



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians

*Executive Branch of Tribal Government
Office of the Chief Executive*

Via E-mail

May 21, 2026

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

Re: Solicitor General Vacancy and HHS Interdepartmental Conflict

Dear Band Assembly:

Aaniin. I am in receipt of your letters dated May 5, 2026 (regarding an HHS Interdepartmental Conflict) and May 14, 2026 (regarding the Solicitor General vacancy). I offer the following in response.

Solicitor General Vacancy

The current term for the Solicitor General expires April 30, 2027. I will post the Solicitor General position soon, but intend to do so for the full four-year term (extending from May 1, 2027, to April 30, 2031). If the Band Assembly wishes for me to make a temporary appointment to cover the next nine months, I am more than happy to meet to discuss options.

HHS Interdepartmental Conflict

Miigwech to the Band Assembly for approving the addendum to the Van Norman contract, even though the original contract was not submitted to the Band Assembly for ratification as it should have been.¹ It is my understanding that, since 2018, there may have been at least a couple more legal contracts initiated by the Office of the Solicitor General without ratification by Band Assembly. My staff has also reached out to the Office of Management and Budget and all Executive Branch Departments to determine if there are any additional legal contracts within the Executive Branch which should be forwarded to the Band Assembly for ratification. We will let you know promptly if we find any such contracts.

If the Band Assembly has any additional questions about when or why the Van Norman contract was first initiated, I encourage you reach out to Commissioner of Administration Gilda Burr or former Solicitor General Caleb Dogeagle directly.

¹ Title 4, Section 16(b) of Mille Lacs Band Statutes reads: "The Exterior Legal Counsel in and for the Band shall be a lawyer and/or a legal firm of the choice of the Chief Executive upon the advice and consent of the Band Assembly." Please note that I never selected Van Norman Law to serve as Exterior Legal Counsel for the Band.

Letter from Chief Executive Virgil Wind to Band Assembly
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As to the Band Assembly's request for "updates about the HHS investigation, an unredacted copy of the law firm's investigatory report, and briefings on how the Executive Branch plans to resolve the conflict in the best interest of the Band and its employees and to limit legal exposure[,]" I have not read the investigatory report (nor do I intend to). I am, however, open to hearing and implementing whatever recommendations emerge from the report. I also have no objection to these recommendations being shared with the Band Assembly.

HHS Commissioner and Executive Officer Job Descriptions

It was only a few weeks ago that the Band Assembly denied my nominee for HHS Commissioner, a Band member who has served the Band faithfully for more than 20 years and proven herself a highly effective administrator. In denying my nominees, the Band Assembly continues to rely on Executive Officer job descriptions which, to my knowledge, were approved solely by the Band Assembly in 2017 and never by the Chief Executive. My preference remains to nominate a Band member for this position who lives in one of our communities, even if they don't meet every last requirement of the 2017 job description.

I firmly believe this approach both honors the wishes of our ancestors and is consistent with Title 4. The Band needs to be run by Band members. And as long as I am Chief, I will be looking first to Band members to fill these crucial leadership positions.

Nominations

During my time as Chief, I have made a total of 13 Commissioner nominations, only one of whom was not a Band member. Of these 13 nominations, this Band Assembly has approved six, denied six, and failed to act on one. Adam Valdez is my fourth nominee for Corporate Commissioner, and the Band Assembly has not acted on this nomination since late February.

Sincerely,



Virgil Wind
Chief Executive

CC:

Gilda Burr, Commissioner of Administration
Jared Miller, Legislative Counsel