



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians
Legislative Branch of Tribal Government

Weekly Review: May 8-12, 2023

Band Assembly Meeting

May 8, 2023

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

Band Assembly conducted a compromise hearing regarding Vetoed Act 30-23. The hearing commenced at 11:48 a.m. with an opening statement from Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin. Following the opening statement there was statements and comments from the District Representatives. There was further discussion on the veto process. The meeting was closed at 12:50 p.m. with continued compromise hearing scheduled for tomorrow at 11:00 a.m.

Band Assembly Meeting

May 9, 2023

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

Band Assembly conducted a compromise hearing regarding Vetoed Act 30-23. The hearing commenced at 11:04 a.m. with an opening statement from Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin. Following the opening statement there was statements and comments from the District Representatives. There was comments from the Legal Policy Counsel, Syngen Kanassatega. Negotiations were made for an agreed upon compromise bill. The compromise hearing was closed at 1:46 p.m.

The District Representatives amended the agenda to add new business item a) Band Assembly Bill 20-03-37-23.

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-37-23 (A bill authorizing a supplemental appropriation for the purpose of authorizing expenditures in budget transfer/revisions for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2023).

In the “Messages from the Representatives” portion of the agenda, District I Representative Virgil Wind opened with reference to speaker Boyd’s comment “this is legislation”. Representative Wind shared we’re going to have disagreements and unfortunately prior to Speaker Boyd looking into the finances there was twenty years of expenditures and he stated the Chief Executive could have brought up that we are not spending our budget adequately, efficiently, or by order of the law. Today because of an appropriation bill they had to have a long drawn out fight after twenty years of her in office to establish new criteria for spending. He stated that with the finances of the Band and the prior officials we have a nest egg to fight over at times, he thanked prior officials for that. He stated the NIGA/IGRA requirements haven’t changed, today was about how they haven’t been applied for twenty years. Moving forward there will be changes within each representative’s office and he believes it was only done to meet a political cover. The ability to meet the needs of the community is articulated in statute and

they have to meet those needs, unfortunately those needs are not met equally to all band members through programs and services and at times have individual circumstances band members have that representatives understand and unfortunately we have people making decisions that don't understand that life and we will have band members that suffer. Representative Wind stated he asked many times today for the date and time of threshold of law that's going to be applied cultural or not how are we going to make that determination. Sadly, band members it seems at some point it isn't about them anymore it's about some political gain, some other thing, it's not about meeting the need and it's about some politics we want to play with people's lives and he's not for that. Representative Wind closed his comments with equally apply the services make sure they're equally provided to all band members and all departments, can't be convenient for one and not another that's the action we took today mi-iw.

District II Representative Wendy Merrill opened with she wanted people to know that she is speaking on behalf of band members in District II and IIA and she will fight for equality and continue to push for programs and services they do. She is with the people and she does listen to the people. Representative Merrill closed her comments with making sure to apply the law equally and not making one determination and not the other, it's not fair. Fairness for all and she is speaking on behalf of band members. She mentioned to staff here that it would be nice if we were just legislators, if we just created band law but they wear multiple hats, again we're liaisons we're legislators, we're that person that people come to before anybody else and we listen to their concerns and take that into consideration. That's a big part of our job is listening to the people and that is why you run for office you don't use it for any other reasons. You're here to speak on behalf of everyone else.

District III Representative Harry Davis opened with he agrees with Virgil and Wendy, it's our job and we do our best to complete our job.

In the "Message from the Secretary-Treasurer" portion of the agenda Secretary-Treasurer Boyd opened with speaking to viewers online this is the compromise hearing and bills have come and gone and this is the process that we're under. Take your hats off for all the elected officials involved and operating within those guidelines and he thinks there are times those things work and this is one of those times and we're going to try to continue to follow these procedures for the legislative processes that we're trying to establish here.

Weekly Sync Meeting

May 10, 2023

Legislative staff facilitated a Weekly Sync Meeting with elected officials to review the upcoming Band Assembly agenda items. The review included the workshop schedule; workshop projects; and District Representative initiatives.

Band Assembly Meeting

May 10, 2023

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

The District Representatives received a Healing to Wellness Court Evaluation Update from Joseph Flies-Away, Evaluator and Carolyn Cooper, Evaluator.

Band Assembly conducted a confirmation hearing for Lyle Mitch Corbine, nominee for the Commissioner of Community Development.

Band Assembly conducted a confirmation hearing for Gordon Matrious, nominee for the Corporate Board of Directors – D3 position.

