

Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission Minutes
June 13, 2014
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room

Attending:

Paul Peterson	White Bear Township (WBT), Chair
Jim Grisim	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Mark Graham	Vadnais Heights (VH)
Marty Asleson	Lino Lakes (LL)
Jim Lindner	Gem Lake (GL)
Chris Mann	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); Diane Gorder (NOHOA); Justine Roe (St. Paul Regional Water Service); Della Young, Burns & McDonnell

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

II. Approval of Agenda

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Mann to approve the June 13, 2014 agenda. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Mann to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2014 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. Administration & Operations

A. Grants Wrap Up

Stephanie stated we have two grants wrapping up on June 30 – the TMDL Grant and the Strategic Planning Grant.

B. New Board Member for North Oaks

North Oaks Mayor, John Schaaf will be replacing Bruce Ackerman as the Board Director from North Oaks. Marty Long will continue as alternate Director.

V. Projects

A. Community Blue Update

Vadnais Heights Elementary installed their raingarden last month. Signs are installed at several sites now.

B. Strategic Planning

The Draft Strategic Plan was emailed out to the TEC earlier in the week. Della summarized the process to date and reviewed the draft report. Della Young is asking the TEC to help prioritize two projects (Gem Lake Highway 61 projects and Wetland Banking Site Exploration) into the current list of projects. The Board would like these two projects included.

Lindner described the current landscape at Highway 61 and County Road E – there is a lot of impervious surface and the thought is that most of the runoff into Gem Lake is coming from that particular area. Stephanie noted that the swales

along Highway 61 currently hold water for a few days so they could be reconstructed to drain better. Mann asked about the road authorities – Highway 61 is a MNDoT road and County Road E is a County road. Graham stated that he would rank it relatively high. Vanessa stated that according to the TMDL, the City of Gem Lake is responsible for 23.9lbs of reduction. Lindner stated that the City would be a strong partner. Graham said that the project could help get Gem Lake off the TMDL list, the City says they have money to put towards it as well. Graham stated that he would put the Gem Lake project as #2 or #4 but that the wetland banking project is something that the Staff should work on as a “scoping effort” rather than a full-fledged project at this point.

Consensus among the TEC to place Gem Lake as #4.

Consensus among TEC to not include the Wetland Banking project within the Project list but keep it as a scoping exercise for staff at this point.

Della stated she will update the plan after the comments by the TEC and will present it to the Board on June 25th.

VII. Programs

A. Monitoring

1. E coli sourcing/monitoring

Brian stated he and Josh went out with Steve Gruber from Burns & McDonnell to walk through the Lambert Creek Subwatershed as part of the E.coli sourcing/monitoring project. They checked the storm drains and how much groundwater influence there is in the pipes. It was found that groundwater seeps into the pipes at many locations. Therefore the theory is that scum builds up in the pipes and builds bacteria and then rain events and groundwater seepage flushes the bacteria into Lambert Creek. Steve will prepare a report explaining monitoring that should arrive next week. Based on the monitoring that will occur this summer, Steve will prepare a final report in the fall. The hope is that we can go to the Cities to get their buy-in on either further monitoring and/or projects to reduce our E.coli levels in the creek.

2. Spring SLMP vegetation assessment

Goose Lake’s survey was conducted last week. Black Lake’s survey will be done later in the summer to ensure plenty of vegetation is present. RCD will produce a report based on their findings. Brian showed an example of one of these reports done on Como Lake.

B. Cost Share Program

There are 6 Landscape Level 1 cost share applications to consider this month. All of the applicants are from Vadnais Heights.

2014-04 will be for multiple projects for a home that has a lot of water issues. In the front yard, a raingarden will be installed to capture runoff from the street (there are no curbs on this street so it just flows into her yard). There will also be a planting of native shrubs in a shady wet area in the back yard which will help with infiltration. If money is still left, they plan to work on another area of the yard where it abuts a wetland to remove weeds and install native plants. They are requesting a \$2000 grant.

2014-05 is for a home within Heritage Estates (who are receiving a Community Blue Grant and encouraging their residents to put in raingardens in their own yards). The homeowner is having new gutters installed and will have the water directed towards the raingarden in the front yard. The yard currently has standing water issues when there is a lot of rain so this project would move the water towards the raingarden. They are requesting a \$2000 grant.

2014-06 is for a home along Lambert Creek. They had Ramsey Conservation District come up with a plan to protect the streambank in 2009 and are now ready to move ahead with the project. They have a contractor hired already. This project will entail the installation of bio-logs along 85' of the creek, erosion control blanket on the slope and 200-300 plants. They are requesting a \$2000 grant

2014-07 is for another home along Lambert Creek. They will be doing some streambank stabilization by using existing wood on their property to create brush bundles and then planting willow shrubs along the creek. They will also be installing a raingarden to help alleviate the flow running off their land and towards the creek. They plan to do more projects over the years but this was as much as they could handle this year. They are requesting a \$2000 grant

2014-08 is for a home within the Lambert Creek subwatershed. They have a pond in their backyard surrounded by reed canary grass and would like to do a multi-year project to combat the weeds and then plant with native plants. They are also putting in a raingarden in the front of their house. The grant for this year would cover the costs of weed mats (to choke out the reed canary grass) and herbicide as well as cover the installation of a raingarden in their front yard. These homeowners have been very involved with the White Bear Lake Montessori School Community Blue project and have come to workshops and proven themselves to be very conscientious and committed to these types of water quality projects. They are requesting a grant of \$1200 for this year's work.

