



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS – April 22, 2026, REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Attendance		Present	Absent
Jim Lindner, Chair	City of Gem Lake	X	
Rob Rafferty	City of Lino Lakes	X	
Sara Shah	City of North Oaks	X	
Ed Prudhon	White Bear Township		X
Andrea West	City of White Bear Lake	X	
Katherine Doll Kanne	City of Vadnais Heights	X	
Phil Belfiori	Administrator	X	
Dawn Tanner	Program Development Coord.	X	
Brian Corcoran	Water Resources Mgr.	X	
Lauren Sampedro	Watershed Tech & Program Coord.	X	
Angela Hugunin	Communication & Outreach Coord.	X	

*= with prior notice
 **= alternate

Others in attendance: Chris Knopik and Frost Bowen-Bailey, CliftonLarsonAllen; Susan Miller (TEC).

I. Call to Order

The regular Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Board Chair Lindner.

II. Approval of Agenda 🐦

The agenda for the April 22, 2026 Board meeting was presented for approval. Administrator Belfiori said staff requested adding a new agenda item VI. B. 3. for: the Consideration of a Motion Authorizing the Board Subcommittee to consider a letter to Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) Regarding the Shared Boundary.

A motion was made by Director West and seconded by Director Shah to approve the April Board meeting agenda as amended. Vote: all: aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes 🐦

The minutes from the February 25, 2026 Board meeting were placed on the agenda for approval, as presented.

A motion was made by Director Doll Kanne and seconded by Director West to approve the February 25, 2026 minutes. Vote: Lindner: aye; Doll Kanne: aye; Shah: aye; West: aye; Rafferty: abstained. Motion passed.

IV. Visitors and Presentations

A. TEC Report to the Board for April & Finance Report

TEC member Susan Miller shared that the 2025 audit was completed and budget planning has started for next year. She noted that there are six major projects under development and highlighted three: the Wilkinson Lake Phase 2 project and the City of Vadnais Heights’

whole-city resiliency study and East Vadnais Lake subwatershed resiliency study. She discussed the complexity of the Wilkinson project due to the number of entities involved and complimented the City of Vadnais Heights’ work in taking the time to complete the resiliency studies.

Susan Miller discussed the 2025 annual report and water monitoring report and highlighted that they provide a comprehensive overview of the Vadnais Lake Area watershed, how it functions, and VLAWMO’s major projects from the year. She encouraged the Board to refer community members to the water monitoring report for current and long-term information on the health of VLAWMO’s lakes.

B. Public Visitors - Non-agenda items

None.

V. Consent Agenda 

Chair Lindner asked if any Board members wished to take items off the consent agenda for discussion.

Consent items on the agenda and included in the April Board packet were as follows:

- A. Consider 2025 Annual Report & Annual Water Monitoring Report
- B. Consider Gallagher Inc. Scope of Work for Salary Survey/Compensation Analysis
- C. Consider Lease Agreement with City of Vadnais Heights for Office Space
- D. Consider 2026 Public Drainage Inspection Report
- E. Consider HEI Technical Memos on Recommended Stabilization at Two Locations on RCD 14 and Consider Engineering Task Orders for Engineering Services
- F. Consider HEI Updated Task Order Preliminary Engineering for Phase 2 of 319 Project
- G. Consider Barr Engineering Technical Memo on E Goose Lake Monitoring
- H. Consider VLAWMO Bylaws
- I. Consider MOU with City of Vadnais Heights for Vadnais Lake Prairie Site
- J. Consider Authorizing Subcommittee to Approve BWSR Bridging Conservation Grant Potential Work Plan and Board Chair to Sign Potential Grant Agreement
- K. Update on MN Watershed Resolutions Process
- L. Update on VLAWMO Watershed Award
- M. Consider Pay Request from LRI for Completed Phase 4 Alum Application in Tamarack Lake
- N. Consider Pleasant Lake Monitoring Partnership

A motion was made by Director Rafferty and seconded by Director Shah to approve the consent agenda as presented. Vote: all: aye. Motion passed.

VI. Business

A. Administration

1. Consider 2025 Audit

Chris Knopik and Frost Bowen-Bailey provided a presentation on the 2025 audit.

