



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
 February 28, 2018

Attendance		Present	Absent
Dan Jones, Chair	City of White Bear Lake	X	
Jim Lindner, Vice Chair	City of Gem Lake	X	
Rob Rafferty, Secretary-Treasurer	City of Lino Lakes		X
Ed Prudhon	White Bear Township	X	
Gregg Nelson - alternate	City of North Oaks	X	
Terry Nyblom	City of Vadnais Heights	X	
Stephanie McNamara	Administrator	X	
Kristine Jenson	Program Mgr.	X	
Brian Corcoran	Water Resources Mgr.	X	
Nick Voss	Education & Outreach Cord.		X
Tyler Thompson	Water Resource Tech.	X	

Others in attendance: Margaret Behrens (Ramsey Conservation District), Mark Graham (City of Vadnais Heights Engineer & TEC Chair); Paul Duxbury (White Bear Township TEC representative); Scott Miller (Institution Community Work Crew – ICWC)

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Jones. A quorum is present for the meeting. Rafferty had an excused absence.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

A request was made to change Item V.B.1 into an action item.

A motion was made by Lindner and seconded by Prudhon to approve the agenda as amended. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**III. Approval of Minutes from December 13, 2017**

A motion was made by Prudhon and seconded by Lindner to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2017 Board of Directors Meeting. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**IV. Visitors and Presentations**

Public Meeting: Spring maintenance work on targeted areas of Lambert Creek

Public Present for the meeting: Vadnais Heights residents - Doug & Barb VanVreede, Paul & Michelle Hakamaki, Antone Gregory, Steve Guida

Scott Miller Crew Supervisor from ICWC was introduced by Brian Corcoran to explain the program and the work we would like to complete this spring. The Institutional Community Work Crew (ICWC) program has been used successfully in many communities, counties, Indian tribes, local colleges around the state. 125 offenders in the program currently, none are sex offenders. Crews have worked on things from picking up sticks all the way up to constructing buildings. The offenders are looking to gain skills so when they are released, they can get a job and to reduce their sentences. They will be working Friday, Saturday, Sunday and can start as early as 7am – the hours can be set by VLAWMO.

Prudhon complimented Miller on the Township’s experience with ICWC. Prudhon asked if this project is something they can do. Miller said that they can definitely perform these tasks.

Jones asked how large of a crew – up to 10 offenders and 1 crew leader supervisor. Offenders have ankle bracelets with GPS tracking on. Prudhon asked about timing – Miller stated that once the ice is out of the creek and Brian can work with him to determine the optimal time.

Jones opened the meeting up to the public.

Antone Gregory – asked if the scope of work is for debris removal or also the excavation of the ditch. Brian stated only debris removal. Gregory asked if there are plans for excavation. Brian stated that an engineering firm has been hired to survey, model and analyze the ditch.

Hakamati – supports this project 100% but states that due to erosion, some trees are about to tip over and if any of these would be addressed as part of this project. Brian stated that the scope for this go-around is removing already downed trees and branches. Hakamati asked if he has the right to cut down the trees himself. Brian stated that he could. Hakamati asked if he could hire this crew to do that. Miller stated they can only work for non-profits or government.

Stephanie indicated that the creek no longer appears on the public water inventory of the DNR.

Jones stated that this type of work is new for us and we have not yet set up a policy for how to address issues for ditch management but that we will be working on it.

Doug VanVreede - 3764 Brunet Ct – we have a large oak tree that is spanning the creek and wondering it will be taken out? Brian stated that it would be removed and set along the banks.

Steve Giuda - 3720 Edgerton St – he has been pulling out trees for 20 years. He has privacy concerns regarding people crossing his property. He has had City and State people cross on his property without knocking on the house. He would like to be given the courtesy to have someone knock on his door before people are accessing his property. He also has concerns about the trucks and their effect on the road. He wants to make sure that if they make any ruts in the road by his house, that they will fix it. Miller stated they will fix any damage if it occurs. Brian stated that they will also be notifying people again once they have dates solidified. Mark Graham stated that he knows many of the homeowners along this stretch of the creek and will help out with knocking on doors as well as finding appropriate places for the ICWC van and trailer to park.

