



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians
Legislative Branch of Tribal Government

Weekly Review: February 5-9, 2024

Workshop

February 6, 2024

Legal staff facilitated a workshop for the elected officials, staff, Commissioner of Administration, Human Resources Director, and Office of Solicitor General Managing Attorney regarding a draft HR Personnel Policy – Parental Leave Social Media Use Telecommuting.

Weekly Sync Meeting

February 6, 2024

Legislative staff facilitated a weekly sync meeting with elected officials and staff to review the upcoming Band Assembly agenda items. The meeting included discussion on Compromise Hearing for the Cannabis Code – Next steps; Letter(s) sent to the Chief Executive about nominations for the Loan Committee – Next steps; Bills to work on; the workshop schedule; workshop projects; and District Representative initiatives.

Band Assembly Meeting

February 7, 2024

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

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Record: January 31, 2024, and tabled Band Assembly Record: February 1, 2024.

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 21-01-10-24 (A Bill Authorizing a Supplemental Appropriation for the purpose of authorizing expenditures and budget revision(s)/transfer(s) for the Executive Branch for the Fiscal Years ending September 30, 2023, and September 30, 2024).

The District Representatives approved contract for Marco to provide audio video conference and wireless presentation installation and equipment of the Upstairs Media Room in the District I Government Center.

The District Representatives approved Foster Care License: District 1: Renewal: FFH1910007.

The District Representatives approved Hardship Request: District I: D1-01-11-23.

The District Representatives approved Hardship Request: District I: D1-02-11-23.

The District Representatives approved Hardship Request: District I: D1-03-11-23.

In the “Messages from the Representatives” portion of the agenda, District I Representative Virgil Wind opened with reminder of continued compromise hearing regarding the vetoed cannabis code on Friday, February 9, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. Band members can view the hearing online or in person. Rep. Wind also mentioned that a letter was sent to Chief Executive hoping

to get response to confirmation negotiations. Representative Wind shared update on cannabis: you can see the construction of the 50,000 square foot facility behind the casino, exciting venture for the Band. Representative Wind shared planning on attending the MMIWR march Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at the Phillips Community Center in south Minneapolis, they still have spots available on the shuttle, if interested contact Nick Cash (320)630-3332, would like to support this important event as they supported us in the past. Representative Wind shared open gym is on Saturdays 2-8:00 p.m. at the new District I community center. Representative Wind shared still giving chairs away, if interested contact Nick Cash. Representative Wind closed his comments with another reminder AAU tryouts on March 16, 2024, at the new District I community center, there are separate times if you have questions contact Eldayshun Big Bear (763)244-9768.

District II Representative Wendy Merrill opened with Ojibwe language table starting on Mondays in Chiminising will be every other Monday, due to the Aanjibimaadizing language tables were in all other districts except Chiminising. It starts February 12th & 26th from 6-8:00 p.m. in the elder room at the Chiminising community center taught by Waabishkigaabaw John Benjamin any questions or concerns please reach out. Representative Merrill shared our district II community meetings will be on February 20, 2024, at Minisinaakwaang and February 21, 2024, in Chiminising, guest speakers are Kelly Applegate, Commissioner of Department of Natural Resources, Niiyo Gonzalez & Raina Killspotted for education, and Nicole Anderson HHS updates. Representative Merrill shared in March we are working with Government Affairs in regards to our community meetings in March they will be the candidate forums for Chief Executive during our community meetings. Representative Merrill shared February 11, 2024, movie night in Minisinaakwaang. February 25, 2024 is open gym for both communities from 12-6:00 p.m. and we have arts & crafts the same day in Chiminising. Representative Merrill closed her comments with Shena Matrious will be doing February Wellness Yoga on Sundays a collaboration with Health & Human Services Sundays, February 11, 18, and 25^t at 9:00 a.m. in Minisinaakwaang and 11:00 a.m. in Chiminising, everyone welcome.

District III Representative Harry Davis opened with community meeting Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at Grand Casino Hinckley. Representative Davis shared Katie Draper, ALU Director would like to have community cribbage tournament hosted at Meshakwad community center February 20, 2024, at 4:30 p.m., with prizes sponsored by District III office. Representative Davis closed his comments with he will be out of office Thursday (personal) and possibly Monday if work is complete on Friday.

Band Assembly Meeting

February 9, 2024

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

Band Assembly conducted a continued compromise hearing regarding Vetoed Act 03-24 Enacting a Cannabis Code as a new chapter within Title 15 – Independent Agencies. The hearing commenced at 8:43 a.m. with a brief overview of letter sent to Chief Executive, Melanie Benjamin regarding the compromise negotiations followed by comments and statements from Chief Executive, Melanie Benjamin and the sponsor, District II Representative, Wendy Merrill. Statements from District I Representative Virgil Wind and District III Representative Harry Davis. The Assembly and the Chief Executive entered into a verbal agreement to adopt the cannabis legislation. In the Agreement, the Chief Executive agreed to sign the legislation so

long as it prohibits retail cannabis sales and cannabis consumption lounges on casino gaming floors, and does not encroach on Department of Natural Resources authority. The parties to the agreement also pledged to work in good faith to finalize the legislation soon. A letter will be drafted to memorialize the terms of the Compromise Agreement. The compromise hearing was closed at 9:09 a.m.

In the “Messages from the Representatives” portion of the agenda, District I Representative Virgil Wind opened and closed with his excitement to get a commitment from the Executive Branch to move forward with the compromised bill that can help us economically within the Band, he appreciated the time of Madam Chief and stated we have a couple days to get agreement. Miigwech.

District II Representative Wendy Merrill opened and closed her comments with as stated before this has been has been a long process and has been on the forefront of legislation, we put funds and time into this effort and glad we came to this process, she’s excited and appreciated the support and feedback from Band members. Collaborated with MLCV and the other Representatives in regards to getting feedback from the community, listening to the feedback of Band members is important and why we’re here today; the people have spoken. Miigwech.

District III Representative Harry Davis opened and closed his comments with his feelings of accomplishment will be here, glad we got to this point and all the hard work we did is going to be our accomplishment for this weekend.

In the “Message from the Secretary-Treasurer” portion of the agenda, Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd opened and closed with to thank the membership who are on the live stream and the archive, what you have seen is the compromise, the push and pull, the tug between the two branches and it’s built that way. Folks can get through this scarred or unscarred and come out with something workable. He thanked Jared Miller, Legislative Counsel, as the negotiator getting folks working through this, you can see the Assembly here and Madam Chief stayed within the lines of Band law and compromise and “This is legislation” this is where it all happens.

The next Band Assembly meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.



Valerie Harrington-Wind
Chief Communications Officer