

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission (TEC) Minutes
September 13, 2023
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Council Chambers
800 County Road E East, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127**

Commission Members Present:

Jim Hauth	Vadnais Heights (VH)
Gloria Tessier	Gem Lake (GL)
Jami Philip	White Bear Township (WBT)
Terry Huntrods	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Tim Payne	Lino Lakes (LL) (Alternate)
Susan Miller	City of North Oaks (NO)

Absent: Andy Nelson (LL) (with prior notice)

Others in attendance: Phil Belfiori, Brian Corcoran, Lauren Sampedro, Nick Voss, Dawn Tanner (VLAWMO staff), Ed Shapland (CAC), Jeremy Erickson (SPRWS), Julia Hupperts (NOHOA)

I. Call to Order

Chair Tessier called the meeting to order at 8:02 am.

II. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Commissioner Philip and seconded by Commissioner Huntrods to approve the September 13, 2023 TEC agenda Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes (August 9th, 2023)

It was moved by Commissioner Philip and seconded by Chair Tessier to approve the August 9th meeting minutes as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. Administration & Operations

A. Financial Report for September and Authorization for Payment

Administrator Belfiori outlined the September financial report. Highlights included payments related to Wilkinson BMP, biochar, and Birch Lake projects and programs.

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Philip to approve the August financial report and authorize payment. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

V. Programs

A. SHG 2023-03 White Bear Lake Historical Society Pollinator Garden Phase 2

Sampedro introduced the grant application, noting that it is a second phase pollinator garden project at a popular community landmark. The phase one for the effort took place in October 2022. The proposed project area is predominately full sun adjacent to the entrance, parking lot, and retaining wall that would mirror the first pollinator garden. The plant design is intended to mimic native species of mesic prairie that historically grew in the area.

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Huntrods to approve SHG 2023-03. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. Vadnais-Sucker Habitat Restoration Interpretive Series

Voss summarized the education signs efforts related to the Vadnais-Sucker Lakes Regional park restoration project. He displayed digital copies of the signs from the VLAWMO website on the Vadnais-Sucker Habitat Restoration project page. These educational signs include the benefits of restoration, history of the drinking water connection and origin of the St. Paul Regional Water Services, as well as Regional Park history. There is also a place-making component that includes perspectives on indigenous Dakota language and land use as well as European-American connections to place.

Commissioner Miller noted that she viewed these signs on the VLAWMO facebook page and that they are well done.

VI. Projects

A. Wilkinson deep-water wetland restoration project

Tanner summarized the latest update on the Wilkinson project, noting that the award for the project bid was issued in August. Tanner described a project expansion due to bids coming in lower than expected. Because of this, the footprint was expanded to better utilize grant funds. A change order was authorized by the Board and, at the time of the TEC meeting, the contractor was onsite conducting the excavation. The contractor may possibly add seed as soon as the current week. The bald eagle nest monitoring is also active.

B. Aquatic vegetation surveys completed for the 2023 season

Tanner summarized the Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation Division partnership that has taken place to complete aquatic vegetation surveys on Birch, Gilfillan, and Pleasant Lakes. Surveys were conducted using standardized protocols and targeted to the needs and priorities of each lake, ranging from invasive species eradication to planning future projects and developing increased understanding for public education.

C. Revised fall carp removal efforts to prepare for spring 2024 removal

The Pleasant-Deep-Wilkinson area carp removal effort is continuing into 2024. Tanner explained that a number of carp were observed by tracking devices approaching the Deep/Wilkinson barrier but returned to Deep Lake and remained there. Because of this, there appears to be a portion of the population that is remaining in Deep Lake during the

spawning season and are thus unable to be removed in the Deep/Wilkinson Lake channel, where the past two years of removal efforts took place. Efforts are underway this fall to place an additional barrier and conduct removal in the Pleasant-Deep channel to capture carp that are not continuing to approach the Deep/Wilkinson barrier. Both barriers will be operational and part of the removal effort in spring 2024. Additional transmitters will be implanted also this fall to compensate for transmitters that are exceeding their battery life and no longer transmitting.

Commissioner Miller inquired about how a biomass survey is completed. Tanner responded it is completed through shocking the carp and collecting data on their weight and how many carp are captured to create a lbs/hectare estimate of carp.

D. Conservation partners legacy grant submission

Tanner described this effort to submit a proposal to the Conservation Partners Legacy grant program, which has Board authorization and has been submitted in partnership with the City of Vadnais Heights. The proposal is focused on purchasing seed for the wooded wetland behind Vadnais Heights City Hall, following 2 years of goat grazing through the Munch Bunch (a partnership effort between VLAWMO and the City of Vadnais Heights). Grant recipient results will be announced by MN DNR, likely by December.

E. Spent lime demonstration project at Oak Knoll Pond

Tanner described that the first loads of spent lime have been successfully applied with VLAWMO monitoring and reporting pH readings. The project is currently on pause as the White Bear Lake water treatment plant undergoes maintenance. The effort will continue with the remaining applications once the plant reopens likely in October 2023.

F. East Vadnais Lake subwatershed resiliency study

Sampedro provided an update that SRF's proposal was selected to move forward with the study and was approved by the Board in August. Working with SRF will expand and enhance the existing effort with Ramsey County to reduce flooding at the Centerville Rd and Edgerton St intersection. The study will include watershed modeling and the development of three potential stormwater best management practices. It will likely be presented to the TEC in April of 2024.

G. Ramsey County Ditch 13 agreement with City of White Bear Lake

Corcoran outlined the background of County Ditch 13 with a timeline as included in the September TEC packet. VLAWMO and the City agree that the City is best equipped to maintain the outlined portion of County Ditch 13, which is highlighted on a map in the County Ditch Repair Agreement. The VLAWMO Board and the City of White Bear Lake Council both approved the agreement at their August 2023 Council and Board meetings. In the approved agreement, VLAWMO agrees to transfer and the City agrees to accept the responsibility to maintain the County Ditch 13 as described within the Ditch Repair Agreement.

I. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Philip announced that the annual White Bear Township day is taking place on Saturday the 16th.

II. NOHOA

None

III. Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division

None

IV. St. Paul Regional Water Services

SPRWS is hosting a family day open house on Sunday the 17th. Highlights include showing the water treatment system, distribution trucks, how water pipes are tapped, games, and food.

V. Public Comment

None

VI. Next Meetings:

Next TEC meeting October 11th, Next BOD meeting October 25th.

XIII. Adjourn

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Miller to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 am. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled by Nick Voss.