

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission (TEC) Minutes
December 13, 2023
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Council Chambers
800 County Road E East, Vadnais Heights, MN 55127**

Commission Members Present:

Gloria Tessier	Gem Lake (GL)
Nick Ousky	Vadnais Heights (VH)
Jami Philip	White Bear Township (WBT)
Terry Huntrods	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Susan Miller	City of North Oaks (NO)
Andy Nelson	City of Lino Lakes (LL)

Absent: None

Others in attendance: Phil Belfiori, Brian Corcoran, Lauren Sampedro, Dawn Tanner (VLAWMO staff), Ed Shapland (CAC), Jeremy Erickson (SPRWS), Erin Spry (City of Vadnais Heights)

I. Call to Order

Chair Tessier called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

II. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the December 13, 2023 TEC agenda. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. Approval of Minutes (November 8, 2023)

It was moved by Commissioner Philip and seconded by Chair Tessier to approve the November 8th meeting minutes as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. Administration & Operations

A. Financial Report for December and Authorization for Payment

Administrator Belfiori outlined the December financial report as included in the packet.

He highlighted expenses for the spent lime project, Tamarack Nature Center potential wetland restorations, the next phase of the Pleasant Lake carp removal effort, the East Vadnais resiliency study, and payment for the North Oaks entrance raingarden through the Landscape Level 2 grant program. Staff recommends approval of the December payments.

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the December Financial Report for payment. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

B. December TEC Report to the Board

Administrator Belfiori summarized the December TEC Report to the Board.

Highlights included sentence to serve ditch maintenance on Lambert Creek, the Wilkinson deep-water wetland, a 2024 raingarden project at Elmwood Park in Vadnais Heights, the beginning of the 2023 audit, the certification of SSU charges, and a scope of work for updating VLAWMO's next 10-year watershed plan, which begins its planning phase in early 2024.

It was moved by Commissioner Ousky and seconded by Commissioner Philip to approve the December TEC Report to the Board of Directors. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

V. Programs

A. Awards and Outreach

1. Presentation of Watershed Awards

Voss summarized the 2023 Watershed Award winners Carol Nelson and Kristie Elfering. He then highlighted some of their accomplishments on partnership projects. He asked if TEC had any feedback on the award process and reminded the TEC members that they should be thinking about nominees for next year.

2. Update on Education and Outreach 2023 results

Voss presented a summary document on the 2023 education and outreach program results and the 2024 goals and desired outcomes.. Commissioner Miller asked what was the best accomplishment for the year. Voss responded that VLAWMO exceeded expectations for the number of residents who first attended a workshop and then followed up with the grant programs. The goal was five people and in 2023 there were eight people. Similarly, the number of residents who participated in the grant programs and then attended workshops increased.

B. Cost Share policy updates

Sampedro provided a cost-share policy update following November's changes to Soil Health, Landscape Level 1, and Landscape Level 2 grant programs. Minor additional changes were made to the Soil Health and Landscape Level 1 programs and the TEC's recommendation of a new tree guide was included in the December packet. Sampedro proposed approval of the updated documents and tree guide for implementation in 2024.

It was moved by Commissioner Philip and seconded by Commissioner Ousky to approve the recommendation of the 2024 cost share program policy updates and implementation of the tree guidance document as included in the TEC meeting packet to the Board of Directors. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

VI. Projects

A. Consider contracts/quotes for 2024

Tanner presented the 2024 contracts to support 2024 lake surveys, site maintenance, restorations, biochar filter maintenance, and carp removal.

Tanner provided an example of a lake survey that is part of the quote for 2024 from the Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation Division, which was an early-year delineation of Curly-leaf Pondweed in impaired Gilfillan Lake. Another example was the continued work with Vadnais Heights City Hall buckthorn removal utilizing the Munch Bunch goat grazing.

Staff requests approval of the attached contracts.

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Philip to recommend Board approval of the batch of contracts provided in the packet with dollar amounts summarized in the table above with: RCSWCD, NST, Sandstrom Land Management, the Munch Bunch, and Carp Solutions. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

B. Consider recommendation for Tamarack and Wilkinson alum feasibility study and scope of work with Barr Engineering for the bid process, oversight, and inspection

Tanner provided a background and summary for the alum feasibility study. The feasibility study for Tamarack and Wilkinson Lakes alum treatment was authorized in 2023. This included sediment core samples, analysis of monitoring data, subwatershed impacts, and other investigations. The final feasibility report was provided to VLAWMO in November. Wilkinson and Tamarack Lakes are both of poor quality in the watershed and an alum treatment is a tool to help shift the water quality into a clean water state. The combination of both lakes helps provide an economical benefit and supports the mobilization costs of the alum treatment. Tanner provided that the effort is budgeted for 2024 from the VLAWMO budget, and that a landowner and community outreach effort will complement the effort. The anticipated application is for fall, 2024.

Commissioner Miller asked if there have been alum treatments on any other lakes in the watershed. Tanner provided that there hasn't been any lakes that have been treated by alum in our watershed, but summarized other state, national, and local alum treatments that have occurred, including many in the Twin Cities metro.

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Nelson to recommend to the Board for approval and authorization to finalize the Tamarack and Wilkinson alum feasibility study by Barr Engineering and authorize the engineering scope of services from Barr Engineering for the bid process through oversight and inspection with a 15% contingency. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

C. Wilkinson deep-water wetland update

Tanner displayed photos of the recent invasive buckthorn and honeysuckle removal and the partnership with North Oaks Company. Native vegetation establishment at the construction is being followed for spring 2024.

D. Spent lime demonstration project update

Tanner stated a total of seven loads of spent lime were applied to Oak Knoll Pond during late summer/fall 2023. Tanner provided that additional updates and results of monitoring will be provided when the project continues in 2024.

E. Comprehensive watershed management plan development update

Tanner said VLAWMO staff met with BWSR on November 16 and received support and feedback on the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan update process. Feedback will be incorporated into the process plan.

The TEC and Subcommittee's recommendations will be presented to the Board, as described at the November TEC meeting, at the December 13 Board meeting.

F. Pleasant Lake aquatic vegetation materials

Tanner summarized recent news articles including an article that was submitted in December. Staff are also working on educational signage that will be presented to NOHOA for approvals, discussion, and placement.

VII. Commissioner Reports

None.

VIII. NOHOA

None.

IX. Ramsey Soil & Water Conservation Division

None.

X. St. Paul Regional Water Services

None.

XI. Public Comment

None.

XII. Next Meetings:

Next TEC meeting December 13th, Next BOD meeting December 13th.

XIII. Adjourn

It was moved by Commissioner Huntrods and seconded by Commissioner Philip to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 am. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.