

Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group
Meeting Minutes – March 21, 2016
Hazelton Town Hall

Attendance: Perry Bunting, MLBO DNR; Al Close, Hazelton Township; Barbara Eller, Mille Lacs SWCD Supervisor; Lynn Gallice, Mille Lacs SWCD; Bob Janzen, Aitkin County SWCD Supervisor; Ted Kostecka, Kathio Township; Janet Smude, Aitkin County SWCD; Chad Weiss, MLBO DNR; Laurie Westerlund, Aitkin County Commissioner; Bob Williams, Round Lake.

1. The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by Vice Chairperson Bob Janzen.

2. Administrative Details: An attendance sheet was circulated and introductions made. The agenda was approved as presented. Pertinent correspondence included an email from Steven Pedersen sharing that he was undergoing chemotherapy for his cancer. He was uncertain when he would be able to return to meetings of the Group.

3. Minutes from the February meeting of the Group were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C Barb Eller / Laurie Westerlund.

4. Financial Report: A report for the month of February was shared. There were no expenses. The report was approved as presented. M/S/C Laurie Westerlund / Bob Williams.

5. Old Business:

5.1. Community Incentive Program and 5.2. 2016 Media Campaign: Lynn Gallice and Janet Smude recently met with Red House Media to discuss this program. Aaron Hautala provided two proposals - a Creative Services Proposal and a Printing Services Proposal. These were shared with the Group and discussed. The total cost is well above the available funding in the Clean Water Partnership Grant. Lynn Gallice has spoken with the Mille Lacs County AIS staff, and they may be able to make up the difference. It was noted that a new program logo needs to tie the program back to the MLLWVG. There would be a need to keep this program in front of the public – the Topic of the Month article(s) would be a way to accomplish this. A motion was made to proceed with the campaign, less items 7a and 7b, provided the additional funding is received. We will also wait with the Facebook portion of the project until further information is received. M/S/C Bob Williams / Barb Eller.

Barb Eller shared that she is working on a SWCD Resolution for a Tax Incentive Program for the Shoreland Steward Campaign, similar to the Sustainable Forests Incentive Act for forestry practices. A motion was made that the MLLWVG support Barb Eller in this effort. M/S/C Bob Williams / Al Close.

5.3. Classroom Workshop Planning Update: The Spring workshop is on hold for a little bit, until the Media Campaign is developed and the incentive program can be launched.

The Lake Health Conference has been set for August 8th and August 9th at McQuoid's Inn in Isle. The Lakeview Room has been reserved, as has an evening launch trip. Lynn Gallice, Dillon Hayes, and Janet Smude are working to schedule the presenters. The focus will be a combination of AIS and stormwater management. A motion was made to order 150 notebooks for the conference, at a cost of approximately \$ 575 M/S/C Bob Williams / Ted Kostecka.

5.4. Looking Ahead – Future Coordinator Services: Janet Smude shared that she has not had much time to work on this issue. Mille Lacs SWCD and Aitkin County SWCD were interested in exploring options for a coordinator position. Crow Wing County was OK with the idea, but wondered if there would be enough work for a full time staff person. There may be an opportunity to combine this with services

needed for the northern part of the Rum River Watershed. Lynn Gallice and Janet Smude were asked to look for an old position description for the Group to review / update. We should discuss what job duties would be needed by a staff person.

5.5. AIS Grant Requests: Janet Smude and Bob Williams have drafted an AIS Grant Application for Aitkin County. The request includes funding for additional placemats and rack cards, replacement / repair of signs, an aquatic vegetation survey of Big Pine Lake, and information folders that will be distributed by some resorts and at community events. They have also worked on a request to Crow Wing County. Financial support is requested for a vegetation survey of Borden Lake. This would be combined with the vegetation information gathered on Big Pine and Round Lakes and presented at a public meeting. Perry Bunting questioned if this vegetation information was already being gathered by the MN DNR. If so, we would not need to duplicate this. A motion approving the submission of these two funding requests was made M/S/C Barb Eller / Al Close.

6. New Business:

6.1. 2016 Rain Barrel Incentive Program: This program was reviewed. Incentives will stay the same as last year – but promotion will be better. Two barrels will be purchased for display at community events like the Lake Health Conference. These could eventually be sold.

7. Subcommittee Reports:

7.1. Media Committee: No additional information was shared.

7.2. Fundraising / Grant Writing: No additional information was shared.

7.3. Membership: It was noted that the public meeting regarding the aquatic vegetation survey could be a tool to increase membership. Chad Weiss suggested an evening meeting, to attract more participants. The lack of participation from Crow Wing County is disappointing.

7.4. Citizen Comments / Member Comments / Fisheries Input Group: Laurie Westerlund shared an update on the Fisheries Input Group. A press release is coming soon regarding summer fishing regulations on Mille Lacs Lake. Walleye fishing will be catch and release only. No live bait will be allowed. There will be special launch permits, allowing live bait. The goal is to protect the 2013 tear age class. The Mille Lacs and Fond du Lac Bands will not be netting this year. Hooking mortality is a concern. The DNR is working to mend the eco-system of Mille Lacs Lake.

Janet Smude recently received a call regarding low lake levels on Borden Lake. The caller wondered if this could be a result of the new outlet structure on Mille Lacs Lake. She shared information regarding this project. The Group suggested another tour at Kathio State Park next fall.

8. Agenda Additions: Bob Janzen reported that the Aitkin County AIS Committee is preparing for the Governor's Fishing Opener on Big Sandy Lake. They are looking to hire up to 30 boat inspectors this year. Many of the inspectors from last year are returning.

There is an ATV Trail meeting next Wednesday at 6:30 pm at the Mille Lacs Trails Snowmobile Clubhouse.

9. The next meeting of the Group was scheduled for Monday April 18th at 10 am at the Kathio Town Hall. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon. M/S Barb Eller / Bob Williams.