



Minutes of Meeting Monday, November 20, 2023

Present: Margaret Vos, Chair, East Mille Lacs; Jake Janski, ViceChair, Mille Lacs SWCD Board; Barb Eller, Secretary, Rum River Watershed; John Pearson, South Mille Lacs, Communications; Pat Murphy, Long Lake, Pres. ACLARA; Perry Bunting, Dir, MLBO Environmental Programs; Dianne Jacobson, Supervisor, Crow Wing SWCD; Bonnie Goshey, MPCA; Todd Haas, Camp Lake Association; Cynthia Johnson, Platte Lake

Welcome and Introductions

1. **Agenda:** No corrections. Chair Approved.
2. **September 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes:** No corrections, Chair Approved.
3. **Financial Report:** See Attachment 1. Expenses for AIS Grant does not reflect John's expenses. Invoices due end of November. M. John 2nd Pat. Approved financial report.
4. **Organization**
 - **Budget procedures and planning (Margaret and Veronica):** Need to approve expenditures. No major changes. Veronica at Aitkin SWCD is our fiscal agent.
 - **Report on October 19 planning meeting:** 9 people attended and included 'kitchen sink' items to be reviewed at another April strategic planning meeting.
 - **Review changes in By-Laws**
 - Changes combined Steering and Technical Committees into one, recognizing the value of our technical advisors.
 - Officer terms simplified to 2 years. With start date Jan 1.
 - Bonnie notes that combining Steering and Technical Committees may raise conflicts of interest with state and local agency staff, especially with funding. John also notes that political advocacy may put state agencies in awkward position. Dianne notes it is wise to keep technical and steering committees separate. **Group concurs: Voting members and Advisory Members from agencies (nonvoting). And only voting members can be officers. No change to previous language/restore original.**
 - **Changes to be incorporated and approved at the January meeting giving 30 days for review.**
 - **Review/adopt 10-year Plan Update**
 - Update of 2017-2027 plan ensures it is inclusive and robust enough to support grant funding, yet acknowledges the reality of our limited resources.
 - Previous version is heavily focused on water quality research which is no longer our focus today. Rather, we collect, review, analyze, and share information that is currently available.
 - Outlines and expands how to take ownership of the Mille Lacs Compass Program. More work to be done here.
 - Communication and collaboration with other organizations, e.g. Keep It Clean, Get the Lead Out
 - Added improvement of organizational effectiveness. Explore benefits of 501c3 status.
 - Pat notes that new members find our multiple areas of interest can be overwhelming, confusing. Margaret notes that the 10 year plan can help us focus and prioritize for the upcoming year.
 - John notes the plan has been sent to 115 people, including Advisory Members.

- **M. John 2nd Pat. Plan 2023 update approved.** Share with Advisory Members and Rum River Implementation Committee for review/ improved communication and collaboration.

5. Activity Updates

- **Mille Lacs Compass Program:** See Lynn Gallice update Attachment 2.
- **Rum River Watershed Comprehensive Plan (Jake):** Interview is complete for the Rum River Watershed Coordinator/Outreach position. Pending applicant acceptance.
- **AIS grant for 2023:** 2024 grant TBD soon.
- **Get the Lead Out Tackle Exchange (John):** 56# of lead collected this year. Pat notes that Senator Wesenburg was not aware of the lead tackle issue. Education needed and provided.
- **Keep it Clean Campaign (Ann):** KIC materials to be delivered 1 Dec around the lake. 3 billboards are going up: Eddy Lyback has donated space, 2 Lamar. Thanks to Perry for scouting. The new KIC law press release is done, DNR reviewed and news media picked up, including Outdoor News, Kare 11 news. Lake Country Journal is featuring KIC in December. A 2 year state wide digital campaign starts mid-December. Include full report for our January meeting.
- **Other updates**
 - **Loon platform:** Barb notes ML Scenic Byway Council received funding from MLACF for Loon Platform to be placed at scenic overlook north of Isle. Barb provide POC to John and Margaret. Ann may be champion within this group and/or invite ML Scenic Byway to provide update.
- **Outreach and Education**
 - **Review Expo and Lunch & Learn events :** Lunch at HLHL Expo and Lunch & Learns was a draw this year. New people attending, with largest attendance yet at the Expo. Question: What is best way to replicate this success? Barb notes that emphasis on local food, local businesses, and the use of compostable, sustainable materials sends message of stewardship and reducing carbon footprint. Ann notes the Birdhouse drawing was good and appreciated. Discuss details of plan for 2024 at January meeting.