The District Representatives received an Appropriation Request/Update from the MLB Delegates (Michele Palomaki, Birdie Roberts).

Band Assembly conducted a compromise hearing regarding Vetoed Act 27-23. The hearing commenced at 3:05 p.m. with an opening statement from Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin. Following the opening statement there was statements and comments from the District Representatives. There were statements by TERO Director, Lori Trail, TERO Chair, Cheryl Miller, TERO Co-Chair, Scott Tossey, and Associate General Counsel for Corporate Ventures, Chad Ambroday. Closing statement from sponsor Representative Wind. The meeting was closed at 4:18 p.m.

Band Assembly conducted a compromise hearing regarding Vetoed Act 31-23. The hearing commenced at 4:18 p.m. with an opening statement from Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin. Following the opening statement there was statements and comments from the District Representatives. There was a comment from the Commissioner of Finance, Mel Towle. The meeting was closed at 4:53 p.m.

The District Representatives tabled Band Assembly Bill 20-03-32-23 (A Bill amending Title 15, Chapter 1 of the Mille Lacs Band Statutes (“MLBS”), to make comprehensive reforms to the Gaming Regulatory Act).

The District Representatives tabled, then later took from the table and approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-33-23 (A Bill Authorizing a Supplemental Appropriation for the purpose of authorizing expenditures and budget transfer(s)/revision(s) for the Executive Branch for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2023).

The District Representatives amended and approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-34-23 (A Bill Repealing and Replacing Act 10-23 to amend the funding source for the FY2023 Community Development section. Act 10-23 authorizing a Supplemental Appropriation for the purpose of authorizing expenditures for the Executive Branch for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 23).

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-35-23 (A Bill of Supplemental Appropriation for the June and July 2023 Tribal Per Capita Distribution for Adults and Minor Trust for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2023).

The District Representatives amended and approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-36-23 (A Bill of Supplemental Appropriation for the June and July 2023 Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act (“TGWEA”) Assistance Payment Program for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2023).

The District Representatives approved Resolution 20-03-22-23: A Resolution Ratifying the Memorandum of Agreement Authorizing the Department of Natural Resources to Join the Mississippi – Grand Rapids Watershed Collaboration for the Development and Implementation of the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

The District Representatives approved a contract with Huot Construction and Services to provide materials and labor for a private elder renovation project in District I.

The District Representatives approved a contract with Merydyan Technologies, LLC. to add PrymeAudit (secured cloud-based paperless Internal Audit System) to existing licensing software.

The District Representatives tabled nomination from Chief Executive Benjamin for Lyle Mitch Corbine to serve as the Commissioner of Community Development for the term ending June 30, 2023.

The District Representatives tabled nomination from Chief Executive Benjamin for Gordon Matrious to serve on the Corporate Board, District 3 Position. Current term ends March 31, 2024.

The District Representatives approved Pursuant to 15 MLBS § 302 (b) (5), Band Assembly hereby nominates Wanetta Thompson and Elvis Sutton to serve as the District 3 member, Gaming Regulatory Authority Board.

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-38-23 (A bill authorizing a supplemental appropriation for the purpose of authorizing expenditures for the Executive Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2023).

In the “Messages from the Representatives” portion of the agenda, District I Representative Virgil Wind opened and closed with a huge shout out and congratulations to our graduates in the Legislative Branch Darcie Big Bear and Taria Aubid.

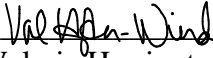
District II Representative Wendy Merrill opened with community meeting changed for Minisinaakwang to Tuesday, May 16, 2023 and Chiminising is still on May 17, 2023 that is due to Minisinaakwang Leadership Academy graduation on May 18, 2023. The rez cleanup is Chiminising is May 30, 2023 and Minisinaakwang is May 31, 2023 information flyers shared and lunch will be provided to Chiminising and Minisinaakwang by her office. Representative Merrill shared the Valley Fair sign up ends on May 30, 2023 call or text Cheryl Miller or Taria Aubid. Representative Merrill closed her comments with dumpster for community cleanup will be done Friday, May 12, 2023 4:00 p.m. Also added congratulations to our graduates in the Legislative Branch Darcie Big Bear and Taria Aubid.

Workshop

May 12, 2023

Legal staff facilitated a workshop for the elected officials, legislative staff, Human Resources Director, and Deputy Solicitor General regarding proposed revisions to HR personnel policies and procedures.

The next Band Assembly meeting is currently scheduled for Thursday, May 18, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.



Valerie Harrington-Wind
Chief Communications Officer