



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians  
*Legislative Branch of Tribal Government*

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**Weekly Review: May 18-22, 2026**

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**Adopt a Shoreline and Rez Roads Clean-Up District III** **May 19, 2026**

Legislative staff participated in the clean-up.

**Band Assembly Meeting** **May 19, 2026**

The Speaker of the Assembly reconvened a meeting of the Band Assembly.

Band Assembly conducted a continued compromise hearing regarding Vetoed Act 20-26 Elder Home Loan Forgiveness Act. The hearing resumed at 9:08 a.m. with an overview from the Speaker of Assembly. There was a statement from Chief Executive Virgil Wind on the vetoed items for proposed compromise. Discussion on compromised items continued with comments and questions from the District Representatives and the Chief Executive. The elected officials reached consensus on the outstanding issues related to Elder home loan forgiveness and drafted a version of the bill for passage, Band Assembly Bill 22-01-25-26. The compromise hearing was recessed at 9:55 a.m.

**Weekly Sync Meeting** **May 19, 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.

**Adopt a Shoreline and Rez Roads Clean-Up District II** **May 20, 2026**

Legislative staff participated in the clean-up.

**Band Assembly Meeting** **May 20, 2026**

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

Band Assembly conducted a confirmation hearing for Adrienne Benjamin, MLCV Board Member Nominee.

Band Assembly conducted a confirmation hearing for Paul Sam, MLCV Board Member Nominee.

Band Assembly conducted a confirmation hearing for Daniel Boyd, MLCV Board Member Nominee.

Band Assembly received a statement from Irene Benjamin, Mille Lacs Band Elder regarding Senior Living-Elder Services held in executive session.

The District Representatives amended and approved Band Assembly Bill 22-01-23-26 (A Bill authorizing a supplemental appropriation for the purpose of authorizing expenditures for Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures-Wewinabi Inc. and Big Sandy Lodge for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2025 and September 30, 2026). Sponsor: District II Representative

The District Representatives amended and approved Band Assembly Bill 22-01-24-26 (A Bill Authorizing a Supplemental Appropriation for the purpose of authorizing expenditures and payroll/budget revision(s)/transfer(s) for the Executive and Legislative Branches for the Fiscal Years ending September 30, 2025 and September 30, 2026). Sponsor: District I Representative

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 22-01-25-26 (A Bill for an act amending Chapter 4 of Title 12 to provide debt relief to Band member elders 55 years of age or older who owe money on homes financed through the Band's Home Loan Program and meet certain requirements). Sponsor: District II Representative

The District Representatives approved Resolution 22-01-22-26 (A Resolution Approving the Continuance of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures' Gaming and Non-Gaming Fiscal Operations). Sponsor: District II Representative

The District Representatives approved Resolution 22-01-23-26 (A Resolution approving the Continuance of the Fiscal Operations of the Mille Lacs Band Government, Circle of Health, Gaming Regulatory Authority, Department of Cannabis, Department of Athletic Regulation, Supplemental Income Program for Elders, Tribal Employment Rights Office, Housing Initiative, and Band Member Legal Services). Sponsor: District III Representative

The District Representatives approved Resolution 22-01-24-26 (A Resolution Adopting the Terms of a Deposit Placement Agreement with Woodlands National Bank). Sponsor: District I Representative

The District Representatives approved a Minor Trust Master Custody Agreement with the Northern Trust Company.

The District Representatives approved a financial subscription agreement with Galliard Broad Market Core Fund, LLC, for investment of the Minor Trust / Nelson Act Minors Trust.

The District Representatives approved Hardship: D1-01-05-26.

The District Representatives approved/denied Hardship: D3-01-04-26.

### **Messages from the Chief Executive:**

Chief Executive Virgil Wind opened by thanking the Assembly, Speaker and recognizing the three nominees for the corporate board positions: Adrienne Benjamin (District II), Paul Sam (District I), and Dan Boyd (at-large). He praised each nominee for bringing unique skills and perspectives that will strengthen the board and thanked them for stepping forward to serve.

He then discussed the amendment to Title 12, Chapter 4, specifically the Elder Home Loan Forgiveness bill. Chief Executive Wind thanked the Band Assembly, Legislative Counsel, and staff for working together to reach a compromise. He emphasized that a veto should not always be viewed

negatively, explaining that the purpose was to ensure proper review, clarity, and protections within the bill. Key concerns addressed included compliance with General Welfare Exclusion regulations, protecting elders from potential tax liability through consultation with outside tax counsel, and strengthening Social Security protections. He also appreciated the Assembly's work on adding clearer appellate procedures through the housing board. He noted that once signed into law, funding will need to be appropriated quickly because approximately 52 elders would immediately qualify for the program.