Jones asked if there were any other comments or questions. There were none. Jones thanked the public and closed the public meeting.

## V. New Business

### A. Election of Officers

The 2017 slate of officers were Chair – Dan Jones, Vice Chair – Jim Lindner, and Secretary Treasurer – Rob Rafferty. Officers preside over Board meetings and become check signers for our account at US Bank. The Chair may speak for VLAWMO in public situations and the Secretary Treasurer is a member of the Finance Committee.

A motion was made by Prudhon and seconded by Lindner to elect Dan Jones as Chair for 2018. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Jones asked if Linder would be willing to continue as Vice Chair. He stated he would.

A motion was made by Prudhon and seconded by Nyblom to elect Jim Lindner as Vice Chair for 2018. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Rafferty informed Jones that he will continue as Secretary Treasurer if the Board wants him to stay in this role.

A motion was made by Jones and seconded by Lindner to elect Rob Rafferty as Secretary-Treasurer for 2018. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Jones thanked them for continuing their service in this capacity.

Committee assignments also need to be determined. We have the Policy and Personnel Committee which Dan Jones and Rob Rafferty have served on. They also serve on the Finance Committee.

VLAWMO requires the Board to appoint a Chair for our Technical Committee. The TEC has nominated Mark Graham to continue as TEC Chair. A motion was made by Nyblom and seconded by Lindner to appoint Mark Graham as Chair for the VLAWMO TEC for 2018. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Jones thanked Graham for his continued service.

**B. Lambert Creek – Engineering Study Update**

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 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. The survey of the branches will not only make the 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 hydrologic and hydraulic modeling.

Thompson stated that there is a process for submitting the ditch data once it is completed but BWSR requires the Board to designate a staff person to be the representative for this process.

A motion was made by Jones and seconded by Prudhon designated Thompson as the VLAWMO representative for working with BWSR on the updating of the ditch system. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**C. Community Blue Grant**

The Board was provided the application and supporting materials for a grant request for a program called Water Heroes. The grant would go towards a watershed education summer program with White Bear Lake schools with Dawn Pape, a professional environmental educator from Lawn Chair Gardener.

The TEC reviewed the grant application at their last meeting and recommended Board approval for the program to be done in 4 schools within the District. Not all of the schools are within VLAWMO boundaries but it is reasonable to expect that participants at all the schools would include those that live within VLAWMO.

There is \$10,000 in the Community Blue Grant program for 2018 and we are expecting another grant application within the next couple of months.

**Discussion:**

Prudhon asked if this voluntary or a summer school program? Stephanie stated that program is an enrichment class open to students in the school district.

Nyblom is concerned that Hugo Elementary is one of the sites and it is outside of VLAWMO.

Stephanie indicated that the program would be advertised to the whole district. The summer enrichment school sites were selected by the school district.

Jones doesn’t feel supportive of this because it is \$106/student and he thinks it is too much. He doesn’t think a puppet show cuts it and he would want it to be in schools in VLAWMO. He thinks it should go to projects.

Lindner stated that Community Blue is more about education and outreach rather than projects and therefore this does fit within the goals of the programs.

Prudhon asked if we can wait for Nick to be back to sell this project better. Stephanie stated that this program has gotten good reviews from other schools and participants. Stephanie also pointed out that something like this leverages staff time so that Nick doesn’t have to be the one in charge of all the programs in the watershed. He has many other things to work on and this allows him to free up his time to do other duties.

A motion was made by Lindner and seconded by Jones to approve the Water Heroes Community Blue grant in the amount of \$5,000. Vote: 2 aye; 3 nay (Prudhon, Jones, Nyblom). Motion failed.

