



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS – June 26, 2024 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Attendance		Present	Absent
Jim Lindner, Chair	City of Gem Lake	x	
Vacant	City of North Oaks	-	-
Rob Rafferty	City of Lino Lakes		X*
Ed Prudhon	White Bear Township	x	
Andrea West	City of White Bear Lake	x	
Steve Rogers	City of Vadnais Heights	x	
Phil Belfiori	Administrator	x	
Brian Corcoran	Water Resources Mgr.	x	
Dawn Tanner	Program Development Coord.	x	
Nick Voss	Education & Outreach Coord.	x	
Lauren Sampedro	Watershed Tech & Program Coord.	x	

*= with prior notice

**= alternate

Others in attendance: Rachel Olm (Houston Engineering), Nick Arndt, Terry Huntrods (TEC)

I. Call to Order

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

II. Approval of Agenda 

The agenda for the June 26, 2024 Board meeting was presented with the proposed deletion of VI. D.

A motion was made by Director Prudhon and seconded by Director West to approve the revised June Board meeting agenda. Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes 

The minutes from the February 28, 2024 Board meeting were placed on the agenda for approval, as motioned at the April 24, 2024 Board meeting.

A motion was made by Director West and seconded by Director Rogers to table the February 28th meeting minutes for the August 28, 2024 Board meeting.

Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Director Prudhon and seconded by Director West to approve the April 24, 2024 Board meeting minutes.

Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.

IV. Visitors and Presentations

A. Consider special election for vice chair and VLAWMO subcommittee representative

Chair Lindner explained that the Board has openings for a vice chair and a subcommittee representative. Chair Lindner and Administrator Belfiori confirmed that regularly scheduled subcommittee meetings for 2024 have been completed.

Director Prudhon elected to serve on the subcommittee.

The vice chair position was determined to be left open and reviewed again at a later date.

A motion was made by Chair Lindner and seconded by Director Rogers to elect Director Prudhon for service to the subcommittee.

Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.

B. TEC Report and Financials for June

Commissioner Terry Huntrods provided an overview of the June TEC Report to Board. The TEC reviewed the resiliency study report for East Vadnais Lake, which will be discussed further tonight. The Oak Knoll Pond spent lime study has several more loads of spent lime to be applied, and is nearing completion. In Pleasant Lake carp removal 12,000 lbs of common carp have been removed from Pleasant Lake, marking this as the best year so far.

Director Rogers asked about how carp are harvested. Dawn Tanner provided a description of the remote-controlled double barrier system, tags and carp movement tracking, and netting by hand with the assistance of electroshocking.






C. Public Visitors - Non-agenda items





None.

V. Consent Agenda 

Chair Lindner asked if any Board members wished to speak on any of the consent agenda items. No requests were made from directors.

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

- A. Consider authorizing Board chair to approve Barr Engineering scope of work for grant application development for Polar Lake Park Reuse 
- B. Consider Draft MOU for Partnership with RCSWCD on White Bear Lake Sports Center Feasibility Study 
- C. Consider Landscape Level 2 2024-03 Three Oaks HOA Smart Irrigation Controller Grant Application 
- D. Consider anticipated pay request for Wilkinson deep-water wetland restoration project 
- E. Consider letter to RWMWD regarding West Vadnais Lake Boundary per subcommittee recommendation 

- F. Consider form from Kennedy and Graven regarding status of Troy G. –attorney representation 
- G. Consider Deep Lake restoration work MOU with NOHOA 
- H. Consider Liability form for insurance 
- I. Consider joining CLAW per subcommittee recommendation 
- J. Update on Spent Lime Demonstration project
- K. Update on Carp Management program in Pleasant Lake
- L. Update on pleasant Lake signs
- M. Update on Birch AIS
- N. Consider MOU with City of Vadnais Heights

Discussion:

Administrator Belfiori provided an update on VI. E. regarding the Wilkinson Deep-water Wetland project. He acknowledged and thanked Nick Arndt for his involvement and collaboration on the project.

Administrator Belfiori explained that item F of the consent agenda includes a letter in the packet to RWMWD that was recommended by the VLAWMO subcommittee.

Director Rogers inquired about a past City of Vadnais Heights council meeting in which it was proposed for Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District to acquire West Vadnais Lake through a watershed boundary change. Administrator Belfiori summarized that RWMWD did not finish the last step of the process with BWSR and therefore they have not yet completed the requested boundary change process.

A motion was made by Director Prudhon and seconded by Director West to approve the consent agenda with the omission of item VI. D. No comments.

Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.

VI. Business

A. Budget

1. Consider proposed 2025 budget 

Administrator Belfiori acknowledged several years of planning that occurred to create the 2025 budget, and thanked staff, the Board, and the communities that they represent. Belfiori stated that the budget is closely tied to and reflects the communities VLAWMO serves.

Administrator Belfiori gave the presentation as included in the June Board packet. The budget strikes a balance between long-range budgeting and fund balance management. The recommendation from the May Board subcommittee was a 5% increase in the Storm Sewer Utility (SSU) rate.

The 2025 budget's main pillars include operations/administration, projects (organized by subwatershed), maintenance and operations of projects, programs, and the fund balance. Belfiori listed the potential projects by subwatershed as included in the Board packet.

Discussion:

Chair Lindner reiterated the meeting review process that took place to assemble the 2025 budget.

