



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians
Legislative Branch of Tribal Government

Weekly Review: March 13-17, 2023

Band Assembly Meeting

March 15, 2023

The Speaker of the Assembly convened a meeting of the Band Assembly. District II Representative Merrill is excused absent. The District Representatives approved the agenda.

The District Representatives amended and then approved the minutes from the Band Assembly meeting dated March 8, 2023.

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-12-23 (A Bill authorizing the expenditure of Economic Development funds for the FY2023 Capital – Quarter 2 Adaptive Planning Project for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2023).

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-13-23 (A Bill amending Section 102 of Title 22 of the Mille Lacs Band Statutes).

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-14-23 (A Bill amending Section 16 and 18 of Title 4 of the Mille Lacs Band Statutes (“MLBS”) to clean up language and to allow independent agencies to hire their own independent attorneys).

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-15-23 (A Bill amending Section 910 of Chapter 3 of Title 15 to expand the service area of Band Member Legal Services for child custody proceedings and child protection matters. It will also enact a new section to allow Band Member Legal Services to reserve the right to assign a different attorney if an attorney declines or terminates representation).

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-16-23 (A Bill of Supplemental Appropriation for the April and May 2023 Tribal Per Capita Distribution for Adults and Minor Trust for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2023).

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-17-23 (A Bill of Supplemental Appropriation for the April and May 2023 Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act (“TGWEA”) Assistance Payment Program for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2023).

The District Representatives approved Band Assembly Bill 20-03-18-23 (A Bill Authorizing budget revisions for the Executive and Legislative Branches for the Fiscal Years ending September 30, 2022, and September 30, 2023).

In the “Messages from the Chief Executive” portion of the agenda, Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin opened with she is currently in office and had some meetings this morning with individuals, but she has been listening to Band Assembly and didn’t get a chance to make it down in person. Chief Executive Benjamin stated she wanted to talk a little about some events that have occurred the last couple days with our new campaign “Water Over Nickel” and there

was a community meeting held in District II on Saturday that she didn't stay for very long and yesterday we had a press session with various press throughout the State of Minnesota that came and was a part of that campaign called "Water Over Nickel" and she said thank you to Kelly Applegate and his team he has brought in consultants to help us move forward with educating our band members and citizens of the State of Minnesota about our position on the nickel mine that is proposed in the Tamarac area in District II area and as of today we do not have a mining plan proposal from the Talon individuals that want to mine the nickel and before we can decide our next steps we need to see that. Chief Executive Benjamin shared the website if interested in this the website is <https://www.waterovernickel.com> please go on the website and if you have questions Kelly Applegate can provide updates and information on that. Chief Executive Benjamin stated also she is meeting with the Governor by zoom and they are going to talk about Legislative priorities in the next day or so, those are some of the meetings coming up and there have been a lot of meetings in the past. Chief Executive Benjamin stated a reminder there is a Commissioner of Administration now that is trying to catch up and improve practices of the Administration of the Executive Branch, and it was kind of interesting with a conversation that he basically didn't say it but he would like me to not micromanage as an Elected Official you have other duties and he has duties as the Chief of Staff so we have come to some what of agreement with that because if any band members come into her office she cannot say Sam Moose is the Commissioner of Administration, she will say that but she wants to make sure that band members have the opportunity to talk to her or other Elected Officials about their issues, but to refer their issues to Sam Moose, that was an interesting conversation and he said he wants it on tape so he can refer back to that when she gets too involved in Administration's business, so pretty cool that he's willing to say stay in your lane and he will take care of the rest. Chief Executive Benjamin closed her comments with she will provide updates in her video on other issues as well.