Nelson asked how this fits into the mission of VLAWMO. Jones stated that this is part of our education program. Jones is concerned about the cost-benefit for this program. And he feels uncomfortable with schools outside of the watershed. Jones asked if Ramsey-Washington or Rice Creek were approached. Stephanie stated that the other watersheds doesn’t have this type of grant program. Rice Creek has a small program (\$500 max that could be used possibly). Ramsey-Washington has a robust educational program without the community education grant program.

Nelson thinks that kids probably don't know what a watershed is and through this program, they will learn it and likely go home and tell their parents which is a great thing. Stephanie asked if the Board would entertain a modified application if the issues were addressed

**D. Birch Lake Project**

As we have discussed at previous meetings, a nutrient reduction project at 4<sup>th</sup> & Otter Lake Road, in White Bear Lake, has been a priority for the watershed. Last year, we worked with Barr Engineering to do a study for the best possible projects to reduce nutrients from this particular site before the water flows into Birch Lake. Monitoring results have shown that this is a "hot spot" for nutrients entering the lake. Barr came up with a plan that includes adding a detention structure to the outlet pipe and installing an iron-sand filter to allow for nutrient capture. The City of White Bear Lake (WBL) showed their support for the project by earmarking \$15,000 towards the project. The Birch Lake Improvement District (BLID) has also been very supportive. Kristine applied for a Clean Water Fund (CWF) Grant from the Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR) for which we have been awarded \$97,000. Staff is requesting the Board consider the Grant Agreement from BWSR, designate an authorized signature for grant-related documents, and give approval for the watershed to move forward with the grant process. If the Board approves of moving forward, Kristine will be submitting a Work Plan to BWSR for the grant. If that meets their requirements, we would have the money available in April.

Kristine has also received a proposal from Barr Engineering to provide the necessary engineering and technical oversight for this project, as required by BWSR. Barr has estimated a cost of \$30,000 to complete the necessary tasks (a copy of the proposal is with your Board packet). This cost is reasonable, given the items we are asking them to complete and staff recommends approval.

For today's meeting, staff requests the following:

1. Approve staff to move ahead with the BWSR CWF Grant by submitting the work plan and grant agreement to BWSR, and to designate who will be an authorized signer for grant documents.

A motion was made by Prudhon and seconded by Lindner to authorize the submittal of the Clean Water Fund Grant Work Plan and Grant Agreement to BWSR and designate Kristine as the authorized signature for grant documents. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

2. Approve the Barr Engineering proposal to perform final engineering and technical oversight for the Birch Lake project so as to meet the requirements defined by BWSR.

A motion was made by Prudhon and seconded by Nybom to approve the Barr Engineering proposal for final technical engineering and oversight for this project at a cost not to exceed \$30,000. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**E. Pilot Watershed-based Funding Priorities**

Background: The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) has developed a new way to spread funding from the Clean Water Fund. In the metro area, they have begun a pilot program where the funding is spread out based on the size of the Counties. Ramsey County is the smallest of the metro area counties and would receive \$422,000 for the two-period of this program. Within the county, local agencies are eligible to receive funding if they have an approved water plan. There are 26 agencies within Ramsey County which can submit a plan with their list of priorities projects and programs with measurable outcomes. This must be submitted by June 30 in order to have a say in where the money should go to do the most good. If this cannot be done, BWSR will use the pot of

money for a competitive grant program. Currently, a proposal being discussed in Ramsey County is that the money would be divided up by watershed land area. Using that formula, VLAWMO could receive somewhere between \$53,000-\$59,000 (13.5% of the land in Ramsey County is with VLAWMO). If the money were to be distributed among all 26 agencies, we would receive approximately \$17,000. The work involved with grant administration is a drain on staff time and therefore VLAWMO does not typically apply for grants unless we would receive at least \$50,000. Some other agencies may feel that way as well. That's why dividing the pot up into larger pieces (per watershed agency) makes more sense. There will be a meeting in March with all agencies within Anoka and Ramsey counties to discuss this further. Any local unit has the option to opt out if they feel the amount of funding vs. the grant requirements and administration is not worth their time.