Next, Chief Executive Wind announced the continuation of the third round of Chief Community Meetings. Meetings are scheduled quarterly in each district, rotating between communities such as McGregor and Chiminising in District II, and Aazhoomog and Hinckley in District III, with regular meetings also planned for District I and urban areas. In addition, quarterly elder meetings will now follow the community meetings.

Finally, he gave a heartfelt shout-out to graduates and their families. He highlighted the large number of graduates across the band, estimating around 100 high school graduates this year alone. He recognized that graduation is a collective achievement supported by families, communities, and educators, and encouraged graduates to thank everyone who helped them along the way. He closed with congratulations and gratitude to all involved, ending with *miigwech mi'iw*.

### **Messages from the Representatives:**

**District I Representative** Carolyn Beaulieu began by expressing happiness and pride that the Elder Loan Forgiveness bill passed through the Assembly, calling it a major accomplishment and saying she hopes to see it signed into law soon.

She then shared upcoming community events for District I:

- On May 21, 2026 District I will host a rez road cleanup in partnership with the DNR. Volunteers are asked to arrive at the Baadwewidang Community Center at 8:30 a.m. for assignments. Refreshments, lunch, and door prizes will be provided.
- On Memorial Day, District I will again partner with the Mille Lacs Indian Museum for the annual Memorial Day pow wow beginning at noon. Her office will provide a dinner meal.
- The District I community meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. She noted that MCT delegates may provide updates, and she will also discuss recent legislation worked on by the Assembly.
- On Sunday, May 31, 2026 District I will host an Elders Circle spa day featuring haircuts, massages, manicures, games, meals, and social activities designed to honor and support elders.
- Looking ahead to June 3, 2026 she announced the end-of-school-year pow wow celebration at the Iskigamizigan Powwow Grounds, with Grand Entries at 12:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. She congratulated students and graduates, emphasizing pride in the youth and appreciation for everyone who supports them through school and graduation.

She closed by encouraging community members to attend and participate in the upcoming events.

**District II Representative** Wendy Merrill expressed gratitude to everyone who helped pass the Elder Loan Forgiveness bill, calling it a major achievement that will change lives and make things easier for our elders. She emphasized that supporting elders is a priority and praised everyone for coming together and working collaboratively to make the legislation possible.

She also shared updates on community events, noting that an end-of-year school celebration was held in East Lake last night. Another celebration for students will take place tonight Wednesday, May 19, 2026 in Chiminising starting at 5:30 p.m.

In addition, she announced the upcoming community cleanup event in Chiminising, which will later join with District I for lunch and activities. She mentioned that the cleanup falls on her birthday, but she is excited to continue participating in the annual tradition.

She closed by thanking everyone and saying miigwech.

**District III Representative** Harry Davis shared community announcements for District III.

He announced that the Pine County graduates award ceremony will take place this evening at 6 p.m. at the Grand Casino Hinckley, recognizing local graduates and their accomplishments.

He also reminded community members that the District III community meeting is scheduled for tomorrow Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 5:30 p.m., also at Grand Casino Hinckley.

Lastly, he announced that the local boxing team has a scheduled boxing match in Bemidji on June 6, 2026 with matches typically beginning around 4:00 p.m.

He concluded by saying that was all he had to report.

**Messages from the Secretary-Treasurer:**

Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd reflected on the day's Assembly session as an example of the Assembly functioning effectively in all of its roles. He highlighted the collaborative and productive nature of the day, including compromise hearings, discussion of creative legislation, executive session procedures for sensitive band member testimony, and the handling of budget bills.

He emphasized that the day demonstrated strong governance and cooperation as terms are coming to a close, calling it a "good functional day" for the Assembly. He particularly praised the work surrounding legislation benefiting both elders and minors. He noted that elders were supported through the Elder Loan Forgiveness legislation, while minors benefited from financial and investment-related work designed to simplify future financial responsibilities and reduce tax burdens by utilizing Internal Revenue Service provisions.

He also recognized the efforts of Mel Towle, the investment board, custodians, and investment advisors for coordinating the financial processes connected to those efforts. In addition, he praised legislative staff, especially newer staff member Erin Anderson, for drafting legislation that complied with General Welfare Exclusion requirements. He noted that outside review from Holland & Knight produced only minor edits, which he said reflected the high quality of the staff's work.

He concluded by acknowledging it had been a long but productive day and described the legislation and accomplishments discussed as meaningful progress for the Band and future generations.

**District II Representative Birthday**

**May 21, 2026**

   **Happy Birthday Representative Merrill**   

**Adopt a Shoreline and Rez Roads Clean-Up District I & IIA**

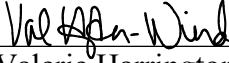
**May 21, 2026**

Legislative staff participated in the clean-up.

**Band Holiday Memorial Holiday**

**May 22, 2026**

*The next Special Band Assembly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.*

  
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Valerie Harrington-Wind  
Chief Communications Officer