Director Rogers inquired about the 5% increase in terms of what the usual fee is in recent years and what trends VLAWMO has seen in the last few years. Administrator Belfiori explained that the stormwater utility fee rate for a residential 1-3 unit classification was \$64.89 in 2024 and the proposed budget for 2025 anticipates a SSU rate of apx. \$68.13 for the residential classification. He noted there has been a steady fee increase in recent years. He noted that the 5% increase in SSU rate as identified in the 2025 budget provides for funding to continue progress towards implementation of important watershed projects and programs. He then explained that the proposed budget also provides budget flexibility due to the inability to guarantee exact timing of which projects will be available and/or embraced by partnerships. Director Prudhon acknowledged that the increase also reflects VLAWMO's salary survey and maintaining consistency in the water resources field.

A motion was made by Director Prudhon and seconded by Director West to approve the 2025 VLAWMO Budget as presented.

Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.

B. Projects and studies/plans

1. Consider WMP priority issues based on April 24 initial planning meeting 

Administrator Belfiori introduced the engagement phase that took place for the Watershed Management Plan consisting of State agency participation, TEC and Board surveys, and a public survey. The results of the engagement phase include the assembly of priority issues. Belfiori acknowledged that all the issues will be included in the Plan and all of them are important, but the priority issues are required by the State to serve as the basis of categories that allocate budget and time. Belfiori reiterated that the TEC is the official Plan review committee, which was a procedure previously approved by the Board.

Rachel Olm continued the presentation with insight on how the priority issues were identified from the engagement input and how BWSR process requirements were met and ranked. The ranking process utilized input consisting of survey results, the capital improvement partner table, and responses from the 60-day plan notification. Each category was allocated with a ranking of 1, 2, or 3 (signifying top, middle, and lower third) depending on the prominence and rate of occurrence in the input. The average of each priority rank is shown in the "average score" column. Issues were sorted and ranked by thirds, depicted with the table included in the presentation and in attachment 4 in the Board packet. Olm added that priorities resulting from Board survey input were bolded for the purpose of this Board meeting for a comparison between Board input and other survey results.

Olm inquired about potential adjustments to the priority issues and provided space for questions.

Discussion:

Director Rogers asked about chloride management in the priority issues. Olm explained that the priority issue mentioning chloride is geared towards closing data gaps so that

future management efforts can be implemented and to better understand the impacts of chloride.

Director West asked about climate resiliency and inquired about potentially raising its priority from a 2 to a 1. Olm provided that climate resiliency also has overlap and application within the other priority issues. Tanner concurred that the staff team had anticipated this overlap and synthesis.

Director Rogers inquired about outreach and communication, specifically if outreach and education support were improved and VLAWMO was better known in the community, whether the top priorities would receive greater traction. Administrator Belfiori explained that VLAWMO's outreach is currently geared towards a project-by-project basis. He acknowledged that watershed organizations are often little known and that VLAWMO staff are continually striving to innovate and grow its program.

It was moved by Director West and seconded by Director Prudhon to authorize the priority issues with nonmaterial changes and transition to the draft phase of the Watershed Management Plan development.

Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.

2. Consider draft MOU for partnership with Vadnais Heights on Phase II of East Vadnais Lake subwatershed resiliency study implementation 

Sampedro outlined the presentation included in the Board packet. She summarized the next steps identified in the East Vadnais Lake Subwatershed Resiliency Study including a wetland delineation which has been completed by S E H, soil borings, survey work, groundwater level sampling modeling, and identifying storm sewer improvement opportunities that could be implemented with the City of Vadnais Heights' street project next year. . The City of Vadnais Heights requested S E H to provide a scope of work for the next steps and the City approved it on June 18 2024. The scope included field services such as survey work, soil and environmental sampling, updated BMP concepts and modeling, cost estimates, and potential grant application preparation. A draft MOU is recommended for approval to support this partnership based on the components outlined in the presentation. The MOU is expected to be brought to a City of Vadnais Heights City Council meeting in July. VLAWMO's contributions as directed in the MOU are not to exceed \$47,930.

Discussion:

Director Prudhon inquired on whether the VLAWMO attorney has looked at the draft MOU. Sampedro responded that the MOU is based on a template which has been shaped by the VLAWMO attorney and used in other efforts. The language of this MOU hasn't directly been reviewed but follows the language recommendations provided by the attorney.

It was moved by Director Prudhon and seconded by Director Rogers to approve the MOU between VLAWMO and the City of Vadnais Heights with non-material changes.

Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.

3. Discuss and schedule VLAWMO Board summer project tour 

Chair Lindner outlined the purpose and background of the Board tour idea. He explained that it enhances project understanding to see them in real life, but the tour is optional. Administrator Belfiori provided an overview of the proposed tour itinerary, outlined by options “A” and “B.” He also inquired about the proposed dates of August 14 or 15.

Discussion:

Most preference was geared towards the 15th, no preference was expressed for tour itinerary order and project site selection. Director Lindner expressed the need to notice the meeting in the event of a quorum.

A motion was made by Director West and seconded by Director Rogers to approve August 15 as the selected date for the 2024 VLAWMO Board tour at 12:30-3:30 pm.

Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.

VII. Discussion/Admin communication

None

XI. Adjourn

A motion was made by Chair Lindner and seconded by Director Rogers to adjourn at 8:07 pm.

Vote: Lindner: aye, Prudhon: aye, West: aye, Rogers: aye. Motion passed.