



Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission Minutes
April 10, 2020
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room

Commission Members Present:

Gloria Tessier	Chair, Gem Lake (GL)
Bob Larson	Treasurer, North Oaks (NO)
Paul Duxbury	White Bear Township (WBT)
Andy Nelson	Lino Lakes (LL)

Commission Members Absent: Jesse Farrell, Vice Chair (VH), Terry Huntrods (WBL)

Others in attendance: Stephanie McNamara, Phil Belfiori, Brian Corcoran, Dawn Tanner, Nick Voss, Tyler Thompson (VLAWMO); Jeremy Erickson (SPRWS); Justin Townsend (RCSWCD); Connie Tailon (WBL); Diane Gorder, Patricia Orvid (NO); Katherine Kanne, Ed Shapland (CAC); Melissa King, Dan Fabian, Barb Peichel, Marcy Westwick (BWSR)

- I. **Call to Order** Chair Tessier called the meeting to order at 7:36 am. A roll call was made for attending Commissioners of the electronic meeting: Farrell: absent Larson: present Duxbury: present Huntrods: absent Nelson: present Tessier: present.
- II. **Approval of Agenda**
The agenda for the April 10, 2020 Technical Commission Meeting was presented for approval, as presented.
It was moved by Larson and seconded by Duxbury to approve the April 10, 2020 TEC agenda, as presented. Vote: Larson: aye Duxbury: aye Nelson: aye Tessier: aye. Motion passed.
- III. **Approval of Minutes**
It was moved by Larson and seconded by Duxbury to approve the March 13, 2020 meeting minutes, as presented. Vote: Larson: aye Duxbury: aye Nelson: aye Tessier: aye. Motion passed.
- IV. **Administration & Operations**
 - A. **TEC Report to the Board and Financial Report for March & Authorization for Payment**
McNamara presented the April 2020 Financial Report for review and authorization of payments, as well as the April TEC Report to the Board
It was moved by Larson and seconded by Duxbury to approve the April Treasurer's Report and authorization of payments. Vote: Larson: aye Duxbury: aye Nelson: aye Tessier: aye. Motion passed.

It was moved by Larson and seconded by Duxbury to approve the April 2020 TEC Report to the Board. Vote: Larson: aye Duxbury: aye Nelson: aye Tessier: aye. Motion passed.
 - B. **Admin Update**
McNamara introduced Phil Belfiori, the newly-hired VLAWMO administrator, and he will start at VLAWMO beginning April 16th. McNamara praised his extensive experience as a previous watershed administrator, and for a career in water resources. Belfiori added that he's excited to be able to join the VLAWMO team and to get started soon.

V. Programs

A. Education & Outreach

1. Community Blue: Rainbarrel Outreach with MWS Katherine

The CB-2020-03 Community Blue application attached in the packet is the continuation of the application submitted in March, 2020. The March application was dedicated to the first component of the project, objective 1, to purchase the rainbarrels while they were still available from a bulk order through the Recycling Association of Minnesota. The rainbarrels have been purchased accordingly. The rest of the project is now outlined in objectives 2 and up, which include the outreach and education of the project. Voss asked that the TEC would help score the project application and have their findings to him by April 9th. Voss announced that due to COVID-19, most of the formats are moving to digital. Kanne announced that some changes have been made to the application for a virtual workshop and schedule one-on-one meetings for folks to meet and get their rainbarrels. Rainbarrel pickup is set for May 2nd, and the workshop will be scheduled for some time in summer 2020, hopefully when in-person meetings are once again allowed. The project, as a whole, is extending from May until fall 2020.

Discussion: Duxbury asked if the number of barrels that they wanted were picked up, and Kanne confirmed this. Voss noted he has created measurable goals in the Community Blue application. Duxbury asked to confirm that the additional funding is the second phase of the project. Voss confirmed this.

It was moved by Duxbury and seconded by Larson for approval of the extension of grant timeline and webinar and remote formatting. Vote: Larson: aye Duxbury: aye Nelson: aye Tessier: aye. Motion passed.

2. Community Blue: White Bear Center for the Arts amendment

Voss summarized that the Community Blue grant with White Bear Center for the Arts (CB-2020-02) faces challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic. VLAWMO staff and the project partners have come to a mutual agreement that the project be postponed until Jan, 2021. Upon that time staff and partners will resume with the original project as outlined, provided that global health concerns allow for in-person public gatherings. Should in-person gatherings be discouraged by the MN Department of Health at that time, staff and partners will re-assess whether to postpone the project further or cancel. The amended project agreement is included in the TEC e-packet.

This amendment is an action item to be voted on and brought to the April, 2020 BOD meeting, and proposes to postpone the project to January, 2021 for reassessment.

It was moved by Larson and seconded by Duxbury for recommendation to the Board to postpone the Community Blue 2020-02 grant until January 2021, and to extend the grant expiration to December 31, 2021. Vote: Larson: aye Duxbury: aye Nelson: aye Tessier: aye. Motion passed.

