



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians

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

August 1, 2024

Via E-mail

Maria Costello, Assistant Commissioner of Administration
Nicole Anderson, Commissioner of Health and Human Services
Kelly Applegate, Commissioner of Natural Resources
Tracy Burr, Commissioner of Community Development
Caleb Dogeagle, Solicitor General
Joseph Nayquonabe Jr., Commissioner for Corporate Affairs

Re: Expectations of Mille Lacs Band Executive Officers

Dear Executive Officers:

Having conducted our first Cabinet meeting, I've decided to reach out to further establish my expectations of you as Title 4 Executive Officers. First and foremost, you are all responsible to carry out your duties as prescribed by Mille Lacs Band Statutes.¹ You are also responsible to adhere to the ethical requirements of Title 6, as well as the Band's Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual to the extent it does not conflict with other Band statutes. In working toward a brighter future, it is important that we remember what our baseline responsibilities are.

As mentioned at our July 18 Cabinet meeting, we will continue to schedule Cabinet meetings. I expect everyone who is invited to attend. If you are unable to attend, then I expect a staff member to attend in your place. If you are unable to attend and send a staff member, please communicate that with Deputy Assistant Darla Roache so we are aware of your absence.

In addition to our Cabinet meetings, I expect you to keep me regularly informed about noteworthy items occurring within your subject-matter jurisdiction. By 9:00 AM every Friday, I would appreciate you sending me a summary of what your work week looked like. Also, within one month, please schedule a time to meet with me for a one-on-one meeting. **Please contact Deputy Assistant Darla Roache at 320-362-07932 or darla.roache2@millelacsband.com.**

In preparation for our meeting, please prepare a memorandum addressing the following questions.

1. What do your weekly and monthly schedules look like?

¹ Mille Lacs Band Statutes establish (primarily) the powers and duties of each Commissioner in the following sections: Commissioner of Administration – 4 MLBS § 10; Commissioner of Health and Human Services – Title 8; Commissioner of Community Development – 12 MLBS § 1; Solicitor General – 4 MLBS §§ 18-19 and 24 MLBS § 1054; and Commissioner for Corporate Affairs – 16 MLBS § 5.

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2. How many days are you present in the office?
3. What are the expectations for your staff to be in the office or working remotely?
4. How do you ensure your staff is working effectively during their remote days?
5. How do you communicate with your staff?
6. How do you ensure you are up-to-date with your department?
7. How many employment vacancies does your department currently have? (Please break down by grant-funded and net-revenue-funded positions)
8. What is the rate of employment vacancies in your department?
9. How many positions within your department are grant-funded?
10. How many positions are net-revenue-funded?
11. How many Band members work in your department?
12. Do you have any recurring meetings that you or your staff attend? If so, does the Office of the Chief Executive's staff need to be aware and attend as well?
13. What are your ideas to improve government operations for better customer service to Band members?
14. What are some areas within your budget that could be improved upon?

Regarding interactions with Band Assembly members, I encourage you to answer whatever questions you can without violating any ethical requirements. There will be times when a member of the Band Assembly contacts you to advocate on behalf of an individual constituent. In these instances, I encourage you to provide whatever assistance you can without foregoing your statutory responsibilities. Please keep me informed, as appropriate, to ensure that all Band members and employees are receiving equal treatment. I would also like to see you log all of your interactions with Band Assembly members, making certain to note any requests. Please include notes from this log as part of your weekly summary to me. Prior to anything reaching the Band Assembly agenda, I should be made aware. All of that being said, I also expect you to be respectful to these elected officials—both in and out of Band Assembly—as they have been voted into office by our people.

With respect to matters external to the Band, please coordinate all meetings or visits from dignitaries (local, state, or national) with Government Affairs. Specifically, please notify Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs Shena Matrious of these events. I rely on her to help

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the Band speak with one voice on matters of broad public importance. **You can contact Shena at shena.matrious@millelacsband.com or 320-279-3132.** I will be reissuing an Executive Order on this requirement soon to make sure that it is followed.

On a final note, please always carry yourself with professional respect and courtesy as an Executive Officer of the Band. This includes when on travel away from our territorial jurisdiction. Although I encourage you to travel as necessary to represent the Band's interests, I ask that you do so in a manner that shines positive light on the Band. In that same vein, you are free to travel (and send your employees upon travel) to conferences, meetings, and summits pertaining to your subject-matter jurisdiction, provided that the travel has been budgeted for and approved through the appropriate channels. Attached is a travel request form and Conference Debrief PowerPoint that I expect you to complete before and after you travel.

In closing, I thank you for your continued service to the Band and sincerely look forward to working with you. Please feel free to contact me directly about any questions you may have.

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Virgil Wifid
Chief Executive

CC:

Shena Matrious, Interim Executive Director, Government Affairs