

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization  
Technical Commission Minutes  
February 10, 2017  
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room**

**Commission Members Present:**

Mark Graham	Vadnais Heights (VH)
Jim Grisim	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Bob Larson	North Oaks (NO)
Jim Lindner	Gem Lake (GL)
Tom Riedesel	White Bear Township (WBT)
Marty Asleson	Lino Lakes (LL)

**Commission Members Absent:**

**Others in attendance:** Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Jenson, Brian Corcoran, Tyler Thompson, Nick Voss (VLAWMO); Margaret Behrens (Ramsey Conservation District – RCD); Diane Gorder (NO Natural Resources Commission, WAV member)

I. **Call to Order** Vice Chair Graham called the meeting to order at 7:30am.

II. **Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by Grisim and seconded by Lindner to approve the February 10, 2017 agenda as amended. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

It was moved by Lindner and seconded by Larson to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2017 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. **Administration & Operations**

A. Legal & Audit Recommendation

Stephanie stated that we have received 4 proposals for legal representation and 3 for auditor. We are required to go out for proposal every couple of years. She will be putting together a memo and bringing it to the Board for their February meeting for a decision.

V. **Projects**

A. Project Updates

1. Whitaker Treatment Wetlands

The services contract between VLAWMO and Burns & McDonnell has been finalized and signed. A notice to proceed was issued. Utility locations and a site survey were conducted the week of January 30. Soil borings will be done shortly. The engineers will finalize the design and VLAWMO will go out for bid on construction by early spring and actual construction will begin late fall 2017.

2. Wilkinson & Goose Lakes Project Study

A meeting was held on February 6 with our consultants and representatives from BWSR, DNR, and PCA to talk further about future actions for Wilkinson and East & West Goose Lakes. The idea of reclassifying Wilkinson as a wetland was discussed at length. Reclassifying it as a wetland would remove it from the impaired waters list but wouldn't change our goals for this waterbody – which is to reduce the phosphorus that is apparently outputting from the lake and moving downstream. Changing classifications would also mean that we couldn't apply for PCA Section 319 grant funding for projects because only waterbodies with an approved TMDL can qualify. State agency consensus was that we should keep it designated as a lake because it isn't hurting us as an agency that the lake is on the impaired list. Our goals for the lake don't change regardless of classification. They said we could always approach the idea of reclassification at a later date if we want. They supported

the idea of us completing an updated bathymetry and vegetation survey this year as a further guide for understanding the ecology of Wilkinson.

For the two basins of Goose Lake, there was discussion about getting a better understanding of the herbicide permit the Ski Otters obtain and finding out when they apply herbicide and where because that information may skew monitoring data. VLAWMO was encouraged to keep a regular dialogue with the Ski Otters regarding their activities so we can compare it to our observations and date. Keegan Lund from the DNR would be the person to contact to receive copies of their permits and a discussion should be had with him to see if conditions can be included on the permit that require the Ski Otters to inform VLAWMO of their herbicide treatments prior to them being done. Other topics regarding Goose were:

- How do we support the use (waterskiing) of the lake? Do we consider the public value (waterskiing) and determine management of the lake from there?
- A healthy plant population will likely be a key to turning the lake around.
- We need to set proper expectations for water quality; the PCA stated that VLAWMO is not “punished” if we are unable to get a lake off the impaired list, they just want to see that we are working towards making the lakes healthier.
- Can we ask the Ski Otters to NOT use East Goose so that we can see if the use restriction has any effect on water quality? How often is East Goose being used for their waterskiing?
- Likely recommendation will be to install a stage recorder in both basins and collect data for at least one year to determine how much water exchange is occurring.

Next steps:

Barr-Young will have their draft report submitted by the end of March and will present their findings and recommendations at the April TEC and Board meetings. It is likely that the report will include further studies that they recommend with clear reasoning as to WHY those studies need to be done. They are also well aware that we want to have some suggestions of projects that they recommend we could pursue. Our Water Plan states that we plan to implement a project for Goose Lake in 2018 so we would need to determine what that project is and start preparing for grant applications and seeking partnership buy-in this spring/summer.

