



Minutes of Meeting Monday, February 26, 2024

Present: Margaret Vos, Chair, East Mille Lacs 31 years; John Pearson, Communications, South Mille Lacs 1940s; Barb Eller, Secretary, Rum River Watershed north, 140 acre Forestland; Veronica Lundquist, staff Aitkin SWCD; Bob Janzen, Supervisor, Aitkin SWCD; Pat Murphy, Pres. ACLARA, Long Lake 1945; Ann Brucciani Lyon, MLACF, Keep It Clean, East Mille Lacs mid1960s; Chad Weiss, Water Resource Manager, MLBO DNR; Perry Bunting, Dir. MLBO DNR (31 years!); Sue Lyback, 50 acres south Mille Lacs 1911, Conservation Easement, Fjord Haven; Molly Clyne, Watershed Organizer, Mille Lacs SWCD; Bonnie Goshey, MN Pollution Control Agency

1. Welcome and Introductions - Thanks to all!

2. Approval of the Agenda - Add Molly Clyne under Outreach and Education. Approved as amended. Chair.

3. 1/22/24 Meeting Minutes : M. Ann 2nd John Approved.

4. Financial Report . No expenses/income. Remains as of Jan 2024.

5. Organization

- **Planning meeting April 19, 1-5 pm**, MLBO Government Center. Tentative Agenda:
 - October 2023 Planning Meeting kitchen list
 - Funding: 501c3?, donate button? Aitkin SWCD fiscal agent/other
 - Compass program rebrand (Jake)
 - Outreach incl youth
 - F2F Meetings
 - Connections: Join ACLARA?/other organizations/relationship to Rum River Watershed. Ann volunteered to attend ACLARA if we join. ACLARA is also member of MN Lakes & Rivers that has strong presence at legislature.
- 2024 meetings schedule: Add to calendar, we can decide to change as needed. March 18 - April 19 (Planning) - May 20 - June 17 - July 15 - August 19 - October 21 - December 16
- 2023 Annual Report (John). Draft started. Requests Crow Wing Compass activities, has Aitkin and Mille Lacs. Requests Financial Summary (Veronica). **TBD March meeting.**
- 2024 AIS grant (Barb):
 - **AIS Grant Application M.Pat 2nd Bob Approved.** Barb send to Veronica for review and approval by Aitkin AIS Committee.

6. Outreach and Education

- **Molly Clyne, Rum River Watershed Organizer**, Mille Lacs SWCD, started Dec 2023: molly.clyne@millelacs.mn.gov 320-983-2160 Focus this year -
 - (1) Forestry Programs, resources for reforestation on private lands, focus SFIA and lands in conservation easements, to support the MN goal to plant 1 million acres. [Tree Planting Open House Mar 16, 10-12 pm](#), Borgholm Townhall, Milaca. Walk in any time 10-12, informal.
 - (2) Community Outreach is bulk of position. Connecting with groups throughout the watershed to start discussion, needs, see how we can help you. Will be doing survey to existing nongovernmental organizations this year.

- Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF): None available this year. Working on policies for 2025 budget year. WBIF funding is tied directly to water quality activities in the Rum River Watershed work plan. Barb notes in discussion with Susan Shaw that funding of websites as education and food as participant draws is unlikely.
- Pat notes the MN Logger Education Program may be useful contact for Molly. Ann notes Pat as Pres. ACLARA is excellent resource.
- Proposed Lunch and Learns (Barb):
 - 2023 Lunch & Learns drew about 30 people each and helped outreach to resorts
 - 2024 Cost of 1 Lunch & Learn done at a local resort: \$1560
 - Possible funding sources: WBIF N/A; Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures Fund; MLEC Fund
 - John notes the success of the 2022 Community of Stewards Picnic. We added 25-30 people to our member list after this event. Need to engage more people in our organization. A model to consider.
 - Option: Pick ½ -full day with several speakers. Mar/Apr, Oct/Nov (Ann)
 - Option: Resume F2F meetings at free venue, perhaps box lunches, speaker followed by regular meeting. Est cost of box lunch: \$16.50 ea. (Barb)
 - **Look at options/recommendation during March meeting (Barb) : 1) Lunch & Learn at Resort \$1560; 2) F2F meetings at free venue with speaker, box lunch (\$16.50)**
- Proposed property tour(s): Sue Lyback and Doug Jacobsen invite a Walk and Talk through Fjord Haven, their 50 acres of MN Trust Land. Multiple diverse ecosystems. Best time June 2024. Suggestions include engaging Paul Dickson, local Forester, native/medicinal plant expert (Cultural Resource Director, MLBO). Subcommittee: **Barb to confirm dates and details with Sue and have full proposal by March meeting.** *Thanks to Sue & Doug!*

7. Compass Program and Other Projects and Activities

- Mille Lacs Compass Program : See Lynn Gallice report January.
- Rum River Watershed Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Jake): N/R
- Get the Lead Out Tackle Exchange (John): Can do collection at all events/meetings
- Keep it Clean Campaign (Ann): Primary goal this year was education, no ticket data available. Lake Noquebay, WI, Lake Oahe, S. Dakota joined, so now tristate. New bill at legislature: Goal is to have state agency, like DNR, take over Keep It Clean and appropriate funding. Email went out with links to new bill asking you to request support from legislators. This area: Sen. Nathan Wesenberg, Rep. Ron Kresha. MN-FISH, Clean Water Action MN, MN Lakes & Rivers Advocates, MASWCD are helping. Aitkin SWCD has joined. Ann to ask Mille Lacs SWCD to join (free).
- eDNA study test results (John): MAISRC Study was to confirm the ability of volunteers to collect water samples for analysis of AIS DNA. Study successful and will potentially increase the statewide monitoring of AIS.

8. New Business & Public Comment

- Mille Lacs trails expansion (Ann) Barb notes [Mille Lacs County has Parks & Trails Department](#) may be place to start.
- [Crow Wing County](#) looking for public comment on ordinance changes until March 22.

9. Action Summary and Next Meeting Plan

- Next Meeting Mar 18, 10 am, Zoom
- Adjourned 11:30

Respectfully submitted, Barb Eller, Secretary