3. 2019 Annual Report, annual report summary, and water monitoring summary

Voss announced that the 2019 VLAWMO Annual Report is complete and posted online, and is accompanied with the 2019 Monitoring Report, and Annual Report Summary, and can be found under the “blog” section.

B. Cost Share – Landscape Level 1 2020-04: White Dry Creek Bed & Raingarden, NO

A Landscape Level 1 grant application was received from Ann & Bishop White, of North Oaks, for a runoff diversion, dry creek bed, raingarden and native plant stabilization project on their property. Their project will divert runoff flows, which currently drain into a retaining wall and house foundation, to the west, through a dry creek bed, and all to be planted with native ferns, grasses & shrubs. The elaborate project plan was designed by the homeowners, major grading and French drains to be contracted out, and the rest of the project will be completed

by the homeowners. This is a large-scale and ambitious project, showing efficient use of finances to solve drainage issues with a water resources-responsible approach.

Staff recommends approval of application LL1 2020-04 in the amount of \$2,000.00.

It was moved by Duxbury and seconded by Larson for approval of application and funding in the amount of \$2,000.00 for the LL1 2020- 04 grant application. Vote: Larson: aye Duxbury: aye Nelson: aye Tessier: aye. Motion passed.

VI. Projects

A. East Goose Alum Grant Update & Next Steps

McNamara announced that the Board voted to approved “option 1” which directed staff to Negotiate with BWSR to release grant funding with an assurance agreement that is based on the grant application and to attempt to address in the BWSR letter of concern dated 2/24/20 using practical options.

She noted that several things must take place before an alum application may actually take place: project assurance agreement with BWSR, grant workplan and assurances completed and executed with BWSR, establishing boat access on a City of White Bear Lake parcel, rough fish removal of yellow bullhead to be completed by late summer 2020, stakeholder meetings to occur through 2020, and anticipating an aquatic vegetation management plan to be put in place, after an alum treatment is completed. McNamara noted that staff is working on a response letter to BWSR, as well as asking for an extension for submittal of the grant workplan and letter to BWSR.

Discussion: Duxbury asked if the boat access will be public or private. Stephanie answered that this would be a maintenance access, and restricted use. Tessier asked for clarification on future costs for lake management. McNamara confirmed that additional costs for lake management for the lifespan of the grant will be additional future costs and would the responsibility of VLAWMO for up to 15 years.

B. Lambert Lake Update

Tanner addressed that the EAW draft is continuing and out for review by VLAWMO staff and SEH, before sending out for initial review and commenting. Tanner has reached out to the DNR and USFWS for identification of native vegetation that will best support pollinator habitat, and guidance has been requested from the USFWS for how best to accommodate multiple species of concern requirements for the construction planning schedule. Tanner noted that the DNR has initially recommended meander excavation occur in the winter, and existing Ditch 14 alignment fill occur in the spring, for the least likely amount of possible impact to Blanding’s Turtle.

C. Carp Project West Vadnais Lake Update

Tanner announced at the Board Special March meeting, that the Board approved the requested the \$12,500 for partnering with RWMWD on Common carp management in West Vadnais Lake. Permitting is in place with the DNR, but due to COVID-19 complications, an electrified fish barrier will not be installed in 2020, but a temporary barrier will, instead, be installed, as Carp Solutions is unable to work until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. The DNR has notified that there is no permit necessary for the temporary conventional fish barrier.

D. Birch Lake 4th & Otter Update

Thompson addressed that final contract documents have been signed and finalized with Blackstone Contractors, LLC, a pre-construction meeting took place on March 24th, and the site has been marked for tree removal, and construction limits will soon be marked for Blackstone to begin work on-site. Work has been slated to begin on April 20th, as construction submittals and approvals should be finalized next week.

E. Birch Lake SLMP Update

Tanner noted that the SLMP was previewed at the March TEC meeting, that the draft is posted on the website and is ready for the public.

VII. Commissioner Reports

None.

VII. NOHOA

Gorder noted that Carp Solutions is moving forward with continuing carp tracking in Pleasant Lake. A meeting was conducted for moving forward with eradication of Oriental Bittersweet in North Oaks, and efforts are moving forward. Gorder noted that the amphibians are active this spring already, and to view the VLAWMO frog & toad story map. Tanner noted that she has been working with a North Oaks student on a Swimmers' Itch article for North Oaks News.

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

None.

X. Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division (RCSWCD) Report

Townsend noted he will be working with Voss next week on a workshop. Townsend noted a new staff member is Cha, will be the lead on lake surveys. Business is modified, but mostly continuing as usual and RCSWCD staff is still working on project designs.

XI. Public Comment

None.

XII. Next Meetings

TEC: May 8th, 2020; Board: April 22nd, 2020

XII. Adjourn

It was moved by Larson and seconded by Duxbury to adjourn at 8:41 am. Vote: Larson: aye Duxbury: aye Nelson: aye Tessier: aye Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Tyler Thompson.