

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission (TEC) Minutes
October 12, 2022
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Council Chambers
800 County Road E East, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127**

Commission Members Present:

Nolan Wall	Vadnais Heights (VH) Alternate
Gloria Tessier	Vice Chair, Gem Lake (GL)
Patricia Orud	North Oaks (NO) Alternate
Paul Duxbury	White Bear Township (WBT)
Andy Nelson	Lino Lakes (LL)
Terry Huntrods	White Bear Lake (WBL)

Absent: Chair Jesse Farrell (VH), Bob Larson (NO)

Others in attendance: Phil Belfiori, Dawn Tanner, Brian Corcoran, Lauren Sampedro, Nick Voss (VLAWMO staff), Justine Roe (SPRWS)

I. Call to Order

Vice chair Gloria Tessier called the meeting to order at 8:01 am.

II. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Orud to approve the October 12, 2022 TEC agenda Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes (September 14 , 2022)

It was moved by Vice Chair Tessier and seconded by Commissioner Huntrods to approve the September 14 meeting minutes as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. Administration & Operations

A. Financial Report for Payment

Administrator Belfiori summarized the financial report as included in the TEC packet. Notable bills include the stormwater utility, which will be included in the October 26th Board meeting. Others include lake monitoring analysis and labwork, the Oak Knoll Pond spent lime project in the Goose Lake subwatershed, the Wilkinson BMP project, and finalizing payments for the Pleasant Lake carp removal efforts. Staff recommends approval of the financial report for payment.

It was moved by Commissioner Duxbury and seconded by Commissioner Orud to approve the October finance report for payment. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. October TEC Report to the Board

Belfiori outlined the TEC report to the Board as included in the October packet. Notable items include drainage reports, the Wilkinson BMP, the Biochar project, the VLAWMO website renovation, the watershed plan minor amendment, and Pleasant Lake carp removal.

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Duxbury to approve the October TEC report to the Board. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

V. Programs

A. Education and Outreach

1. Website renovation update

Voss outlined the scope of the website renovation pending legal review. He noted that it is anticipated that this scope would be brought to the Board meeting on October 26th. Phase one of the website renovation includes 10 updated pages, five repeatable landing pages, and four page templates for staff use. He then summarized the development process of phase one. Phase two will be pursued next year and will be revised based on the outcomes of phase one. He noted the cost of the first phase will be \$12,980.

Voss noted that this website renovation is not a full overhaul but an update to new website software.

It was moved by Commissioner Orud and seconded by Commissioner Wall to approve the website renovation scope to the Board. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

2. Annual Watershed Awards: Reminder

Voss reminded the TEC that now is a great time for nominations to come in for the watershed awards. He said past nominations are still valid and could be brought forward again this year. He noted that the award winners will be announced at the December VLAWMO Board meeting.

VI. Projects

A. Biochar construction update

Corcoran presented the construction of the Biochar project is mostly complete, with a few minor items under discussion with Petersen Companies and SEH consultants. Corcoran outlined the process of construction from dewatering the pond to digging out and filling the biochar bench. The project began on September 30th and took less than a week to finish due to amiable weather. The system includes intentional design for taking water

samples on water exiting the filter, which will be monitored in spring 2023. The erosion fence will remain up until at least 70% vegetation establishment, which will be until either spring or early summer, 2023.

Commissioner Duxbury asked about the life of the practice. Corcoran responded sand filters last for at least 25 years, but the biochar may only be effective for 10 years. He added that staff will be monitoring the practice for the next year and will have a better idea of its longevity after that.

B. Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Amendment

Tanner provided a review on the minor plan amendment. Requested changes were brought to the TEC and Board in August, and the amendment comment period ended September 25th. The City of White Bear Lake provided three comments and VLAWMO staff made revisions to address two comments (the third will be included in the next full Plan update). The Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR) also sent a formal letter confirming the proposed watershed management plan changes are minor and approving the requested changes. BWSR's letter is included in the October 2022 TEC packet. A public meeting will be held at the October 26th Board meeting for public comments, which was legally noticed on October 5th and 12th, per BWSR guidelines. Staff recommend approval of the minor plan amendment with the additional changes for the October 26th BOD meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Nelson and seconded by Commissioner Huntrods to approve the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Amendment with the additions. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

C. Wilkinson BMP update

Tanner provided an update that Houston Engineering, Inc. continues work on modeling and design for the Wilkinson BMP project. Wetland delineation work is underway, and staff will be meeting with them soon.

D. Community-engaged Learning UMN student fall semester update

Tanner included updates on Community-engaged learning student activities. The current cohort is ten students from two environment-focused classes. Examples of activities include seed collection, invasive species removal, bare-root planting, and the group attending the recent CWMA meeting and associated equipment demonstration was highlighted.

E. Recent MN DNR activities in the watershed

Tanner said the DNR visited the watershed in September to survey for uncommon aquatic macrophytes and collect Water willow specimens. Water willow samples will be incorporated into the Bell Museum herbarium collection. Bearded nitella was also found, collected, and mapping its distribution is the focus of a current research project.

Walleye fry stocking occurred in East Goose Lake in the spring and was survival of those fry was checked using trap nets by MN DNR in September.

F. Birch Lake turion check with RCSWCD

Tanner provided an update that only a few curly-leaf pondweed plants have been found in Birch Lake. She and RCSWCD staff checked for turions, which were not found during the survey. She added that, since the curly-leaf pondweed infestation appears to have been detected early, there is an opportunity to eradicate curly-leaf pondweed from Birch Lake.

I. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Wall stated there is an upcoming Vadnais Heights street renovation project on South Oak Drive, which is adjacent to a wetland. A trail connection from Bear Ave N to Bear Park has also been completed, with a boardwalk planned for 2023.

II. NOHOA

Patricia Orud provided an update on the North Oaks neighborhood entrance renovation. She said a few surprises were found by the contractors when digging the raingarden including old foundation materials, cesspools, and tree trunks. Grading will be completed in 2022 and planting will occur next year. NOHOA is currently asking for community input on the planting design of the raingarden.

III. Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division

None

IV. St. Paul Regional Water Services

SPRWS reported a high rate of retirements in 2022 and continued prep work for a new treatment plant addition.

V. Public Comment

None

VI. Next Meetings:

Next TEC meeting November 9th. Next BOD meeting October 26th.

XIII. Adjourn

It was moved by Commissioner Orud and seconded by Commissioner Huntrods to adjourn the meeting at 8:37am . Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled by Nick Voss.