



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians

Executive Branch of Tribal Government

Office of the Chief Executive

Via E-mail

March 5, 2025

Sheldon Boyd, Speaker of the Assembly
Carolyn Beaulieu, District I Representative
Wendy Merrill, District II Representative
Harry Davis, District III Representative

Re: Tribal Leaders Discussion

Dear Band Assembly:

Miigwech for meeting with me on Friday, February 21, to discuss a host of issues important to the Band. I am in receipt of Legislative Counsel Jared Miller's e-mail, dated February 25, and offer the following in response:

- Given my busy schedule, I cannot commit to meeting with you weekly. However, I am willing to meet with you approximately twice per month, when my schedule permits. Friday afternoons may work for me, but may also interfere with upcoming Cannabis Compact negotiations between the Band and State of Minnesota. Please contact Deputy Assistant Darla Roache to verify what dates and times may work.
- I don't object to sharing key information about Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures ("MLCV") with the Band Assembly, though I request the same treatment in return. If there's any information you believe I have that you wish to access, feel free to ask. The majority of the information I referenced during our meeting is available on the Band's Restricted Drive, including key budget and finance information. I completely agree that the Band's elected officials should have visibility into the financial health of MLCV. This is a problem I inherited and one I need your help to resolve.
- I recently met with Commissioner Darcie Big Bear, and she is preparing an MLCV Shareholders Report. A meeting to review the Report is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, March 19. I am proud of the work Darcie has done so far at MLCV and am very excited about the cost-cutting discussions that have begun under her leadership. Darcie has precipitated a substantial shift in the mindset of MLCV executives, and they are now shifting from a growth mindset to an efficiency mindset. Said differently, Darcie has placed tremendous focus on fiscal responsibility, and her efforts are beginning to produce encouraging results. With this shift, Darcie intends to provide the Band Assembly with a fourth quarter fiscal year-end update, a forecast of the financials, and an update as to the changes being implemented.
- Rather than nominating and confirming into a broken position, I would prefer that MLCV's corporate governance model be reimagined first. That being said, I understand it is the Band Assembly's prerogative whether to consider my proposed revisions to Title 16 (Corporations) of Mille Lacs Band Statutes. The proposed revisions I submitted to the Band Assembly were

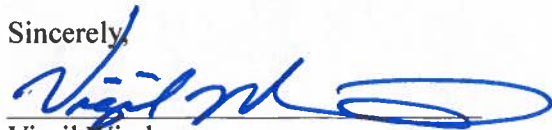
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merely a starting point, and I am more than willing to work collaboratively on a comprehensive solution.

- I don't object to increased scrutiny of MLCV's operations, past and present. In fact, I have been calling for this type of accountability for several years. But if the proposed solution is a simple audit, I am skeptical as to whether such action will reach the core of what truly plagues MLCV. If the proposed solution is a forensic audit, we will need to develop a list of questions to guide the forensic auditor's investigation. For my part, I would like to see a detailed examination of bonus payments, travel expenses (and how they relate to companies of similar size), and a full accounting of all MLCV's contracts and agreements over the last 10-12 years.
- I would also like to see an accounting of MLCV leadership's overall spending and a detailed examination of their executives' expense accounts—including the previous Commissioner. Finally, as I have mentioned on several occasions, I would like to see an analysis of the shared services that are being used by all MLCV subsidiaries with the vast majority of funding being provided by our casinos. To pose this last concern in the form of a question: Are the Band's gaming properties receiving benefits from shared services commensurate with the amounts they are being charged?
- I support the Band Assembly's idea to hold a Band members-only meeting about MLCV, provided that we, as elected officials, have performed our due diligence in determining what the main issues are.
- Due to the grave nature of what's taking place federally, I am open to having Holland & Knight provide updates to the Band Assembly on a quarterly basis—at least for the next year. But given the Chief Executive's statutory responsibility to conduct external affairs, my office and Government Affairs will have to be closely involved with any updates that are provided. Please coordinate any requests through Government Affairs Director Shena Matrious.

I look forward to our next discussion about these issues and especially to the MLCV Shareholders Report.

Sincerely,



Virgil Wind
Chief Executive

CC:

Jared Miller, Legislative Counsel
Darcie Big Bear, Interim Commissioner of Corporate Affairs