



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians
Legislative Branch of Tribal Government

Weekly Review: January 12-16, 2026

Weekly Sync Meeting

January 12, 2026

Legislative staff facilitated a weekly sync meeting with elected officials and staff to review the upcoming Band Assembly agenda. The meeting included discussion on bills to work on, the workshop schedule, workshop projects, and District Representative initiatives.

State of the Band Address & Band Assembly Meeting

January 13, 2026

The Speaker of the Assembly convened a meeting of the Band Assembly prior to the State of the Band Address held at Grand Casino Mille Lacs. District Representatives amended approved the agenda.

The meeting was recessed and reconvened at the Band Assembly Chambers.

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Record: May 14, 2025, approved Band Assembly Record: May 28, 2025, approved Band Assembly Record: May 29, 2025, and amended and approved Band Assembly Record: May 30, 2025.

The District Representatives amended and approved Band Assembly Bill 22-01-02-26 (A Bill Authorizing a Supplemental Appropriation for the purpose of authorizing expenditure(s) and budget revision(s)/transfer(s) for the Executive and Legislative Branch(s) for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2025 and September 30, 2026). Sponsor: District II Representative

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 22-01-03-26 (A Bill authorizing a supplemental appropriation for the purpose of authorizing expenditures for Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures-Wewinabi Inc. for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2026). Sponsor: District II Representative

The District Representatives approved a contract addendum with FSX for the service agreement for e-filling & e-service system and add additional funds.

The District Representatives approved a contract with TruTouch Cleaning Services, LLC., for commercial cleaning five (5) day(s) a week, Monday through Friday throughout the school year with one deep clean at the Nay Ah Shing Elementary School.

The District Representatives approved a contract with Apex Engineering Group Inc., for the design of the turn key community water and sanitary sewer infrastructure system within the Bands Isle Community.

The District Representatives approved Hardship: D1-01-12-25

Messages from the Chief Executive:

Chief Executive Virgil Wind was not present.

Messages from the Representatives:

District I Representative Carolyn Beaulieu shared events:

- Elder circle is Sunday, January 25, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. at the Baadwewidang center.
- District I Community meeting is Wednesday, January 28, 2026 at Baadwewidang center at 5:00 p.m. seating.
- Friday, January 30, 2026 there will be Winter story telling by Migizi Sullivan doors open at 5:00 p.m. with a meal hope to see folks there.

District II Representative Wendy Merrill shared “Well I first want to start out the conversation by saying I do appreciate the speech that you had today Mr. Speaker I think a lot of people needed to hear those concerns that you have and just giving people certainty and peace of mind in regards to like how us elected officials feel about what’s going on in the world and specifically in our urban area. I do want to state for the record that I am on the same boat, I do have my same concerns, I did send an email out last week just so band members are aware asking for some kind of resolution or legislation in regards to what Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) can do on reservation opening you know I put this out in the community too to hopefully have some kind of listening session in regards to the statements that came out from Native American Rights Fund (NARF) you know what are people’s rights are and what to do if you are ever encountered by ICE so I just think that’s out there and I just want band members to know that we are looking at it from a Legislative perspective I know that’s something I put out there and if anybody has any questions feel free to reach out to me in regards to I guess the whole situation that’s happening so my number is (320)362-4925.”

She shared community events:

- Community Meeting in East Lake Tuesday, January 20, 2026 5:30 p.m.
- Community Meeting in Chiminising Wednesday, January 21, 2026 5:30 p.m.

District III Representative Harry Davis shared community meeting will be this Thursday, January 15, 2026 at Grand Casino Hinckley at 5:30 p.m.

Messages from the Secretary-Treasurer:

Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd had no message.

Workshop

January 15, 2026

Legal counsel facilitated a workshop with the Band Assembly regarding a discussion about the Tribal Employment Rights Office bill compromise discussion, Title 18 bill, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement resolution

The Speaker of the Assembly convened a meeting of the Band Assembly. The District Representatives approved the agenda.

