

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization  
Technical Commission Minutes  
February 14, 2014  
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room**

**Attending:**

<i>Absent</i>	White Bear Township (WBT), Chair
Jim Grisim	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Mark Graham	Vadnais Heights (VH), Vice Chair
Marty Asleson	Lino Lakes (LL)
Jim Lindner	Gem Lake (GL)
John Murphy (alternate)	North Oaks (NO)

Others in attendance: Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Jenson, Brian Corcoran, Vanessa Strong (VLAWMO); Margaret Behrens (Ramsey Conservation District); Bob Larson (NO Natural Resources Commission Chair); John Murphy, NOHOA; Justine Roe, St. Paul Water Regional Water Service (SPRWS)

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

**II. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Grisim to approve the February 14, 2014 agenda. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Graham to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2014 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**IV. Administration & Operations**

**A. Election of 2014 Treasurer**

The Treasurer seat is open due to Neil Franey leaving the TEC. Lindner offered to be the Treasurer.

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Grisim to elect Jim Lindner as Treasurer. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**B. Intern 2014**

We would like to have authorization to put up the job announcement for our summer intern. We are looking to have an intern for 20 hours/week. We feel we wouldn't need an intern full time since we are fully staffed this year. The intern would help with monitoring and some office work.

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Lindner to post the position for intern and hire whom staff deem appropriate. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**VI. Projects**

**A. Facilities Maintenance: Whitaker**

Whitaker Pond will be dredged by Ramsey County in the beginning of March. This will be of no cost to VLAWMO as per our maintenance agreement. The County, White Bear Lake and White Bear Township will be splitting the cost of this project. We hope it may give us better monitoring numbers as well.

**B. Strategic Planning – Recommendation for consultant**

Background: The VLAWMO Performance Review (PRAP) by BWSR was completed last year and has gone to the Legislature. The one recommendation BWSR made was to consider strategic planning to identify and prioritize projects and programs VLAWMO should work on through 2016, when our next Comprehensive Water Plan should be complete. The goal of the plan is to produce a Strategic Work Plan for 2014 – 2016.

As Project Research and Development is a budgeted item for 2014 and there is the potential for grant funding through the PRAP grant program, the TEC directed a Request for Proposal to be sent to qualified consultants. Four proposals have been received and reviewed by an ad-hoc committee (Mark Graham, Kris Jenson, and Stephanie McNamara). Proposals were scored based on seven criteria: 1. Familiarity with VLAWMO, 2. Experience with strategic planning and facilitation, 3. Responsiveness & timeliness in previous work, 4. Staff resources allocated, 5. Social media experience, 6. Hours anticipated and 7. Cost.

Proposals came from Wenck, HDR, Burns & McDonnell, and Tom Petersen. The committee recommends the TEC forward a recommendation to contract with Burns and McDonnell for a cost of \$9,904. Della Young, the project manager also managed the current VLAWMO Water Management Plan.

**Recommendation for TEC consideration:** The TEC recommends the VLAWMO Board of Directors enter into a contract with Burns & McDonnell to implement the proposed scope of services for Strategic Planning assistance as outlined in their proposal of January 31, 2014.

**Additionally, it is recommended that VLAWMO pursue grant funding** under the PRAP grant program to help pay for the Strategic planning work.

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Murphy to recommend the Board to enter into a contract with Burns & McDonnell to implement the proposed scope of services for Strategic Planning assistance as outlined in the proposal dated 1/31/14. Vote: all aye. Motion passed. TEC also told staff to pursue the BWSR grant funding to help pay for this.

**VII. Programs**

**A. E.coli sourcing/monitoring direction**

A proposal has been received from Burns & McDonnell to assist staff with an e.coli monitoring study. Burns & McDonnell are the only firm around who has experience with this sort of monitoring which is why we approached them for a proposal. Their plan has VLAWMO staff doing the collection of samples which are then sent to Weston labs in California for analyzing the data. Rather than just guessing on what to do and how to do it, we would like to work with this firm to determine the where and why we have the bacterial issues and what we can do to manage this. The total for their proposal is \$24,000 and we have money in the budget for this. A deliverable would also include helping us find grant money to implement plans to reduce the bacteria levels in Lambert Creek.

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Graham to recommend to the Board that the Burns & McDonnell proposal to develop and implement an E.coli source monitoring program be accepted. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**B. Cost Share Update to the Board**

A proposed change to the BMP Cost Share program was discussed at the last Policy and Personnel Committee meeting. The BMP program is directed towards homeowners who want to put in a raingarden, naturalized planting, or shoreline restoration. When the economy lagged, landscaping isn't a priority for most homeowners. Many watersheds offer larger grants than VLAWMO and this proposed change would bring us closer to what is offered in other watersheds. It will hopefully bring in more applications and put projects in the ground. In order to make the program more attractive to property owners, it was proposed that we increase the reimbursement limit of the grants from \$1,000 to \$2,000 and to allow for a 75% rather than a 50% reimbursement.