Board Action and Staff Recommendation: The process set up by BWSR requires that each agency that elects to participate in this collaborative process designate a representative that may speak and make decisions for VLAWMO at the meetings. Staff recommends that the Board designate the VLAWMO Administrator to be its delegate concerning this program funding and to speak for the Board at meetings.

A motion was made by Lindner and seconded Nelson by to designate the VLAWMO Administrator as the representative for VLAWMO at meetings relating to the Watershed-based Funding Program and to speak for the agency and the Board. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**Discussion:**

Staff brought a list of projects and programs that are in the 2017-2026 Water Plan to the last TEC meeting for discussion and recommendations. Following are a list of their top recommended projects for your preliminary discussion – not in any order. Keep in mind that we are talking about \$53,000 that will need to have a 10% local match. It would be useful to have direction on priorities by your April meeting.

- Goose Lake shoreline restoration: There are three areas that could use restoration – on West Goose where the Ski Otters have their shows and at the channel on East Goose by the Polar Chevrolet car dealership.
- Spent lime feasibility study: Preliminary data collection of water chemistry and sediment analysis has already been done on Oak Knoll pond (Wood Lake). This would take it to the next step of designing a pilot project that could help us understand if treating with spent lime is good tool to use on some of very nutrient rich waters.
- Increase cost-share funding: The Board may in particular want to fund either in the smaller LL1 program that generally goes to homeowners or in the larger project funding, LL2, which could go for municipal or business projects. Some of the other metro watersheds use this to fund city water enhancement projects.
- Wilkinson Load study: We have been gathering data on what is coming in from the drainage area of this impaired water already. More monitoring is slated for this summer to better identify where the nutrient loading is coming from. The study would take all the available data to run models allowing a better understanding the lake. The study would also identify the best practices most likely to improve the water quality and health of the lake.

**Discussion:** Jones feels this money is tenuous and unpredictable. He is hesitant about using it for the cost share program because he doesn't want to promise money to people and then have the money gone.

Lindner stated that the spent lime study would be a good project to work on. The Goose Lake shoreline isn't worth doing as long as the Ski Otters use the area.

Nyblom suggested we consider another item – the study of chloride and asked Stephanie if it is stated in the Water Plan. Stephanie stated that it isn't listed as a priority issue other than that we do the annual analysis on the creek and the lakes as well as continue to work with Birch Lake for more chloride monitoring.

**F. Administrator Annual Review**

Jones stated that Stephanie did not receive a rate increase last year. Jones would like to give Stephanie a raise for 2017 of 3.5% and then another raise of 3.5% for 2018. The 3.5% is the average of the raises for the rest of the staff.

Nyblom doesn't understand why we would give her the raise for 2017 and why government is getting 3.5% when private sector gets 2%. Jones stated that these increases are in line with market rate.

Motion by Jones/Nelson for 2018 to increase McNamara's pay rate by 3.5% – vote all aye.

For 2017

Nelson asked if it would be paid in a lump sum or how it would be handled. Jones said it could be a lump sum or over time. Jones stated that paying her for 2017 is something he wants to do. Stephanie didn't ask for a raise and she didn't want Jones to ask for 2017 retro pay but Jones feels she deserves it because it wasn't given last year, partly because Jones neglected to do it. Jones stated that paying for this would come from the fact that we are paying less for Stephanie's health insurance since she is now on Medicare. Nelson stated that it is valuable to pay for staff that have history and experience.

Lindner/Nelson – 3.5% for 2017 as well. Vote: 4 aye, 1 nay (Nyblom)

**VI. Consent Agenda**

**A. Contract for lab analysis for 2018**

Staff sent out RFP's for 2018-2019 monitoring analysis. Three companies responded. Ramsey County Labs no longer does commercial analysis, Pace and RMB Laboratory provided proposals. Analysis will be for both our regular monitoring program as well as the wetland treatment pilot project. Staff summarized the proposals from both Pace and RMB at the February 9, 2018 TEC meeting (proposals are in the packet). The TEC has recommended to the Board that VLAWMO contract with RMB Laboratories for the 2018-2019 monitoring seasons.

