

Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission (TEC) Minutes
May 10, 2023
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Council Chambers
800 County Road E East, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127

Commission Members Present:

Nolan Wall	Vadnais Heights (VH) (Alternate)
Andy Nelson	Lino Lakes (LL)
Terry Huntrods	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Jami Philip	White Bear Township (WBT)
Susan Miller	North Oaks (NO)

Absent:

Gloria Tessier, Gem Lake

Others in attendance: Phil Belfiori, Brian Corcoran, Lauren Sampedro, Nick Voss (VLAWMO staff), Jeremy Erickson (SPRWS).

I. Call to Order

Administrator Belfiori called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

A. Selection of meeting chair

Administrator Belfiori called for nominations of a meeting chair. He recommended withholding an election of TEC officers until June 2023 due to the current absence of the vice chair.

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Wall to select Commissioner Nelson to serve as this meeting's chair. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

II. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Huntrods to approve the May 10, 2023 TEC agenda. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes (April 12, 2023)

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Huntrods to approve the April 12, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. Administration & Operations

A. Appointment of TEC representative to May 24th budget subcommittee

At the April 2023 Board meeting, the Board identified an interest to have a TEC member present at the budget subcommittee. The meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2023 at 6:30 pm at Vadnais Heights City Hall.

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Wall to appoint Commissioner Nelson as the TEC representative to the May 24 budget subcommittee. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. Financial Report for May and Authorization for Payment

Administrator Belfiori outlined the financial report as included in the May TEC packet. Notable items include the newly completed audit, 2024 stormwater utility planning, carp management at Pleasant Lake, ditch inspection report, the Wilkinson Lake BMP, and paying the 0% interest loan to the MPCA regarding the Lambert Lake Pond sheet pile renovation in 2021. Staff recommends approval for payment.

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the May financial report and authorization for payment. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

C. Spring flooding, lawn care, and climate tools

Voss provided an overview of climate and lawn care resources that local partners can utilize. The National Weather Service Twin Cities provided a 2023 spring flood outlook which includes factors such as snow water equivalent and root zone moisture. Commissioner Miller asked if this would be something for a City website. Voss identified that the tool could be used as an eblast type of communication if the community receives a large number of inquiries on spring flooding. Voss also explained the DNR's Climate Explorer tool that can show long-term weather trends dating back to 1895 for more accurate talking points with the public related to climate change. Voss then discussed lawn care resources with the program called "slow mow May". The goal of this program is to achieve soil moisture retention and greater root depth while supporting pollinators in May as well as beyond May.

V. Programs

A. CB-2023-01: Minnesota Water Steward Capstone

Voss summarized the purple loosestrife management and wetland education MN Water steward capstone project located at Rice Lake in White Bear Township. This will be conducted by water steward Megan Sigmon-Olsen. He explained that this project will reduce the population of purple loosestrife to a more manageable level, promote increased wetland vegetation diversity, and support wetland storage capacity. He highlighted the past success of the Rice Lake HOA's biocontrol program in this neighborhood in 2016. Megan's project will involve purchasing weevil beetles and rearing them, which will then be released in the wetland per DNR permit guidance and oversight from Katie Farber of Bolton and Menk. This project will also have an important wetland education component including a tour of Megan's rain garden during Night to Unite and social media storytelling. Voss identified that the project cost share application was scored by staff and was rated 144/150. Voss recommended approval of the application.

Commissioner Miller stated she is supportive of the project because it is something NOHOA has been looking into doing. She said she is interested in seeing the results and

how it was done. Voss recommended using five kiddie pools, netting, and loosestrife plants to rear the beetles. Commissioner Miller asked what type of beetle is used. Voss replied that the beetle is a type of non-invasive weevil. Commissioner Miller stated that she is aware of the weevil beetles being sensitive to weather. Commissioner Nelson said Katie Farber is excellent to work with and also commented that he liked the educational component and thought it is a great project.

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Phillip to approve CB-2023-01 Rice Lake Purple Loosestrife Management and Wetland Education with Minnesota Water Steward Megan Sigmon-Olsen. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

B. Rotary Park field days with Birch Lake Elementary

Voss identified that next week there will be wetland education activities with Birch Lake Elementary coinciding with the ongoing Rotary Park wetland restoration project currently being implemented by the City of White Bear Lake, supported by VLAWMO grant funding. The Birch Lake Elementary activities start with an indoor focus on storytelling related to the Rotary Park wetland, then moves into a series of macroinvertebrate and planting field days on-site. He explained that the approach includes behavior changing elements that children can develop but that it can also work for adult audiences. He provided an overview of the content included in school presentations. Voss stated the presentation slides or images from the presentation can be shared with City staff.

VI. Projects

A. Pleasant Lake surveys Board approval

Administrator Belfiori provided a summary on upcoming aquatic vegetation surveys at Pleasant Lake. The goal for a spring to early summer survey is to assess how curly-leaf pondweed has changed since a previous survey in 2016. Curly-leaf pondweed is significant to water management as the vegetation die back creates an influx of excess nutrients in lakes in the early summer, coinciding with warm waters and potential algae blooms. The second aquatic vegetation survey is to evaluate the presence of native and other non-curly-leaf pondweed invasive species.

Administrator Belfiori provided that VLAWMO appreciates North Oaks Home Owners' Association and Saint Paul Regional Water Services partnerships on the effort.

B. Carp project update

Administrator Belfiori provided an update that project coordination continues for a spring common carp removal in the Pleasant Lake system. The barrier is in place with partners, monitoring is underway with the PIT antenna and a remote camera, and partner communication with Carp Solutions is ongoing. He stated as of this morning, Carp Solutions has mobilized with nets out due to the movement of carp to the barrier. Staff hope to have a removal update at the next TEC meeting. .

I. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Wall thanked Jesse Farrell for his efforts on the TEC representing the City of Vadnais Heights and informed everyone that he and Nick Ousky will be serving as alternates until the City of Vadnais Heights fills the role of City engineer.

II. NOHOA

None

III. Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division

None

IV. St. Paul Regional Water Services

None

V. Public Comment

None

VI. Next Meetings:

Next TEC meeting June 10th. Next BOD meeting June 28th.

XIII. Adjourn

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Wall to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 am. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled by Nick Voss.