

**Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization
Technical Commission Minutes
September 11, 2015
Vadnais Heights City Hall, Lakes Room**

Attending:

Paul Peterson	White Bear Township (WBT)
Jim Grisim	White Bear Lake (WBL)
Mark Graham	Vadnais Heights (VH)
Marty Asleson	Lino Lakes (LL)
Jim Lindner	Gem Lake (GL)
Chris Mann	North Oaks (NO)

Others in attendance: Stephanie McNamara, Kristine Jenson, Brian Corcoran, Vanessa Strong, Tyler Thompson (VLAWMO); Margaret Behrens (Ramsey Conservation District – RCD); Bob Larson (NO Natural Resources Committee)

I. **Call to Order** Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:31am.

II. **Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded by Mann & Grisim to approve the September 11, 2015 agenda as amended. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Graham to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2015 Meeting of the VLAWMO Technical Commission as presented. Vote: all aye. Motion passed.

IV. **Administration & Operations**

A. Additional Staff Assistance

We have requested and received authorization from the Board to continue with the assistance of our very excellent intern, Tyler Thompson. As of now the authorization is through the end of the year. Roughly the anticipated work load would be GIS projects (40%), monitoring & field (20%), administrative assistance (20%), communication (20%). He will continue work on GIS projects such as the working his way through 24 years' worth of paper files of WCA mitigation or other action, digitizing the mitigation locations and linking the associated information. He will finish working with fall monitoring work and other field assistance. Just as important is the help he has and will provide on Water Plan work. VLAWMO has consulting assistance for the Water Plan, but anticipated doing a substantial portion of it in house. Having Tyler on board has helped considerably. This position will be reassessed by the Policy & Personnel committee later this fall for possible continuation. We are very glad he is continuing.

B. Schedule of VLAWMO IT Network Update

The VLAWMO network server will be migrating to a virtual server provided by the Roseville Metro INET system which also provides IT service 36 local government agencies including 3 other watersheds. At this point we anticipate minimal, if any interruption in service. The transfer should be complete by September 25th.

C. Storm Sewer Utility Rate for 2016

The annual SSU rates are based on the budget approved by the Board each June for the following year. Both the VLAWMO budget and of course the SSU fees remained flat for several years. Projects and the scope of work being done by VLAWMO professionals has increased substantially. Grants have helped defray some of the costs and allowed VLAWMO to do more than is reflected in annual budget. But they are an unreliable source of income. The 2016 budget was increased to help support the approved Strategic Work Plan 2014-2016.

The proposed 2016 SSU annual rate is \$28.92 /unit or \$41.88 /acre, much LESS than anticipated. This is an increase of 2.6%, again much less than last year's increase of 7.3%. This rate includes a 0.8% buffer to account for subsequent changes in the 11,428 parcels. The number of parcels increased by 71 this year, which offset much of our budget increase. In broad strokes this means that VLAWMO single family residential (1-3 units) parcels that have a flat rate of \$28.92 (an increase of \$0.70) for 2016. All other per-acre rate parcels will increase by \$0.80 /acre/year.

D. Water Plan

1. Stakeholder Meeting and Survey Results

Stephanie reviewed the input we received from our TAC for the list of priority concerns. Stephanie also reviewed the results of surveys from the public. Handouts were distributed with the details listed.

2. Discussion Points: Input and review of 2 Water Plan Issues

1a1) – Lindner: achieving a 50% reduction on a lake like West Goose seems unattainable. Discussion of how to balance delisting and also not letting the healthy ones go on the impaired list. Graham: Getting 4/9 of the lakes delisted seems do-able. Brian: the issues we have on some of our lakes is internal loading and we are having trouble with trying to figure out how to fix those lakes. Gem Lake will probably get delisted but that doesn't have internal loading. But the other lakes have an internal loading issues. Stephanie: we do need to include in the plan how we will support our municipalities with their WLAs for the impaired lakes. Grisim said maybe we should put lots of money into ONE lake to get it delisted rather than doing little bandaid projects that aren't going to make a difference. Linder: tying the plans together... (*djd anyone catch what he was saying?*) Mann stated that she is still trying to figure out how the Mississippi water affects the lakes. Brian said having the aeration systems running in Pleasant and East Vadnais helps them and if they didn't have them, it would probably change their quality. Mann stated she talked to a person about floating islands and he says they don't work and if they were used, it would have to be much bigger and the vegetation would need to be harvested to help capture the nutrients. This person said some sort of circulation system that goes through a wetland system could work.

1a2) – Vanessa explained some of the details for MIDS. Graham – there is a lot to be said from a municipal perspective to have everyone treated the same way. S&V – RWMWD has adopted this.