### 3. *E. coli* Source Study – 2017 recommendation

A proposal has been received from Burns & McDonnell to continue to assist staff with an *E.coli* monitoring study in 2017. This will be the final monitoring of the project. The total for their proposal is up to \$32,216 and we have money in the budget for this. The number of samples and complexity of the 2017 program is a bit unknown due to outcome of initial wet weather sampling results. The TEC is being asked to make a recommendation to the Board. The continued goal of this project is to identify sources of indicator bacteria in the Lambert Creek Watershed which can be used to develop and implement BMPs to meet the requirements of the bacteria TMDL. We will be concentrating on the Whitaker and Goose sub-drainages.

#### **Burns & McDonnell 2017 Proposal**

Task #	Task Description	Cost
Task 1	Update Monitoring Plan	\$6,672
Task 2	Molecular Analyses	\$10,000
Task 3	Data Analysis and Report Preparation	\$11,584
Task 4	Report Presentation	\$3,960
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$32,216</b>

Task 2- Molecular analyses are up to \$10,000. Depending on the culture results it is very possible we may not need all \$10,000 for the tests.

Task 4- Report Presentation is \$3,960, it will be up to the TEC and BOD whether or not they would like Steve to present the findings. Staff recommends having Steve present all finding of both dry and wet weather results at the completion of the wet weather studies.

**Staff asks the TEC to recommends the VLAWMO Board approve the Burns & McDonnell 2017 proposal for *E. coli* monitoring, analysis and reporting as outlined below. The recommended funding source would be from 3.420 – Lambert Creek Subwatershed.**

It was moved by Lindner and seconded by Larson to recommend the VLAWMO Board approve the Burns & McDonnell 2017 proposal as shown with funds from line item 3.420 – Lambert Creek Subwatershed. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

## VI. Programs

### A. Education & Outreach

#### 1. School programs, spring and summer initiatives

Nick brought many items that he has gotten for the education and outreach programs. Storm drain stencils, special nets for macroinvertebrate collection and study, a picture post (built by WAV member Tom Falk) that will be installed at a couple of spots in the watershed that allows volunteers to come at designated times to take pictures for phenology project, and the new water drop costume that will be used at community events.

Nick showed new and updated brochures – stormdrain stenciling, curbcut raingardens (for homeowners who will be having their streets reconstructed), and updated landscape grant program information.

#### 2. 2017 tours and events – survey for TEC and Board members

A 3-quesiton survey will be dispersed to gather input on 2017 events and activities. Nick collected those that were completed by the TEC and stated that it is also available online:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PF3DD78>

### B. Monitoring

#### 1. 2016 Monitoring Report – Lambert Creek & *E.coli* Study

Brian presented the findings from 2016 sampling along the creek.

Notable findings:

#### **Total Phosphorus, Chlorphyll A, Total Suspended Solids, Chloride**

-The levels of TP within West Goose Lake are higher than the levels collected at the outlet as it enters Lambert Creek.

-We began collecting ChIA levels along the creek this year due to PCA recommendation.

-White Bear storm sewer – collects from a neighborhood and is one of our best sites and has been meeting state standards since 2012 and the trends continue to go down.

-Whitaker – since the forebay was put in, the TSS has gone down substantially and is meetings standards. However, TP continues to go up which indicates that the iron-enhanced sand filter in the weir is not working to reduce TP. Findings show that the pond itself is a source of TP and TSS because the levels leaving the pond are higher than the levels coming into it from the storm sewer.

-At Oakmede, TP and TSS have fluctuated over the years but the overall trend is that levels are going down.

