



Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission Minutes
December 13, 2019
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room

Commission Members Present:

Gloria Tessier	Chair, Gem Lake (GL)
Jesse Farrell	Vice Chair, Vadnais Heights (VH)
Bob Larson	Treasurer, North Oaks (NO)
Paul Duxbury	White Bear Township (WBT)
Andy Nelson	Lino Lakes (LL)

Commission Members Absent: Terry Huntrods (WBL)

Others in attendance: Stephanie McNamara, Brian Corcoran, Dawn Tanner, Tyler Thompson (VLAWMO); Jeremy Erickson (SPRWS); Michael Schumann (RSWCD); Connie Tailon (WBL), Kate Winsor (NO).

- I. **Call to Order** Chair Tessier called the meeting to order at 7:32 am.
- II. **Approval of Agenda**
The agenda for the December 13, 2019 Technical Commission Meeting was presented for approval. It was moved by Larson and seconded by Duxbury to approve the December 13, 2019 TEC agenda, as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.
- III. **Approval of Minutes**
It was moved by Farrell and seconded by Larson to approve the November 8, 2019 meeting minutes, as presented. Vote: all aye; Tessier abstained. Motion passed.
- IV. **Administration & Operations**
 - A. **December 2019 Financial Report for authorization for payment of checks.**
McNamara presented the December 2019 Financial Report for review and authorization of payments and reported that the second half of 2019's SSU fee payments have come in. It was moved by Farrell and seconded by Larson to approve the December Treasurer's Report. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.
 - B. **Carry over Fund balances for 2019**
McNamara presented the carry over fund balancing, moving what's left for funds in VLAWMO's 2019 budget into its 2020 budget. These amounts were presented at the November Finance-Policy & Personnel Committee meeting, and were brought to the December 11, 2019 Board meeting for approval.
- V. **Programs**
 - A. **Education & Outreach**
 1. **Climatology Resources Presentation**
Voss provided details and an overview of climate change presentations and MnDNR's new interactive tool for plotting climate trends within the State by major watershed.
 2. **2020 Education & Outreach Plan (EOP), 2019 Summary**
As the 2019 EOP summary and 2020 Education & Outreach Plan are complete and ready for review, Voss overviewed highlights from each of the Plans, as well as outcomes from 2019 and goals moving forward into 2020. Voss also overviewed the new annual Watershed award, which will be taking nominations and awarded in February 2020.

VI. **Projects**

A. **Lambert Lake Project, contract signed with MPCA, and full steam ahead**

Tanner reported that the grant contract is now signed with the MPCA, and that both the loan and grant fund process is complete, and the Project is funded and able to move forward. SEH and the U of M lab have notified that they are clear to resume their work. A meeting has taken place for direction moving forward and scheduling on all fronts. Bridget Ulrich will be working on the design of the biochar treatment filter cells.

B. **Carp Project article submitted to North Oaks News**

A write-up for the North Oaks News has been submitted for the January issue. It has been reviewed by Carp Solutions and NOHOA, and was included with the TEC packet.

C. **East Goose Lake Star Tribune**

Tanner was interviewed by the Star Tribune for an article on the proposed boating ban on East Goose Lake, and the article has since been published. Tanner noted that the VLAWMO Board rescinded their recommendation of a boating restriction on East Goose. More information will be available in January when news of the grant application is released.

Discussion: Farrell mentioned as disappointing as this is, it may lead to something better, such as spent lime, once application and dosing is nailed down. McNamara mentioned the decision was not easy for the Board to make, but they acted with the direction of the community, and we will wait to see what comes of the alum grant application in January.

D. **Biological Surveys**

The final reports for the frog & toad and remote-camera surveys are complete and available in the packet and on the VLAWMO website. Tanner is seeking input as how or if to proceed with subsequent years of monitoring with several options: conduct regular sampling every year and compile as part of the regular monitoring program; conduct sampling for 2 consecutive years to establish baseline data and trends; discontinue sampling and have baseline data available to citizens; other. Tanner queried the TEC commissioners as to their direction for moving forward with these studies, whether it is continuing or reducing frequency, or different possibilities for monitoring the schedule.

Discussion: Duxbury asked how much staff time it takes to complete a survey and what have the results of the surveys shown, in regards to health and diversity. Tanner estimated about 40 staff hours per survey and that the baseline data and results have shown fairly healthy diversity, and could help to inform and track areas for restoration. Winsor proposed that training of monitoring volunteers could be a possibility; both Winsor and Tessier volunteered to be involved or help conduct surveys. Duxbury proposed Voss & Tanner partner to build a population of volunteers that staff can then train to make the transition to volunteer monitoring, over time, having a full volunteer team 3-4 years down the road. Tanner mentioned there are 13-14 sites and they do not require a lot of time or effort. She also outlined the different resources available to help to train, and 2 years of consistent monitoring is effective to establish baseline data in the Watershed, via staff, and then moving more towards volunteers. Tailon asked what would happen if diversity declines. Tanner responded the sites could be studied further, and it may be valuable to explore restoration, at that point.

Direction from the TEC: 2 more years of staff monitoring while working to add and transition to volunteers for biology monitoring over the course of those next 2 years, with a goal to have all monitoring turned over to volunteers.

E. **Cover it Up!**

A new research project from the U of M has been identified and made aware to VLAWMO via NOHOA and Carol Gernes. The project would use the 30X40 area at Vadnais Heights City Hall that was just recently cleared this year, and 6 plots will be set up to test native seeding ability to outcompete areas recently cleared of buckthorn. The goal is to improve success/reduce maintenance of these sites recently cleared of buckthorn.

- F. **CPL grant for 4th & Otter submitted with support from City of WBL**
Tanner noted that the VLAWMO Board voted to authorize submission of the Clean Partners Legacy grant application for funding to finish restoring the City of White Bear Lake parcel with native vegetation, and to reduce leaf cover for easier maintenance of the iron enhanced sand filter. The grant application is for roughly \$8,000. Tanner also announced the MCC grant application for City Hall was submitted and results will be heard for in January. The Great River Greening grant has an area demarcated for 45 acres of restoration area, and actual restoration area will be determined and announced later in 2020.
- G. **Birch Lake 4th & Otter: updated project specs & Board approval for re-bid**
Thompson reported that at their December 11 meeting, the Board authorized staff to resubmit for a second round of bidding for the iron enhanced sand filter project at 4th & Otter on Birch Lake. Project specifications and bid documents have been updated to reflect slight changes in the filter construction and construction schedule that should lower bidding costs to be more in-line with cost estimates from Barr Engineering.

VII. **Commissioner Reports**

None.

VIII. **NOHOA**

Gorder appreciates the partnership that North Oaks has with VLAWMO.

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

Nothing to report

X. **Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division (RSWCD) Report**

Schumann reported that the Conservation Division is still working on plenty of design projects, end of year reporting, finishing well-sealing grants, and closing 2017 fiscal year grants. It was also noted that the first round of interviews would be taking place for the open GIS staff position.

XI. **Public Comment**

Tailon reported that the Parks and Environmental Advisory commissions met to design targeted priority projects. The City will also be implementing raingardens for mill and overlays projects, along with reconstruction projects. McNamara announced her date on her retirement of April 1st, 2020. She will still be in the area and involved in some way, and will continue to assist during the transition period. Board will be meeting with HR consultant to discuss next steps.

XII. **Next Meetings**

TEC: January 10th, 2020; Board: February 26th, 2020

XIII. **Adjourn**

It was moved by Duxbury and seconded by Larson to adjourn at 8:32 am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Tyler Thompson.