DNR) work want an updated survey of the creek with cross sections and hydraulic modeling. The FEMA work needed detailed surveys and modeling of only certain sections of the creek but also they will be updating the FEMA maps in other areas of VLAWMO. The VLAWMO staff is recommending that the survey and modeling include the all of Ditch 14, with the option of including its branch ditches if the cost is feasible.

The Board directed staff to reach out to consultants for engineering services to determine how best to manage the drainage system. They need to look at the historical data to determine how deep it was originally and how much water it was meant to move. Next would be to survey the ditch (with the option to also survey the branches). Third would be to model the system and analyze the hydrology and hydraulics. And lastly, they would reduce a report for how to proceed that would be added into

the Water Plan. We sent out the RFP and received their proposals on December 7 at noon. The bids are wide-ranging and staff will bring it to the Board next week to determine the next steps.

C. Capstone Project – Pleasant Lake

Erickson stated that the U of M students gave their presentation last night with the results of their study regarding the lake level on Pleasant Lake. They were to make a model (HEC-HMS model) which they completed. However, the challenge with models is calibrating it so it can give valuable information. Noted results are that there is a significant groundwater influence in the lake, the water quality matches the quality of the Mississippi River. The Mississippi provides 50-80% of the water in the system so it makes sense that the water quality would reflect the river. Their recommendations for moving ahead were to continue the promotion of shoreline restoration, for SPRWS to reduce input fluctuations, and adding more QA/QC to monitoring so that there are explanations for outlier data. A report will be produced and made available in the near future.

VIII. Commissioner Reports

Graham stated that he went to a salt workshop recently.

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

Justine stated they had an employee conference last week.

X. Ramsey Conservation District (RCD) Report

XI. Public Comment

XII. Next Meetings

TEC: January 12; Board: December 13

Graham will be absent next month so Grisim will run the meeting and Graham will have an alternate attend.

XIII. Adjourn

It was moved by Grisim Duxbury to adjourn at 9:10am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.