They highlighted audit deliverables and results, financial results, required communications, and engagement finalization. Knopik noted that this year is the second year that VLAWMO has reported under the regulatory basis (cash basis) of accounting and that it was a smoother process as a result. The audit deliverables included: a report on financial statements, a required communications letter, internal control letter, and Minnesota legal compliance letter.

Frost Bowen-Bailey discussed the financial reserves in comparison with VLAWMO's fund balance policy and the total 2025 disbursements and receipts. Knopik stated that there were no changes, disagreements, or difficulties to report in the governance communication letter and everything was in good shape. Knopik explained the last step for the Board is to approve the 2025 audit. After it is approved, it will be released to the State.

Discussion:

Chair Lindner thanked Knopik and Bowen-Bailey for their presentation.

A motion was made by Director Rafferty and seconded by Director West to approve the 2025 Financial Report and audit documents and direct them to be distributed to the appropriate state and local agencies. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

2. Discussion on High Level 10-year Budget PPT & Discussion on 2027 Rough Draft Budget

Administrator Belfiori provided a presentation on a high level 10-year budget overview to look at long-range projections and first cut of the 2027 budget. He stated that the Watershed Management Plan implementation table provides the most accurate snapshot of the long-range budgets. He noted that the amounts in this table will not always match the yearly budget amounts.

Administrator Belfiori discussed four long-range budget scenarios to compare project budgets with implemented project costs and the required SSU revenue per year. He noted that there are several partnership projects that may require future budget increases depending on if the projects are able to move forward, such as the East Vadnais Lake resiliency project. Staff requested Board review of the presented material before the next Board meeting.

Administrator Belfiori presented the 2027 draft budget table that was reviewed at the March 31st Subcommittee meeting. He noted that management of several uncertainty factors like technical feasibility, project timing, partnerships uncertainty, and outcome of possible state grant applications are key to the 2027 budget process. He said funding is still allocated for uncertain projects in the draft budget to help VLAWMO remain part of

partnership discussions. Specific budget amounts will be provided at the June Board meeting.

Administrator Belfiori described the next steps including discussing the budget at the May 20th Board Subcommittee meeting and consideration of the budget at the June 17th Board meeting.

Discussion:

A motion was made by Director West and seconded by Director Shah to authorize the Subcommittee to review the draft 2027 budget materials and provide the full Board recommendation(s) at the June 17 meeting. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. Projects, Planning, and Programming

1. Consider Partnership with City of Vadnais Heights on Fire Station Design Services for Trail Connection

Sampedro presented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for consideration to partner with the City of Vadnais Heights on design services for a fire station trail connection. Sampedro explained that the City is currently in the early design process for redeveloping the proposed fire station and is interested in partnering on a trail that would connect the City campus to the potential resiliency project area behind City Hall. Sampedro explained that the current design cost estimate is \$56,340 and the MOU proposes the City and VLAWMO equally split the costs, with VLAWMO's cost not exceeding \$28,170. The MOU specifies that the City would serve as the project lead and manage the design process.

Discussion:

None.

Director Rafferty moved and Director Shah seconded to approve the MOU with the City of Vadnais Heights with any non-material changes and on advice of counsel, and to authorize the Board Chair and Administrator to sign. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

2. Consider Wilkinson 319 Project Phase 2 Easement Documents and Consider Wilkinson 319 Project Phase 2 Engineering Scope for Project Design Services

Tanner presented that since the last Board meeting, the 319 grant contract with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, funded by EPA, was executed on March 3rd for the Wilkinson Phase 2 project. She explained that the MOU and maintenance agreement for the project has also been fully executed and returned to NOC.

Tanner said a conceptual project design for the project continues to be updated and refined. The current engineering contract to complete remaining design through taking the project out for bid is \$98,840. She stated that a temporary construction easement and extended-

temporary maintenance agreement are included in the packet and have been signed by NOC and MLT.

Staff recommended the execution of the project easement as included in the proposed Board motion.

Discussion:

Director Shah asked if the easement is an extension. Tanner responded there are two components of the project easement: temporary construction, which includes 3 figures, and extended-temporary, which includes 1 figure, for maintenance.

