



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians
Legislative Branch of Tribal Government

Weekly Review: January 20-24, 2025

Band Holiday Civil Rights Day

January 20, 2025

Band Assembly Meeting

January 22, 2025

The Speaker Pro Tempore of the Assembly convened a meeting of the Band Assembly. The District Representatives amended and approved the agenda.

Band Assembly received a presentation from Darcie Big Bear, Interim Commissioner of Corporate Affairs regarding Non-Gaming Operating Budgets-FY2025 Q1 & Q2 and Bank of America interest loan.

The District Representatives approved Resolution 21-03-03-25 (A Resolution approving the Continuance of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, Non-Gaming, and Gaming Fiscal Operations until April 30, 2025).

The District Representatives approved Foster Care License: District I FFH0410003.

Messages from the Chief Executive:

Chief Executive Virgil Wind was not present.

Messages from the Representatives:

District I Representative Carolyn Beaulieu shared a reminder for the District I community meeting tonight Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at the Baadwewidang Community Center doors open at 5:00 p.m. She shared on the agenda is Commissioner of Finance, Mel Towle; General Welfare Exclusion (GWE) program, representative from Four Winds Treatment facility, and there will be an information table for the MCT delegates.

District II Representative Wendy Merrill shared reminder for community meeting tonight Wednesday, January 22, 2025 in Chiminising and rescheduled Minisinaakwaang community meeting for Thursday, January 23, 2025.

District III Representative Harry Davis had no message.

Messages from the Secretary-Treasurer:

Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd was not present.

Joint Session of the Band Assembly Meeting

January 22, 2025

The Speaker Pro Tempore of the Assembly convened a meeting of the Joint Session of the Band Assembly. The Joint Session of the Band Assembly amended and approved the agenda.

The Joint Session of the Band Assembly amended and approved Joint Resolution 21-03-01-25 (A Resolution approving the enrollments into the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe for those who meet the ¼ degree requirement of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe).

The Joint Session of the Band Assembly amended and approved Joint Resolution 21-03-02-25 (A Resolution denying the enrollments into the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe for those who do not meet the ¼ degree requirement of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe).

The Joint Session of the Band Assembly amended and approved Joint Resolution 21-03-03-25 (A Resolution denying the enrollments into the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe for applicants who were not born to an enrolled Mille Lacs Band Member).

Messages from the Chief Executive:

Chief Executive Virgil Wind shared “Thank you so much, so this is kind of a question that’s going to come up next week. So at the last TEC I’m not sure if you guys we able to attend or if you heard anything about it, but the last TEC there was a motion by both White Earth and Leech Lake they did tribal resolutions within their tribes to incorporate Red Lake blood into their tribes and what the context of the MCT action was they wanted to amend the enrollment ordinance within the MCT platform, basically saying that instead of it being MCT Chippewa blood it would just say Chippewa blood. And my approach there was to say ok well we really haven’t had these conversations yet right? And when I look at it you know they’re taking the approach of well this isn’t going to affect Mille Lacs right it’s not going to affect when we do our things and I of course you know said I don’t have anything against Red Lake right it’s not about Red Lake or leaving them on their own or whatever it’s just about when people make those decisions within MCT, let’s just say that any MCT tribe out there that increases their blood quantum or increases their enrollment is going to have an effect on each and every MCT tribe and I know there’s going to be a push to get this, to get that I want to say it was an enrollment ordinance, but I may not have the terminology correct, but it is a push to incorporate Red Lake and allow tribes to be able to do that individually. One of the things that’s notable about that is you know recently within the last couple years Red Lake made all of their members full bloods. You know so now what does that look like in a trickle over affect to another MCT tribe what does that look like when both the largest MCT tribes being Leech Lake and White Earth incorporate that. One of the things I’ll say from being a very new Chief Executive is in all of the studies that we’ve ever done within the Band we’ve done a couple of them. There was a 2014 Wilder survey that you guys all have hear of and then we did another one in 2024 that I mentioned at State of the Band, but in any of those studies we never ever looked at what it would mean to incorporate Red Lake blood into the Mille Lacs Band you know we talked about other anishinaabe blood, we talked about you know blood quantum and those requirements carrying forward, we’ve talked about you know what it would look like if we went to an eighth, what it would look like if we went to a lineal descendancy, but we’ve never ever had the conversation about what that is and as I stated at State of the Band I believe and I hope that you guys would support this, that it should be a vote amongst the people that’s my thing like we should if we’re going to change anything to any enrollment criteria that has any effect on the Mille Lacs Band it should be a referendum vote where the elected officials we tell band members the pros and cons of each right? And say here’s what it is and now you guys make a determination our job is to educate you guys tell us what you want us to do and what direction you want us to take unfortunately when we go to TEC next week there could be an outnumbered vote right? I was the only one to stand up at that point and say you know what I do oppose this because of the fact that we haven’t educated our people because of the fact that you know any change to any MCT enrollment is going to ultimately have an effect on Mille Lacs of course it’s not faring well with my new compadres over there but, my interest is the Mille Lacs Band’s interest

and making sure that our people have a say in that. The other thing that I mentioned at State of the Band that I think bears noting is that when the last Wilder survey went out over 80% of our membership said that they didn't think that MCT should make that determination that they thought Mille Lacs Band members should make that determination and that's what I'm really standing on, you know I think there was over 800 people that voted that way within that survey and there was just over 1000 people overall so I want to say it was over 80% of the people just said you know what we'll make that determination on our own and then looking at what that looks like in statute of course we would get legal involved or whatever, but really when do we have those conversations and I really want to have that conversation amongst all elected officials because as you guys know we're, you know I only represent one twelfth of the vote on the TEC and of course Sheldon is that second twelfth for the Mille Lacs Band, but we have to have some consorted effort there and that's what I have for my messaging. It could have some adverse consequence."

Messages from the Representatives:

District I Representative Carolyn Beaulieu shared agreement and will be at the meeting next week to see what the other tribes have to say.

District II Representative Wendy Merrill had no message

District III Representative Harry Davis commented we need to follow up with what Virgil is saying and we need to have discussions before we talk with our memberships.

Messages from the Secretary-Treasurer:

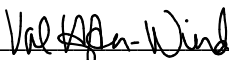
Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd was not present.

Workshop

January 23, 2025

Legal staff facilitated a workshop for the elected officials, staff, Chief Executive, and Legal and Policy Counsel for the Chief Executive regarding Band Member Legal Services bill, TERO Board nominations, MLCV appropriation requests, dog ordinance update need, joint session rules review, legislative letters stamp approval needed, and joint powers agreement with Department of Corrections resolution.

The next Regular Band Assembly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.



Valerie Harrington-Wind
Chief Communications Officer