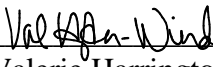
In the "Messages from the Representatives" portion of the agenda, District I Representative Virgil Wind opened with to play off of Madam Chief's statement yesterday he and Representative Merrill had the opportunity to attend the public push out of the "Water Over Nickel" campaign for the Mille Lacs Band very well put together thank you Madam Chief and Kelly Applegate for your hard work and pulling together the resources to help us combat this very important issue. Representative Wind shared as Madam Chief stated the "Water Over Nickel" campaign is a very important fight for the Mille Lacs Band and very important to our family up in the McGregor area Sandy Lake area, he made a statement sometimes in legislative/executive there's a lot of push and pull, there's you push me we pull whatever, but in fights like this it's very important that we come together, we leave yesterday where it was and come together as a family and help combat all of the stuff we are dealing with and when trying to contest with a big conglomerate that Talon is and Rio Tinto is we are going to need come together as a family as a Mille Lacs Band family and other little squabbles we have need to go by the wayside when battling this huge monstrosities it's going to become, there was a meeting in District II that didn't go so well, to those up there remember we are in this fight together we can argue about yesterday some other time but this fight is important for us to come together on so hopefully as we share that information and share information about how the campaign is going to go that we really come together as the Mille Lacs Band family that we are. Representative Wind shared there is a number of bills on today's agenda adjusting certain parts of statutes, these were all due to a huge collaboration between the Band Assembly, Executive Branch, and Gaming Regulatory Authority (GRA), a lot of the information came from GRA on the one that's on there, we also had concerns brought forth from constituents of the Mille Lacs Band with concerns of some short falls within statute, some short falls within legal representation that have happened

and due to that collaboration these bills are coming forward, so statutes need to change as the needs change and as the people change we need to adjust those statutes and that's what a lot of today was adjusting and cleaning up some stuff from yesterday, a huge shout out to Legislative Branch thank you all for the hard work and all the time that we put in together creating these bills hopefully they do become law. Representative Wind shared the District I March community meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 29, 2023 at the new District I community center starts at 5:30-7:30 p.m. sometimes shorter or longer, dinner will be served, there will be drawings for door prizes, if you're not feeling well please stay home, get well, and hope to see you next time. Representative Wind shared on the agenda is District I Representative welcome District I office update and legislative updates, we will have DNR Commissioner Kelly Applegate there he will be there to update us the DI community on the proposed Tamarac mine he will also be providing updates on the 2023 fisheries here in Mille Lacs so invite everybody to come out, also the District I office and him are in the process of putting together and pulling together the details for our 3rd annual Ziigwan round dance this will take place on April 30th we're thinking midafternoon 2-7 p.m. there will be a meal served awesome invited singers vendors are welcome free and open to the public number of specials and really coming together and what he has come to know is that in the Anishinaabe culture the new year becomes with new and budding life and the Ziigwan roundy is a way to forget about what happened last year and look forward and we're really excited to put on this awesome and wonderful event for anybody that chooses to attend. Representative Wind closed his comments with of course as always if you have any questions or concerns please reach out to him directly at (320)630-1428.

District III Representative Harry Davis opened with announcing our community meeting is going to be tomorrow 5:30 p.m. at the Grand Casino Hinckley ballroom and we have Health & Human Services Nicole Anderson and Family Services we're going to talk about the need for Foster Care parents in our District. Representative Davis closed his comments with there will be no boxing training on Thursday and there will be training tonight.

In the "Messages from the Secretary-Treasurer" portion of the agenda, Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd opened with for the record he would like to mention that our Legal Counsel, Adam Candler has moved on and in the interim Joseph Jensen and Hanna Valento are picking up the slack here (asked to put camera on them while we do that) and just to let everyone know we're re-shuffling here and we're making due, we will get through it and we will get more staff on board here to help continue the full staff for the law making process and speaking of those processes that a lot of these processes in Band Assembly are very strict and structured and the purpose of that he'd like to remind people not to get jaded on this but a lot of money moves through here and we got to make sure we account and make record of how that money is spent and he thinks that kind of supports the purpose of the very regimented way that we stop and ask for comments and give the representatives some time to speak and ask are you sure? Are you sure? Secretary-Treasurer Boyd stated and we always have Mel Towle even though bills are the same every two or three months; got to have him make a summary we'd like to have each one of these meetings stand on their own so you don't have to refer to another one so twenty years from now when someone asks what happened they'll just pick up this video recording and will have as clear of a record as we can of the purpose of the money being authorized by the representatives. Secretary-Treasurer Boyd closed his comments with that's the duty of the speaker of assembly and the staff is to provide that structure for that.

The next Band Assembly meeting is currently scheduled for Tuesday, March 21, 2023, at 10:00 AM.



Valerie Harrington-Wind
Chief Communications Officer