

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization**  
**Technical Commission (TEC) Minutes**  
**March 13, 2024**  
**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)
Susan Miller	City of North Oaks (NO)

**Absent:** Andy Nelson (LL), Jami Philip (WBT), Terry Huntrods (WBL).

**Others in attendance:** Phil Belfiori, Brian Corcoran, Lauren Sampedro, Dawn Tanner (VLAWMO staff), Jeremy Erickson (SPRWS), Julia Hupperts (NOHOA), Erin Spry (City of Vadnais Heights).

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Tessier called the meeting to order at 8:10 am.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

It was recommended by Chair Tessier and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the March 13, 2024 TEC agenda.

**III. Approval of Minutes (February 14, 2024)**

It was recommended by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Ousky to approve the February 14<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes as presented.

**IV. Administration & Operations**

A. Financial Report for March and Authorization for Payment

Administrator Belfiori outlined the March financial report as included in the packet. Highlights included expenses related to the financial audit, watershed management plan, engineering costs for the East Vadnais Lake Subwatershed Resiliency Study and Polar Lakes Park, and a Landscape Level 1 grant project payment.

It was recommended by Commissioner Ousky and seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the February Financial Report for payment.

**V. Programs**

A. Update on Pleasant Lake Signs – Authorize submission to NOHOA for review

Tanner introduced the topic through the powerpoint included in the packet. She described an effort to learn more and communicate about aquatic vegetation, invasive species, and

lake survey results. One example was a strategy to conduct a survey for Curly-leaf pondweed at its optimal time of the year. A 2023 aquatic plant survey included early season focus on Curly-leaf pondweed and a later season focus on native plants that also included invasive Eurasian watermilfoil. The MN DNR discovered rare macroalgae as a result of a 2022 biological survey. A 3-part article series was submitted to the North Oaks News in 2023 to communicate about aquatic plants and their role in water quality. Two draft education signs have been completed for TEC review to be submitted to partners at NOHOA.

Administrator Belfiori expressed thanks to NOHOA and SPRWS for their partnership on this effort. He summarized the intent and focus of the signs including descriptions of native vs invasive aquatic vegetation and conveying the partnerships that are being implemented on Pleasant Lake.

Commissioner Miller commented that the naming of an “Underwater Forest” is a good approach, and expressed appreciation for the inclusion of duckweed on the draft sign. She also commented an appreciation for the inclusion of removal of invasive Yellow iris on the partnership signs.

It was recommended by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Ousky to submit Pleasant Lake Signs to NOHOA for review.

## **VI. Projects**

### **A. Consider Houston Engineering task order for monitoring analysis for the Wilkinson project**

Tanner described the Wilkinson Deep-Water Wetland project including Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) reporting and the next steps for a scope of service with Houston Engineering for monitoring, and to allow VLAWMO to report actual pollutant load reductions to MPCA.

It was recommended by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Ousky to approve monitoring analysis for the Wilkinson project.

### **B. Update on Watershed Management Plan progress**

The TEC/CAC/Partner survey closed on February 26, 2024. HEI is analyzing results and will be incorporating this feedback along with the public survey into the upcoming Board survey. There was 100% participation from the TEC on the survey. Staff thanked the TEC for taking the time to fill out the survey.

### **C. Spent lime demonstration project update and amendment to extend temporary easements**

The Board authorized the contract extension to allow the spent lime demonstration project to resume in 2024. A total of 10 landowners living around Oak Knoll Pond/Wood Lake granted

temporary easements for the project in 2024. All landowners living around the pond/lake were mailed a postcard with a project update in early March. A follow-up letter and request for signature on an amendment to extend the temporary easement to allow project completion during 2024 was mailed on March 5, 2024. The project resumption date is dependent upon receiving temporary easement extensions from participating landowners.

D. Tamarack Lake alum project update

Tanner explained that Barr Engineering recommended a full dose treatment in 2024 for alum in Tamarack Lake and reported that the Board authorized requesting a Request for Quotes for the project at the April meeting.

E. Birch Lake AIS removal preparation

Tanner described the permit to remove Eurasian watermilfoil and Curly-leaf pondweed. This will be brought back to the April TEC meeting.

F. Wilkinson Deep-Water Wetland Restoration

Commissioner Miller inquired about the level of assurance we have for the system's performance when an influx of water appears on the site. Tanner described that seeding has been completed and larger plantings will be made in 2024 to provide site enhancement and stabilization. There is also a contract for ongoing maintenance and inspection to address remaining puch-list items.

G. Pleasant Lake carp removal

Tanner explained that a new carp barrier has been installed between Pleasant and Deep Lakes. The early spring mobilized this project early, and it is now ready for spring removal. Telemetry monitoring for carp movement is ongoing.

Commissioner Miller inquired about low water levels impacting carp movement. Tanner acknowledged the low water levels and explained the shallow water will still allow for carp movement. Commissioner Miller also inquired about whether carp might shift their spawning from Deep Lake to Charley Lake. Specialists at Carp Solutions have noted that carp are not likely to change their spawning behaviors to a different lake such as Charley. Telemetry checks include Charley Lake. Tagged carp have not been detected in Charley Lake.

H. VH City Hall wooded wetland buckthorn removal

Tanner described recent service crew days for buckthorn removal and that the early spring weather has coincidentally worked out well for the effort.

## **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 April 10, 2024. Next BOD meeting April 24, 2024.

**XIII. Adjourn**

It was moved by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Ousky to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 am. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.