The District Representatives approved Resolution 22-01-04-26 (A Resolution opposing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement activities on Mille Lacs Band Lands and requiring Federal consultation). Sponsor: District II Representative. After the introduction there was a comment from an elder regarding concerns of ICE.

Messages from the Chief Executive:

Chief Executive Virgil Wind shared “Thank you Band Assembly I appreciate the resolution; it has a lot in it that I incorporated into an executive order that I put out was it yesterday? The 14th, two days ago on the 14th. That executive order been and readily available for band members to read and really what it says is that you know? Before ICE could ever enter tribal property, they have to respect our sovereignty, they have to respect our trust and treaty obligations that come from the Mille, or from the federal government and if and when they try this executive order clearly stated that they would not should not without contacting the chief executive, without contacting tribal police without having OSG there. That being said we’ve been working around the clock also since last Wednesday trying to figure this whole thing out. I know there’s a lot of concerns out there with everything that’s going on with the Band. In regards to the hotels in regards to Makwa Global that stuff was all here long before I was here, whether it was as the Chief or whether it was as District Representative that stuff was all moving already. The hotels regardless of what it is, who owns them right? Who’s going to own that mistake that was made? We have to own that too and as leadership we have to figure out exactly what we want to do with them. We know they’ve been losing proposition for a number of years and now here’s another scenario where it’s another loss to the Band. So, over the last week mentioned the executive order that was placed on January 14th yesterday January 15th really trying to exercise all legal authority lawful authority within our different branches. We met we sent off a letter to Secretary of homeland security, making strong statements about how ICE, I’ll just read the letter. Chief Executive Wind read letter. “On behalf of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe I’m writing as Chief Executive of the Band to express our extreme concerns and objections to recent reports of Immigrations and Custom Enforcement activities involving the arrest and detention of tribal members in ongoing operations and request government to government consultation as future actions of ICE agents deployed in Minnesota may impact our band member communities and properties. The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe is a federally recognized Tribal Nation with inherent sovereignty and a government-to-government relationship with the United States. We have more than 5100 enrolled members, our members have lived for many generations in East Central Minnesota region, which today encompasses three districts throughout East Central Minnesota. In addition to these communities, we have a notable urban population of band members in Minneapolis where the band maintains an established urban office in the Twin Cities metropolitan area to service their needs. We observe the growing concerns and events unfolding in Minneapolis, our community was alarmed to learn that ICE had violently arrested a U.S. citizen descendant of the Red Lake Nation, our Ojibwe cousins. These concerns grew even more pressing in our community, even more worried as we noted an arrest and detainment of four Oglala Sioux Tribe members in Minneapolis that remain in custody with ICE to this day. We object to the conditions our cousins were subjected to in the strongest possible term, ICE cannot place U.S. citizens in immigration detention, including tribal members after their citizenship is verified. As the state and communities grapple with the tragic shooting in south Minneapolis we should be very careful not to compound one shocking tragedy with more violation of civil rights and treaty obligations. We speak with confidence knowing that many