**B. Continuing Contract with Ramsey County GIS User Group**

Staff is recommending the approval and signing of the 2018-2020 Joint Powers Agreement to continue in partnership with the Ramsey County GIS Users Group. This is a 3 year JPA. The prior JPA expired at the end of 2017, and this new JPA contains the exact same language as the previous, but with updated and current dates. As a member of the RCGISUG, VLAWMO pays an annual due of \$254.26 and is a voting member and receives access to products and services funded by the Users Group. The annual due has not increased since 2006, and is not projected to change.

**C. Continuing Contract with Ramsey Conservation District**

VLAWMO contracts with Ramsey Conservation District as do other watersheds for a variety of technical services. They have helped with channel restoration design, rain garden designs, vegetation and bathymetric surveys and have completed retrofit analysis of all VLAWMO subwatersheds. This 2018-2019 contract is for service as needed with a cost not to exceed \$14,000. Staff recommends approval of the 2018-2019 contract.

**D. Designation of Legal Publication, Legal Counsel and 2018 Meeting Dates**

Staff recommends confirmation of legal services with Kennedy & Graven, for 2018 on an as-needed basis.

Staff recommends continued use of Press Publications as its legal publication for public notices. The following dates for Board meetings are as follows: 2/28, 4/25, 6/27, 8/22, 10/24, 12/12. A motion was made by Lindner and seconded Nelson by to approve all items under the Consent Agenda. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

**VII. Operations and Administration - Reports**

**A. TEC Report and Financial Report**

Graham stated that VH cleared branch ditches and that they have piggybacked on with our

**VIII. Discussion**

**B. Water Matters presentations**

Staff are interested in reviving a long-lost VLAWMO tradition, the Water Matters series. This idea would be a 15-20 minute talk about a specific topic related to VLAWMO's work, and would occur prior to a board meeting and provide time for questions. The talk to begin at 6:15 so as to not affect Board meeting start time. The talks will be recorded and used as a valuable education/outreach tool. Each talk would invite a guest speaker who's an expert in the sub-topics that relate to VLAWMO's work:

- Aquatic Invasive Species
- Groundwater
- Water quality
- Road salt
- BMP (best management practice) design and function
  - Shoreline restorations
  - Raingardens
  - Bio swales and underground retention basins
- Wetland health and function

Examples of where the experts would be coming from include:

- Blue Water Science (VLAWMO's partner in fish surveys)
- Business contractors such as Natural Shore Technologies
- MN DNR
- MPCA
- Freshwater Society
- Metropolitan Council

Jones said he likes the concept but maybe a couple times per year rather than each Board meeting. Jones thinks a presentation about "who is in charge of water" and educating what the different agencies do – what is the chain of command. He said it could be done just as a packet of information for the Board.

Nyblom stated that the Friends of the Mississippi River are available, he'd like them to come to the April meeting to discuss chloride. Jones stated that none of our lakes are impaired for chloride. Nyblom stated that by the Board learning more about chloride, they may decide to make it more of a priority because once a lake is impaired for chloride, it is too late so doing what we can before they are impaired is important.

Jones thinks the first one can be April could be Steve McComas to discuss the fish surveys he has conducted for VLAWMO and then another one in August or October. Nyblom thinks a presentation about chloride would be important at April. Board decided that if we could get chloride speakers for April, to do that first. If they cannot come in April, then have Steve McComas come.

Nyblom stated that we should contact the local cable service to have someone come to record it so it can be broadcast.

**C. Agenda – Jones** asked Stephanie to remove this item from the agenda from now on.

**IX. Administration Communication – Annual Report, Audit, 2019 Budget**

Annual report will be at the April meeting and the audit was completed and they will be at the April meeting with their report. And prior to the April meeting, the Finance Committee will meet to start preparing the 2019 budget.

**X. Public Comment**

**XI. Adjourn**

A motion was made by Lindner and seconded by Nelson to adjourn at 8:51 pm. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.