

# City of White Bear Lake Environmental Advisory Commission

## MINUTES

Date: December 16, 2020	Time: 6:30pm	Location: WBL City Hall
<b>COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	Sheryl Bolstad, Bonnie Greenleaf, Rick Johnston, Gary Schroeber (Chair),	
<b>COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT</b>	Chris Greene, Robert Winkler, Valeria Diaz, Sage Durdle	
<b>STAFF PRESENT</b>	Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist	
<b>VISITORS</b>	Dan Jones, WBL resident, VLAWMO Director and City Council Member; Phil Belfiori, VLAWMO Administrator; Dawn Tanner, VLAWMO Program Development Coordinator; Nick Voss, VLAWMO Education & Outreach Coordinator	
<b>NOTETAKER</b>	Connie Taillon	

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32pm.

### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and had no changes. Commissioner Johnston moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad, to approve the agenda as presented.

#### Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye  
Greene: Absent  
Greenleaf: Aye  
Johnston: Aye  
Schroeher: Aye  
Winkler: Absent  
Diaz: Absent  
Durdle: Absent

Motion carried.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### a) November 18, 2020 regular meeting

The commission members reviewed the November 18, 2020 draft minutes and had the following change: last paragraph on page 3, change 'yad' to 'yard'. Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Chair Schroeber, to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2020 meeting as amended.

#### Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye  
Greene: Absent  
Greenleaf: Aye  
Johnston: Aye  
Schroeher: Aye  
Winkler: Aye  
Diaz: Absent  
Durdle: Absent

Motion carried.

**4. VISITORS & PRESENTATIONS**

Taillon introduced visitors Dan Jones, WBL resident, VLAWMO Director and City Council Member; Phil Belfiori, VLAWMO Administrator; Dawn Tanner, VLAWMO Program Development Coordinator; and Nick Voss, VLAWMO Education & Outreach Coordinator, who were in attendance to discuss the East Goose Lake Adaptive Lake Management process and associated public engagement.

Mr. Jones stated that he and Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO) staff are attending the meeting to ask the Environmental Advisory Commission for help to address the polluted condition of East Goose Lake by supporting VLAWMO’s Adaptive Lake Management planning process, and helping with public engagement as a first step in that process. Mr. Jones provided a background of Goose Lake, noting that the lake is shown on maps of the area dating back before Minnesota became a state in 1858. He mentioned that over the past 100 years, the lake has been mistreated by becoming the City of White Bear Lake’s raw, sanitary, sewage deposit site, it was split in half by US Highway 61 in early 1950s by the Federal Government, and White Bear Avenue was expanded by Ramsey County to a four lane, concrete road in 1972, very close to the shoreline that surrounds 40% of the northeast shoreline. As a consequence, Goose Lake has been listed as an impaired water by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Mr. Jones gave an overview of past Goose Lake cleanup planning efforts, stating that the planning process started 3 years ago and in 2019 a Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) grant was applied for to help fund an alum treatment on East Goose Lake that would treat internal phosphorus load, which is roughly 80% of phosphorus load in East Goose Lake. In the grant, VLAWMO stated that it would pursue a temporary motor boat restriction of 1 to 2 years. That request was asked of the City of White Bear Lake – the legal authority to enact the ordinance. The DNR would then approve the temporary restriction. Some of the lake shore owners were not in favor and voiced their concern to the City Council. It was then voted on by the VLAWMO Board of Directors to withdraw the request from the city for three reasons; 1) a positive thing like cleaning up a polluted lake was becoming very negative, 2) it was very apparent that the City Council was not going to pass the temporary restrictions, and 3) it didn’t appear that the DNR would approve the temporary ban of motors, something that the DNR has never done for any type of recreational lake. Since VLAWMO could not get the motor restrictions, which no water management organization has ever gotten, BSWR changed the grant conditions and timeline where it didn’t make financial sense for VLAWMO to accept the grant because it would cost more, in a shorter timeline, than accepting the grant money. Mr. Jones stated that they are here to restart the process using a more adaptive approach. Mr. Jones introduced Mr. Belfiori, then left the meeting.

Mr. Belfiori presented reasons for pursuing a healthier East Goose Lake and noted the lake’s impairment status by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. He explained that the City, as a stormwater permittee, is now required to report annually on the progress of nutrient impairment and loading into East Goose Lake, called Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Mr. Belfiori presented an Adaptive Lake Management (ALM) approach toward a healthier East Goose Lake that would rely on stakeholder input, project implementation, and monitoring. A departure from the overall more costly and restrictive grants in the past, he outlined steps to implement the ALM approach:

<p><b>Step 1:</b> Input sought, compiled, synthesized</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhood meeting(s), mailing follow-up</li> <li>• Community engagement: stakeholder survey, web resource, and other engagement events/activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 2:</b> Continue developing ALM approach and authorize initial projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals and projects established, selected and initial projects authorized</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 3:</b> Implement initial projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback and evaluation of project implementation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 4:</b> Based on feedback and results, continue implementing ALM projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback and evaluation of project implementation</li> </ul>

Mr. Belfiori discussed next steps for community engagement that includes a public web resource and survey. Input from the community engagement process will be combined in a report back to the City Council, VLAWMO Board, and community.