The majority of our grants hit the \$1,000 grant limit because projects are costing more. Kristine handed out a spreadsheet showing how the change in the program would affect the grants which are currently still open. If we had a 75% reimbursement rate, a project would need to cost about \$2,700 in order to meet the \$2,000 maximum grant.

The Policy and Personnel Committee are recommending this change to the Board.

## **C. Outreach**

### **1. Workshop Dates**

The dates have been set for our spring workshops that Kristine will teach. 4/16: Raingardens 101 - Introduction; 4/30: Shoreline Restoration; 5/14: Raingardens 201 - Design & Installation; 5/21: Raingarden and Shoreline Maintenance.

### **2. Website Update & email switch**

Our work email was switched over to the new system on Monday. We are well into our website redevelopment. We have finished the layout and had a meeting with HDR and staff to review and discuss the rough design. We are still planning to have the new website up and running by April 1.

### **3. Shallow Lake Forum and Focus Group – April 12**

VLAWMO has partnered with a few other local watersheds to create a forum just for shallow lakes since they require different management issues. A focus group meeting was held recently with homeowners on shallow lakes (including 2 members of the Birch Lake Improvement District) to get input on issues to discuss. We may ask a member of the BLID to sit on a table for discussion. The forum will be held at the Arboretum.

### **4. Lino Lakes Rotary Presentation**

Vanessa spoke with the Rotary in Lino Lakes. She discussed VLAWMO and things the Rotary could do with watersheds.

### **5. NEMO Watershed Game for students**

Vanessa is working with a group on redoing the watershed game for students. NEMO received a grant to adapt the game for kids to use. While the game could possibly work for PreK-12 grades, it will likely focus on middle school age kids.

### **6. RWMWD Community Confluence**

Vanessa attended the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed (RWMWD) community and stakeholder meeting which is part of their process for

updating their 10 year management plan. She felt it was a great event and could use some of their ideas as we work on our next 10 year plan.

**7. Signs: Tamarack & Community Blue**

The sign for the floating island at Tamarack Nature Center is complete and will be installed. Vanessa showed the template for the Community Blue signs that will be installed at each of the project sites. We received a proposal from Vacker Signs for the printing and installation of all the signs for \$5603 which will be paid out of our Community Blue funds. It was moved & seconded by Graham & Grisim to approve the expenditure of \$5603 to Vacker towards the printing and installation of Community Blue signs. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**D. Community Blue**

There are 3 Community Blue applications for TEC to consider and recommend to the Board for approval.

**CB-05: White Bear Township – Fox Meadow Park**

This project would be part of their parking lot redevelopment at the park. The Township approached Kristine last year to discuss stormwater management options with the parking lot reconstruction, given the proximity right along Lambert Creek. Metro Blooms is working with the Township engineers on the design but the proposal is to install a curb along part of the parking lot and slope everything so it drains away from the creek and towards the south side of the parking area where a raingarden would be installed and planted primarily with native shrubs for easy maintenance. Project costs range from \$14,600 - \$17,800. Staff recommends a \$15,000 grant towards the project.

**CB-06: Heritage Estates**

This is a townhome association group in Vadnais Heights who would like to do a curbcut raingarden to capture stormwater coming from a stretch of road in their development. There are some very interested homeowners in the association who are very excited about the project and are committed to the maintenance needs of this project. Project costs estimates go to \$16,532. Staff recommends a \$14,500 grant for the project.

**CB-07: Lakeaires Elementary School**

This school is located in White Bear Lake and will be undergoing some redevelopment. The Community Blue program was suggested to them and they were eager to put in a raingarden as part of the redevelopment. The raingarden would be at the front of the school and the school is excited to incorporate the raingarden into their curriculum. The cost estimate for this project is \$25,875. Staff recommends a grant of \$19,000

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Graham to recommend approval to the Board for the three Community Blue CB-05, CB-06, CB-07 with grant funding \$15,000, \$14,500, and \$19,000 respectively . Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**E. TMDL**

The TMDL Report has been sent to the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency). The turnaround time for their approval is about 6 weeks. More implementation meetings will be planned soon for the other waterbodies affected by the TMDL.

**F. Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)**

The City of Vadnais Heights is looking to put in a road extension within an area in Vadnais Heights (by County Road E and LaBore) where there is a hotel and medical center. The soils near the wetland are very poor for road development, with the current plan to build a “land bridge”. Any WCA action is postponed. Graham said this project brings up the idea that VLAWMO should continue to pursue having their own wetland bank.

**VIII. Reports**

**A. Financial Report for February 2014 & Authorization for Payment**

It was moved and seconded by Graham and Linder to approve the February Financial Report and approve payment of checks. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**B. TEC Report to the Board**

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

**IX. Commissioner Reports**

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

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

RCD has received 48 applications to fill the job that Ryan Johnson vacated so they are working on vetting the applications and hiring.

**XII. Public Comment**

**XIII. Next Meetings - TEC: March 14; Board: February 26**

**XIV. Adjourn**

It was moved and seconded by Linder & Grisim to adjourn at 8:45am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.