Minnesota Tribes have already issued statements echoing their own concerns and objections because the implications of detentions on tribal sovereignty. The federal government has clear trust responsibility to tribal nations as well as well established obligations under federal law and policy to consult with tribes on actions that may affect their citizens, lands, and governmental interest. Sorry it's long. Meaningful consultation is not discretionary, before undertaking or expanding enforcement actions that impact tribal citizens on or near tribal lands the Department of Homeland Security must consult with and work collaboratively with Tribal Governments. This promise was established in the DHS Tribal Consultation policy which states DHS recognizes that agencies, policies, programs, and services may directly and indirectly impact Indian Tribes and is committed to regularly and meaningfully collaborating. I could go on. In essence the letter is telling them that we do not stand for what's going on, we do not believe that our members civil rights are being withheld, we believe that it's a strong violation of civil rights. The letter goes on to state that our band members, Mille Lacs Band members and American Citizens as well should not have to carry proper documentation just to go on about their busy lives. This is a problem that isn't going to go away overnight. We've been very cautious in being reactive to you know? Misinformation that's out there. I'm almost done Mr. Speaker thank you so much for your patience. Misinformation that was out there, really like to reiterate that Makwa Global has let the leadership know that they are not participating in any ICE activity, we can provide further information on the work that they do globally, but they said very clearly that they are not participating nor bidding on that activity. My understanding is there's some construction contracts, training and development stuff but we can follow up on that. Call to leadership we're not going to agree all the time, but we're in a world right now that needs us to come together. We need to put ourselves aside and figure out exactly what the best solution is to continue providing services to our members. We need to come together as a strong united front, even if we have to argue and fight behind the scenes. We need to come together for the betterment of the band members out there. If there's more that I can do I'm more than happy to do it. It's been a crazy week especially with State of the Band, but will continue working. Miigwech.

Messages from the Representatives:

District I Representative Carolyn Beaulieu shared "Thank you I'm just going to say that we are having that protest at 11:00 today. The protest is for I was invited to it, I did not create this protest, but I was invited to go as a leader of the District I community, so I will be there. But personally, I oppose ICE staying in our hotels in the cities, see them providing safety and lodging to ICE while they have a nice night's rest and go out the next day and beat up on American citizens. I don't support that and I was under the impression, in two meetings that MLCV would make a decision and then make a statement about it, so that it what my intentions are behind today's protest. Community members want answers. Irene the things you brought up about including in our businesses on off reservation that's a Solicitor General question but he said has no say over MLCV or the businesses, so again I don't know who's going to answer for that. Recognition of tribal I.D.s how do we go about asking ICE to honor those, what's the steps on that? Is tribal PD traveling with ICE? I haven't heard that, but I guess we could ask Solicitor General that as well. And as for Makwa Global they might no be partnering with ICE, but it probably wasn't appropriate for that leader of that area to go post on face book that she's schmoozing with DHS while this is all going on, it just wasn't the best thing, best decision to make. So, at this point I don't know who's in charge over at MLCV because you got everybody passing the buck on making a decision about this, but a decision is due now. So, I'm really hoping from hearing from community today forces a decision. Miigwech.

District II Representative Wendy Merrill shared "I just wanted to say Miigwech to band members that have reached out to me recently and working with everybody along side this week and sharing my own personal concerns on social media. I too oppose ICE staying in our hotels, there's definitely a

strategy behind it. There are ways we can get out of that situation, unfortunately we don't have a Corporate Commissioner over there that can make that decision and again here we are a year later without a Corporate Commissioner leading that and unfortunately all that decision making has to fall on either the board and it's just not a good time for them and I do feel bad for them, so I guess I don't really have a whole lot to say I too will be at the rally or the protest today at noon. We did invite or MLCV did want to meet with us at 11:00 a.m. but unfortunately, they cancelled, but or wanted to be remote we asked for in person meeting today. I think that's all I have. Miigwech."

District III Representative Harry Davis was not present.

Messages from the Secretary-Treasurer:

Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd shared "I think it will be really helpful if we educate out band members on what's called the fourth amendment the right against search and seizure and all that entails. Be very knowledgeable on when you're moving around and this is a suggestion from a concerned band member about what you can expect and how you navigate those waters when you encounter people. If we can get that stuff out there, something really easy to read so those people will have the knowledge to be able to behave confidently as possible and take away some of that fear and then document the interactions. Ok I think we can arm our band members with that knowledge and that confidence about how to navigate through those and that's what this all is, it's about encountering those folks ok?"

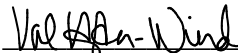
After the messages an elder opened up about her concerns of unhoused band members and ICE.

Meeting

January 16, 2026

The Elected officials met with Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures.

The next Band Assembly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.



Valerie Harrington-Wind
Chief Communications Officer