-At Cty Rd F, TP levels are consistently not meeting standards but TSS has met standards. There was freeway construction and heavy storms blew out erosion protection barriers, sending soil into the creek.

-At Kohler, TP was high, TSS was low.

-Chloride levels overall are meeting standards throughout the creek. The two sites that have had higher levels were at the storm sewer and at Whitaker Pond. This makes sense because there is a lot of street runoff going into those areas.

-Flow was high throughout the year which makes sense because it was one of the wettest years on record.

#### ***E.coli***

-Findings thus far show that we do not have dry weather *E.coli* issues. Last year, wet weather sampling was done in the Oakmede area. They were able to collect samples at two storm events – timing is critical with this type of sampling. Samples must be collected before the storm and at 15 minute intervals once the storm starts and continue after the storm stops. Results show that samples are low in *E.coli* before the storm starts but that the samples are over state standards once the storm starts and after the storm stops. Samples were then analyzed to determine the *E.coli* sources. Avian sources were positive on all samples. There was a very small amount of canine. A minute amount of human source was found but we were told this is very common and does not indicate a septic system problem.

-For Cty Rd F area, the storm that was sampled had the same story: levels of *E.coli* are high during and after a storm but not in dry weather. All samples had avian sources and a small amount of canine.

-A sediment study was done as well that collected samples of clear sediment water and re-suspended soil. Findings show that *E.coli* levels are high in the re-suspended soil samples.

-Fecal coliform in wetland sediment was above state standards in both dry and wet samples.

-All soil samples were negative for human markers, and for feline and canine markers. All but one sample had avian markers though.

#### **Summary**

Overall, the *E.coli* issues are associated with wet weather which means it enters the creek as it flushes from the subwatershed. The sources of *E.coli* are avian. The issue isn't the creek itself but what is being flushed into the creek and is primarily avian.

Graham suggested showing this sort of information in summary form to the Board because he thinks it would be very good for them to understand the watershed more.

## **VII. Reports**

A. Financial Report for February 2017 & Authorization for Payment

It was moved by Lindner and seconded by Graham to approve the treasurer's report and February payment of checks. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. TEC Report to the Board

The report was not included with the packet so there was no vote to approve it. However, the TEC was comfortable with allowing the report, prepared by staff, to go to the Board at their next meeting. Graham stated he would be at the next Board meeting to represent the TEC.

C. WCA – Water Gremlin Bridge

Water Gremlin in White Bear Township is finalizing the permit process to construct a pedestrian bridge to cross over Lambert Creek just east of Otter Lake Rd. This is to make staff commute from their north building to south building safer. Bridge supports will be in wetland. DNR and CORP approval is needed to move forward. Anticipated start of project is mid-February 2017. No wetland impacts anticipated. Bridge pilings were deemed acceptable per WCA.

## **VIII. Commissioner Reports**

-Graham informed us that Brent Thompson, an engineer with the City of White Bear Lake, has handed in his resignation and will be moving to Colorado.

-Linder stated that he was approved to the Board representative and will continue as the TEC representative as well unless someone volunteers to fill that role.

-Graham stated that Terry Nyblom will be the new Board representative for the Vadnais Heights.

-Grisim asked about the impact from the Hyvee construction. Stephanie said the original plans haven't changed in regards to the amount of impervious surface that would be installed as part of the construction.



Grisim was curious if the change in footprint will negatively affect water quality. Brian and Stephanie stated that it will actually be better because our water quality standards have become more stringent.

**IX. St. Paul Regional Water Service (SPRWS) Report**

**X. Ramsey Conservation District (RCD) Report**

All year end reports have been completed and they are working on their annual plans.

**XI. Public Comment**

Diane Gorder stated that Behrens has joined the North Oaks NEST group and they are excited for work they will do in 2017.

**XII. Next Meetings**

TEC: March 10; Board: February 22

**XIII. Adjourn**

It was moved by Lindner and seconded by Larson to adjourn at 8:41am. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.