



MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE

Executive Branch of Tribal Government

February 25, 2022

Dear District II Band Members,

Approximately two years ago on January 30, 2020, the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) adopted Resolution 64-20 regarding the historic Sandy Lake Band of Chippewa. This resolution stated that the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe:

“is in full support of the efforts of the non-removable Sandy Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa and hereby presents this resolution of support as the Sandy Lake Band of Mississippi Chippewa continue their efforts to have their federal status restored.”

This resolution was the result of a lobbying effort led primarily by individuals enrolled with the Red Lake Band of Chippewa, other individuals who are not Mille Lacs Band Members and Michaa Aubid. Resolution 64-20 passed the TEC in 2020 and is the official MCT position.

At the last Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) meeting of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe on January 28, 2022, Mille Lacs Band Member Michaa Aubid requested that the TEC adopt a proposed resolution regarding restoration of the Sandy Lake and Rice Lake reservation boundaries. The resolution states the following:

1. That the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Tribal Executive committee *“acknowledges and supports the existence of the reservation boundaries at Sandy Lake and Rice Lake as reserved in the 1855 Treaty”*;
2. That *“the MCT TEC supports the RESTORATION of the 1855 Sandy Lake and Rice Lake Reservation Boundaries to protect, preserve and defend into perpetuity”*.

During this 45 minute discussion, which is available for Band Members to view on-line at https://youtu.be/XZoZVc_S7IE, I requested that this resolution be “tabled”, or delayed, until the next meeting of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe scheduled for April 29, 2022 for two reasons.

First, this resolution was added to the agenda of the TEC meeting just 24 hours before the TEC met, so there was no opportunity for District II Band Members to review the resolution and provide feedback to your elected officials. There are 146 enrolled adult Mille Lacs Band Members who are voting-age living in the Rice Lake/Sandy Lake region but the TEC only hears regularly from approximately three enrolled Mille Lacs Band Members in attendance who support this resolution.

Second, the Band has yet to receive historical data which I have requested be shared with the Band government on numerous occasions. Specifically, the Band provided a \$100,000 grant for a District

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II Historical Research Project in 2015. Michaa Aubid was the History Project Coordinator and while we have made past requests that the final report and historical research be shared with the Band, we have yet to receive that information.

At the January 28, 2022 TEC meeting, I agreed to provide a series of questions to Michaa Aubid to answer in advance of the next TEC meeting and I also asked him to provide the historical report that was the work product of the \$100,000 grant.

The TEC agreed to table the resolution until the next regular quarterly meeting scheduled for April 29, 2022 at Bois Forte's Fortune Bay Resort, so as to provide time for Michaa Aubid and others involved with this effort to provide the information the Band is requesting.

These issues will impact District II Mille Lacs Band Members. This letter includes resources to help District II Band Members better understand this issue so you can inform your elected officials of your views on this matter. These resources include:

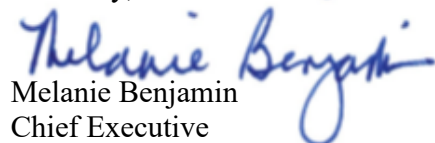
- 1. TEC Resolution 64-20** that was adopted two years ago supporting efforts to restore federal recognition status to the Sandy Lake Band as an autonomous tribal government.
- 2. A proposed resolution** seeking restoration of the Sandy Lake and Rice Lake reservation boundaries that was distributed at the January 28, 2022 meeting by Michaa Aubid. This resolution is scheduled to be voted on at the next regular TEC meeting on April 29th
- 3. This link to view the 45 minute TEC discussion** on this topic that occurred on January 28, 2022 at the last quarterly meeting. Please visit https://youtu.be/XZoZVc_S7IE to view this 45 minute TEC discussion.
- 4. An important survey** for the you to complete and return, as a voting-aged enrolled Mille Lacs Band Member residing in the Sandy Lake/Rice Lake region of District II.

Your feedback as a District II citizen is very important to ensure your voices are represented at the next TEC meeting. Please complete and return the survey as soon as possible. For those who wish to complete the survey electronically, instructions are included on the survey for doing so. If you wish to see the questions sent to Michaa Aubid, please call my office at (320) 532-7486 and ask for them to be sent to you.

Whether you support, oppose or have concerns about the resolution and its impact, I would like an opportunity to hear your opinion. If you would like to discuss this issue, please do not hesitate to call me at (320) 532-7486 or email me at melanie.benjamin@millelacsband.com.

I look forward to receiving your feedback as a District II Mille Lacs Band Member.

Sincerely,


Melanie Benjamin
Chief Executive