2014-09 is for a property owner who received a grant from us in 2010 for a raingarden. She now wants to extend the raingarden so that it captures direct runoff from a downspout in her front yard as well as from her sump pump outlet. Her first raingarden has been successful and she understands the nature and maintenance of having a raingarden. She is requesting \$1722.75 for this particular project.

Staff recommends approval of all grants as presented.

It was moved and seconded by Mann & Grisim to approve Grants 2014-04, 2014-05, and 2014-06, 2014-07, 2014-08, and 2014-09 as presented. Vote: all aye.

Motion passed.

C. Event Calendar

Vanessa talked about the North Oaks Community Fair event and the Vadnais Heights Taste of Vadnais event. We gave away a rainbarrel at each of the events. Vanessa walked through the upcoming events calendar. We have an event calendar on our website and if any of the partner organizations want to have their events on our calendar, they can let Vanessa know.

D. Facilities Maintenance Request

Central Middle School's swale project has been largely successful. As it was designed prior to our work in 2012, there was a small inlet into the swale on the north end and a slightly larger inlet on the south end. With our 2012 work, we installed a larger inlet at the north end with a forebay and pre-treatment chamber and left the south end inlet as is. However, that south inlet is in need of having a smaller forebay installation (like the one done at St. Mary's) in order to collect some of the particulates that are still entering the swale. Debris is still being washed into the swale and therefore down into the storm sewer (which outlets into the Lambert Creek system) plus the velocity of the water coming in is making it hard to hold any mulch in this part of the raingarden. This particular inlet is very close to the swale outlet and therefore there is no space for the particulates to settle from stormwater before moving into the storm sewer. At VLAWMO's requested Earth Wizards gave us an estimate for \$3054 (which includes a discount due to our successful relations with them). Earth Wizards has done a good job on this project and continues to do the maintenance through this year when it will then be turned over to the school district to manage. The School District have been great partners on this project as well and are eager to keep the swale looking great and working well. **Staff recommends approval of the Earth Wizards estimate to install this forebay with funding coming from our Facilities Maintenance budget.**

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Lindner to approve the Earth Wizards up to \$3500 to install a forebay on the south end of the Central Middle School swale. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

E. Outreach

1. Media

Vanessa showed the new banner and name plates that have been created recently.

2. Dragonfly Kids Program with Tamarack

Vanessa will be taking part in a program partnered with Tamarack Nature Center in June. This will be part of the annual Dragonfly workshop.

3. WAV

Vanessa stated there was a meeting on June 12 with the WAV. Vanessa talked with them about helping to create categories for our upcoming 10 Year Water Plan. They will also be hosting a photo contest.

Vanessa added that we will have a workshop in the Fall with the City of North Oaks called Soggy Yard Solutions. She is also organizing a Minnesota Erosion Control Association (MECA) workshop. We will also be at White Bear Lake's Marketfest in July.

F. VH City Center Drive Request for Variance

The TEC recommended and the Board approved a WCA wetland replacement plan for this new road earlier this spring. VLAWMO stormwater standards require volume, rate and water quality controls as well. There is a net increase of 0.9 ac. of impervious surface. Quality control will be met through the addition of treatment SAFL baffle. The variance request is to allow for an increase in volume (2.6/4.1/6.4 cfs) and rate (1645 cfs) of stormwater runoff above existing levels. VLAWMO variance policy 13.1 allows this if undue hardship is found due to "the

plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property and not created by the landowner; and the variance will not alter the essential character of the locality”. Extreme soil conditions and the narrow corridor for the road have created unique conditions. **Staff recommendation: approval of the variance for volume and rate control in the amounts indicated by the applicant.**

Lindner asked what negative impact would be potential. Stephanie said there is the potential for flooding. Graham stated that the estimated number of cars on this road is 4000 per day.

It was moved and seconded by Mann & Lindner to approve the variance for City Center Drive for the volume and rate in amounts indicated by the applicant. Vote: 4 aye. Graham abstained. Motion passed.

G. TMDL Implementation Plan

Vanessa stated that the plan will be out for public comment in the next week for 1 week and will complete by June 30.

VIII. Reports

A. TEC Report to the Board

It was moved and seconded by Mann & Grisim to approve the TEC Report to the Board as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Financial Report for June 2014 & Authorization for Payment

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

IX. Commissioner Reports

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

Justine introduced their intern for the summer – Taylor Barten.

XI. Ramsey Conservation District (RCD) Report

Margaret stated they are very busy right now.

XII. Public Comment

XIII. Next Meetings

TEC: July 11

Board: June 25

XIV. Adjourn

It was moved and seconded by Graham & Mann to adjourn at 8:48am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.