After the presentation, Mr. Belfiori asked the commission members if they have any questions.

Chair Schroeher asked if the survey will go to all residents in White Bear Lake. Mr. Belfiori responded that the survey will go to key stakeholder groups such as residents and businesses in the City of White Bear Lake and downstream of the lake and to local leaders.

Commissioner Bolstad asked if the lakeshore residents included properties on the east side of the lake. Ms. Tanner responded that the team conducted a neighborhood meeting for lakeshore properties on December 1st, which did not include the properties across White Bear Avenue on the east side of the lake.

VLAWMO staff agreed with Chair Schroeher that when the lake becomes clearer, the vegetation will begin growing and an ongoing plan for its control will need to be implemented. Commissioner Johnston suggested not using the word 'weeds' when referring to native aquatic vegetation.

In response to a question about algae, Ms. Tanner stated that blue-green algae has occurred in East Goose Lake. The MN Pollution Control Agency only gets involved when a person or pet gets sick. Commissioner Johnston asked if there has been testing for other contaminants. Chair Schroeher suggested that other pollutants be tested.

VLAWMO staff responded to Chair Schroeher's question about other options to clean the lake such as dredging, stating that dredging was considered but was very expensive.

Commission members discussed their support of a healthier East Goose Lake and the East Goose Lake adaptive management process. Commissioner Greenleaf stated that she would like the commission to create a resolution of support. Mr. Belfiori suggested that a good time to include a resolution of support from the commission might be when VLAWMO and the City provide a report to City Council on the results of community engagement.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a) East Goose Lake Public Survey**

Mr. Belfiori provided an overview of the draft Goose Lake survey and asked if the commission members could review and provide comments on the draft community survey, and consider approval of the revised survey at their January 20th meeting. Chair Schroeher expressed his support of the survey but suggested that the survey be kept short. Commission members agreed to provide comments on the draft survey by the end of the day on Friday, January 8th. Mr. Voss mentioned that there may be other opportunities for the commission to support and assist with community engagement such as hosting an engagement event. He stated that VLAWMO and City staff could compile a list of possible engagement assistance for discussion at their January 20th meeting. All four commission members in attendance were supportive of adding this discussion to their January 20, 2021 agenda.

### **b) 2020 budget**

Commissioner Greenleaf stated that she would like the commission to purchase native seeds to give away at the Expo with the remaining 2020 budget. Commissioner Greenleaf and Commissioner Bolstad will meet and come up with ideas for seed purchases. Taillon will place the order with a native seed company.

- c) 2021 draft work plan  
Tabled until the January meeting

## 6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) 2020 budget  
Taillon reported that the native seed packets have been purchased for a total of \$210, with \$2.90 remaining in the 2020 budget. Taillon stated that the seeds were delivered. Commissioner Greenleaf offered to store the seeds at her house.
- b) 2020 work plan high priority goals  
Tabled until the January meeting
- c) 2021 draft work plan  
Tabled until the January meeting
- d) Surface Water Management Plan review  
Taillon asked if the commission members have any comments after reviewing the draft surface water management plan. Chair Schroeher emailed comments to Taillon prior to the meeting. Commissioner Bolstad stated that some of the local flooding areas identified in the plan may have been addressed as part of the 2020 street projects and should be removed. She also mentioned that not all drains are included on the Adopt-a-Drain website map. Taillon stated that she will provide an updated map to the Adopt-a-Drain administrator. Taillon will incorporate comments received by the commission and provide a revised plan for review, possibly at the January meeting.

## 7. DISCUSSION

- a) Staff updates
  - Reissued MS4 General Permit  
Tabled until the January meeting
  - Eureka Recycling composition study  
Taillon stated that Eureka Recycling conducted a recycling audit in November for the City's curbside recycling program, and they found that the residual, or non-recyclable, component increased to just over 13%, up from approximately 9.5%. The three most common and concerning non-recyclable items found in the recycling are plastic bags; miscellaneous metal objects such as car parts, pots and pans, and metal coat hangers; and batteries. Taillon mentioned that the City will begin educating the public immediately, starting with a half page ad in the White Bear Press and postings on Facebook.
- b) Commission member updates
  - Recycling ambassador program, Chair Schroeher  
Chair Schroeher announced that he completed the 6-week course and is now a Recycling Ambassador. He summarized what he learned in the final course, which included a discussion about what is and is not recyclable.
- c) Do-outs  
New do-out items for December 18, 2020 include:
  - Commission members to review the draft East Goose Lake public survey and email comments to Taillon by January 8, 2020.
  - Taillon to send current storm sewer map to Adopt-a-Drain administrator.
  - Taillon to incorporate commission member comments in the SWMP.

d) January agenda

Include E. Goose Lake public survey for approval, possible East Goose Lake public engagement opportunities, SWMP endorsement, and 2021 work plan.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Greenleaf moved, seconded by Commissioner Bolstad to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 pm.

Roll call vote:

Bolstad: Aye

Greene: Absent

Greenleaf: Aye

Johnston: Aye

Schroeder: Aye

Winkler: Absent

Diaz: Absent

Durdle: Absent

Motion carried.