1a3) – Mann & Lindner – it would be hard to tell someone that they can't get more money just because their drainage area doesn't go to one lake. Linder – it would be hard to sell that. Graham – we've had plenty to go around. Linder – people in Gem Lake don't seem to take part in the program so how do you force them to. Grisim – perhaps focus on outreach in the targeted areas to promote the programs. Stephanie – should we give more money to people who do curb cut raingardens? Mann said we could do that but the City would need to kick in too. Graham – with this city, we are a 50/50 split on costs between the homeowner and city for road reconstruction costs. Lindner – in Gem Lake, we aren't at that point for being able to do that sort of cooperation.

LAKE MANAGEMENT GOALS

6) Discussion about the pros of using higher quality automated equipment. Discussion about the costs involved with purchasing. Mann suggested that

we buy one and see how it works. Brian thought that was a good idea. Grisim asked if there were any grants available for this. Brian said there might be some options. Graham said we should have a proposal at the next meeting to purchase one and let's try it.

NO NET LOSS OF WETLAND FUNCTION AND VALUE

4) Mann asked about land that is either publically owned or privately owned. Grisim said the City has problems with allowing all sorts of variances and also not following through with the conditions set up for their development plans.

V. Projects

A. Project Updates

1. Deep Lake Channel

Work has begun on the Deep Lake Channel project. The CCM crew started yesterday. Tyler was working with them all day. Most of the rock was placed along the sides of the channel. Next week, we will create the rock vanes, lay erosion control blanket, and plant trees, shrubs, and perennials.

VI. Programs

A. Grants

1. Cost Share

Kristine reported that there is \$2435 left in the cost share program budget for 2015. The raingarden workshop held on August 19th garnered some interest so we may get some applications before the end of the year. Otherwise the funds will roll over into next year's cost share budget. Of the 5 cost share projects still open, 2 of them are complete and Kristine is just waiting for them to submit receipts for reimbursement. The other 3 are currently being completed so hopefully we can have them paid by the end of the year.

2. State Grant Updates

There are 3 potential grants that VLAWMO could be awarded for projects. Kristine submitted one to BWSR for the Cerenity Homes underground cistern project. RCD submitted one for our Sucker Lake Channel project. And there is an application with LCCMR for a project with Whitaker Pond. We won't know about the BWSR grants until the end of this year. The LCCMR Board will be discussing this grant application today.

Peterson asked why Ramsey County doesn't do the maintenance required for Whitaker Pond. Stephanie said she doesn't have a good answer as to why they haven't done it and that if anyone knows Ramsey County Commissioners because that is the step we are at now to try to get it done. Lindner knows one and he said he would talk to him.

B. Education

1. Water Quality and our Watershed

Vanessa stated that she did a training with staff at the Tamarack nature Center this week.

C. Community Events

1. Past: Kristine had a raingarden workshop on August 19th and VLAWMO was at the State Fair. Kristine did a shift for Blue Thumb.

2. Upcoming: There are two events coming up soon. The Clean Water Summit: Groundwater on 9/15 at the Arboretum and the East Metro Lakes Meeting regarding AIS on 9/23 at the Washington Conservation District offices. Vanessa encouraged folks to attend the events.

D. WCA/Plan-site review – Edgerton & Lambert Creek; Co Rd J culverts

Brian stated for Edgerton project that the City divided a parcel into 3. At one of the parcels, it was found that the contractor was pushing some material towards the creek but it didn't get into the creek. The developer cleared it out and put up silt fence. Brian said that for the next water plan, perhaps there should be a policy for the stream where we have a buffer area from where development can occur. Lindner said that if we did that, the City would also have to include it in their ordinances. This is true but each feeds off the other so if one has it, it makes it easier for the other to include it. Brian said it is something that we should discuss and think about for the future so that an issue like the one that recently occurred would be more easily handled.

County Road J had a culvert that needed replacement and they asked us if they could have a smaller culvert but have decided to use the same size culvert instead.

VII. Reports

A. Financial Report for September 2015 & Authorization for Payment

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

VIII. Commissioner Reports

Lindner said to go to the St. Paul Audubon website to see the newsletter called The Cardinal. Lindner is now the President and writes a piece for the newsletter and he has written about knowing your watershed and the connection of healthy water and healthy birds and pollinators.

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

X. Ramsey Conservation District (RCD) Report

Margaret Behrens stated that their meeting is on Monday and invites everyone to attend. The State of the Waters meeting will be in October and will be held at the RCD offices.

XI. Public Comment

XII. Next Meetings

TEC: October 9; Board: October 28

XIV. Adjourn

It was moved and seconded by Lindner & Mann to adjourn. Vote: All aye. Motion passed.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Kristine Jenson.