A motion was made by Director Shah and seconded by Director Doll Kanne to take the following actions regarding the Wilkinson Project Phase 2:

1. Approves and authorizes VLAWMO staff to move forward and sign the contract between HEI and VLAWMO for engineering services for \$98,840 with non-material changes and upon advice of counsel;
2. Authorize a 15% contingency (\$14,826) for the VLAWMO Administrator to approve if unforeseen changes occur;
3. Requests that VLAWMO staff continue working with HEI to proceed with development of the Wilkinson BMP Project;
4. Approves and authorizes for the Board to sign the attached project easement and authorize staff to provide the fully executed easement to VLAWMO's attorney for filing with Ramsey County.

Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

3. Consideration of a Motion Authorizing the Board Subcommittee to Share a Letter with Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) Regarding a Shared Boundary

Administrator Belfiori provided background on the various communications that have occurred between RWMWD and VLAWMO on this topic and that this was a process that RWMWD initiated in 2022. He noted that VLAWMO added a small amount of budget for possible joint boundary discussions/work in the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) in response. He said RWMWD requested comments from stakeholders last February as they began their WMP update process. At that time, VLAWMO provided a comment requesting a meeting to discuss the joint boundary.

RWMWD is now working on the issue identification portion of their WMP, which will be discussed at a scheduled Technical Advisory Committee meeting. Staff determined another comment regarding the joint boundary may be necessary and wish to be proactive since their comment period may end before the June 17th Board meeting.

Staff recommended authorizing the Board subcommittee to approve a comment letter from VLAWMO regarding the shared boundary.

Discussion:

Director Doll Kanne said it was her understanding that RWMWD originally requested for the West Vadnais Lake area to be moved into RWMWD’s boundary and removed from VLAWMO’s boundary due to the scientific rationale they provided. She said she thinks it would be beneficial to both organization’s missions and the City of Vadnais Heights residents to pursue this boundary change.

Director Shah asked if RWMWD approached VLAWMO initially. Administrator Belfiori replied yes, in 2022. Director Shah asked if staff has changed. Chair Lindner replied that the RWMWD Board has changed since the initial discussions and it is his understanding that the current RWMWD Board hasn’t prioritized the boundary change. Director Shah asked if VLAWMO’s proposed communication would be a letter. Administrator Belfiori confirmed.

Director Rafferty asked about the RWMWD WMP process and if this letter was part of the formal plan development process. Administrator Belfiori responded that this proposed letter to RWMWD was part of the review by the Planning TAC which VLAWMO is a member.

Director Shah motioned and Director West seconded to authorize the VLAWMO Subcommittee to approve a comment letter from VLAWMO to RWMWD regarding the shared boundary between the two entities and their WMP draft priority issues/issue statements/draft goals and to approve sending the letter to RWMWD and a copy to the City of Vadnais Heights. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

VI. Discussion May 20, 2026 VLAWMO Subcommittee Meeting

Administrator Belfiori said the Board Subcommittee meeting will be a busy meeting including the discussion of the proposed salary survey/analysis, draft 2027 budget, and the proposed RWMWD letter. He said the meeting will be held at 6:30pm on May 20th in the Lakes Room and Terry Huntrods from the TEC will be there.

VII. Administration Communication

1. Update on BWSR Meeting on 4/6 and or 4/22
2. Reminder on June VLAWMO Board Meeting One Week Earlier Next Month (6/17)

Administrator Belfiori announced that the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) provided unanimous approval of VLAWMO’s WMP and thanked Director West for her attendance at the BWSR Metro Subcommittee meeting on April 6th. He said BWSR was complimentary of the plan, which is especially meaningful because they review many local plans across the State. He added that VLAWMO’s plan is formally approved by BWSR and the final step is for the Board to approve it. He noted the plan approval will be on the June 17th Board meeting agenda.

Administrator Belfiori reminded the Board the meeting is one week earlier than usual in June; June 17th. He noted the meeting packet will be provided on June 10th.

Discussion:

Director West said it was exciting to see the different watershed district plans at the BWSR meeting and hear BWSR staff's feedback. At the 4/6 BWSR Metro subcommittee meeting she found that VLAWMO's WMP stood out and received overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Chair Lindner asked if the other watershed districts represented at the BWSR meeting are in the metro area. Administrator Belfiori confirmed.

XI. Adjourn

A motion was made by Director West and seconded by Director Shah to adjourn at 8:02 pm.
Vote: all aye. Motion passed.