6. Other updates

- **Tracking and Posting Water Quality Data: N/R**
- **Updates on MLBO DNR data and USGS Gaging station (Chad/Perry):** MLBO-USGS joint funding agreement is done.

7. New Business & Public Comment:

- Pat notes the ACLARA website is under update, funded by Aitkin County to reflect Aitkin County’s “Naturally Better” trail system project.

8. Action Summary and Next Meeting Plan:

- **Next meeting Jan 22, 2024, 10-11:30 via Zoom**
- **April Strategic Planning Meeting, hosted by MLBO, to discuss ‘Kitchen Sink’ list.**

Respectfully submitted,
Barb Eller, Secretary
218-839-4489

Attachment 1.

| MLLWMG Financial Report September & October 2023 | Budget Balance | Spent Previous Periods | Donations | Spent This Period | Current Balance | |
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| MLLWMG FUNDS | | | | | | |
| All previous combined | \$ 733.04 | \$ 341.28 | \$ 458.53 | 0.00 | \$ 850.29 | |
| Lunch & Learns - Printing, Facebook Ad | \$ 40.00 | \$ 40.00 | | 0.00 | \$ - | |
| Keep It Clean Website | \$ 100.00 | | | | \$ 100.00 | |
| Subtotal | \$ 873.04 | \$ 341.28 | \$ 458.53 | \$ - | \$ 950.29 | |
| | | | | | | |
| Lunch & Learns 2023 | | | | | | |
| Venues (3) | 700.00 | 900.00 | | \$ - | \$ (200.00) | |
| Speaker Stipends | 300.00 | 100.00 | | | \$ 200.00 | |
| Subtotal | 1,000.00 | 1,000.00 | | \$ - | \$ - | |
| | | | | | | |
| Aitkin County AIS Education Grant 2023 | | | | | | |
| Healthy Land Healthy Lake Expo | | | | | | |
| Advertising | 1,000.00 | | | 730.34 | \$ 269.66 | |
| Website Consultant | 1,000.00 | | | | \$ 1,000.00 | |
| Event Hosting | 475.00 | | | 301.00 | \$ 174.00 | |
| Lunch | 250.00 | | | 250.22 | \$ (0.22) | |
| Website / Facebook / Marketing | | | | | \$ - | |
| Website Hosting, Domain Name Registration | 300.00 | 261.05 | | 0 | \$ 38.95 | |
| Keep It Clean Campaign Support | 650.00 | | | | \$ 650.00 | |
| Website / Social Media Consultant | 300.00 | | | | \$ 300.00 | |
| CD3 Watercraft Cleaning Station Support | 1,025.00 | 1,025.00 | | - | \$ - | |
| Subtotal | 5,000.00 | 1,286.05 | | 1,281.56 | \$ 2,432.39 | |
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| | | | | | | |
| Grand Total | \$ 6,873.04 | \$ 2,627.33 | \$ 458.53 | \$ 1,281.56 | \$ 3,382.68 | |
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| ** Note - Lumber Yard Donations / Onamia School | \$201.60 | | | | | |

Attachment 2. Mille Lacs SWCD, Lynn Gallice, Update on ML Compass projects



Mille Lacs SWCD Compass Up-Date November 2023

DIY No-Mow Buffer Project Development

Direct mail invitations to the Compass Healthy Land Healthy Lake event did not result in any contact from landowners in the targeted project area. 24 out of the 35 landowners in the targeted area do not list Mille Lacs Lake as their primary residence. This will present a challenge to community buy in for installing buffers on lakeshore property. Staff will work to find the best way to achieve buy-in for community water quality goals to landowners who do not reside full time on Mille Lacs Lake.



2023 Healthy Land Healthy Lake Event

Compass Landowner Assistance

A Compass member near Wahkon has asked for technical assistance with the control and management of Phragmites, a large perennial reed that can be invasive in its non-native form. A site visit will be conducted, likely in spring, to determine if these reeds are Phragmites and if they are native or non-native.

