



Minutes of Meeting July 21, 2025, Zoom

Present: Margaret Vos, Chair, east Mille Lacs; Jake Janski, CoChair, Supervisor Mille Lacs SWCD, Chair, Rum River Watershed Partnership; Barb Eller, Sec/Treas, Onamia, upper Rum River Watershed; John Pearson, Communications, south Mille Lacs; Dick Weber, Big Pine Lake, MN Lakes & Rivers Rep; Guy Haglund, Eastside Mille Lacs, ML Compass Member; Pat Murphy, Pres. ACLARA, Glen Township Council, MLEC Board, Long Lake; Cynthia Johnson, Platte Lake, Milaca, Sustainable Ag & Food; Bonnie Goshey, MPCA, Rum River Watershed; Molly Clyne, Watershed Organizer, Mille Lacs SWCD; Perry Bunting, Dir, Environmental Programs, MLBO DNR; Bob Janzen, Supervisor Aitkin SWCD, Ellie Joing, Watershed Management Specialist, Aitkin SWCD; Robert Wall, Watershed Coordinator, MLBO DNR; Bob Carls, Board Chair, Northern Waters Land Trust, includes parts of Mille Lacs watershed; Tom, new member, Eastside Mille Lacs.

1. Meeting called to order at 10:05 am.

2. **Agenda:** Add to new business: Dick Weber, Cynthia Johnson, Ellie Joing. Approved by Chair with additions.

3. **4/25/25 Meeting Minutes:** Correct start time to 1:30 pm. M. Jake 2nd John Approved as corrected.

4. **Financial Report:** See Attachment 1. Note donation from Guy Haglund and additional donation not yet listed of \$150 from Becky Sandelands in memory of Jeff Neafus. Thank you. M. Jake 2nd Guy Approved.

5. Organization:

- Update on becoming a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization (Barb and Cynthia)
 - Reviewed draft Articles of Incorporation, Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group, which meet the requirements of MN Statute 317A, Nonprofit Corporation and IRC Section 501(c)(3), Nonprofit Corporations. See Attachment 2. Note to clarify that we can define “Board of Directors” as the current elected officers.
 - Reviewed the State and Federal process for filing, legal requirements, and costs. See Attachment 3. For our purposes, the Board of Directors is our elected officers. Our annual meeting is our October meeting or the meeting occurring in the final quarter of the year.
 - **M. Pat 2nd Guy. Proceed with the process to become a Nonprofit Corporation governed by MN Statute Chapter 317A. Barb amendment: The Articles of Incorporation as presented conform to MN Statutes Chapter 317A and IRC Section 501(c)(3). After discussion of costs, potential funding sources, and member pledges totaling \$500, the Motion with amendment is Approved.**
 - Estimated cost of initial process: \$126
- Healthy Land, Healthy Lake Expo review: Committee- John Pearson, Ann Brucciani Lyon, Pat Murphy, Cynthia Johnson, Barb Eller
 - The committee reviewed the successful Healthy Land, Healthy Lake Expo, May 3, 2025, which attracted about 100 attendees, triple the previous year's number, and added 27 names to their email list.
 - They recommend the expo format be continued. Presentations and table presenters may need to be separated for best audio. Need to better time the prize giveaways as it

interfered with the roundtable discussion.

- Confirmed the next event for May 2nd at Tulibee's Event Center. Barb confirmed date with Rob Hobbs. Committee work should start soon. Report at October meeting.
- 2024 Annual Report (John): Draft is ready for review. Financial statement for 2024 being finalized.

6. Continuing Projects and Activities

- Mille Lacs Compass Program: Jake notes that Lynn Gallice, Mille Lacs SWCD and point person for the ML Compass Program, plans to retire April 2026. We invite Lynn to October in person meeting for recognition.
- Rum River Watershed Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Jake):
- Get the Lead Out (John): N/R
- Lake clean-up efforts (Ann): Ann not able to attend today.
 - Keep It Clean
 - Clean Up the Lake
 - Mille Lacs Trash Tracker: Perry notes website is up with 1100# of trash collected
 - Trash Boom Collector: Perry notes that this project may be eligible for a GLFWS grant. Under discussion.
- Perry notes the USGS Mille Lacs gauge station has been moved to Garrison, the Harbor Inn area. This is a deeper site than the lake outlet and less prone to freezing.

7. New Business and Open Discussion:

- **Dick Weber:** The MN Lakes and Rivers Shoreline Steward Program is being successfully used by property owners on Big Pine Lake. It is available on their website: <https://mnlakesandrivers.org/> Recommends their publication: Shoreland Guide to Lake Stewardship.
- **Pat Murphy:** All are invited to the Lake Association Summit, July 31, 4-6:30 pm at the Moose Lodge, Aitkin, MN. Also notes the hearing for change in lakeshore ordinances is scheduled for July 31, 1 pm, Courthouse.
- **Ellie Joing:** Send PDF of Lake Assoc Summit to John for distribution.
- **Cynthia Johnson:** The Initiative Foundation is organizing the Community Climate Leaders Program. She will report more after meeting with IF rep Elizabeth Mboutchom. <https://climate.umn.edu/community-climate-leaders>. August agenda.
- **Bonnie Goshey:** MPCA is in 2nd year of monitoring the Rum River Watershed. Data to be available February 2026. She will get on our agenda to review and present at next HLHL Expo.

8. Next Meeting: September 15, 10 am-11:30 am via zoom. Mark calendars for In person meeting, October 24, 1 pm-4pm. Perry will coordinate with Margaret for meeting place TBD.

Meeting adjourned 11:43 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Eller, Secretary/Treasurer

Attachment 1. Financial Report

MLLWMG Financial Report 25 Apr-16 July 2025

	Budget Balance	Spent Previous Periods	Income	Spent This Period	Current Balance
DATE					
25-Apr	\$1,523.75				
24 Apr		\$23.17			
04/21/25		\$457.90			
04/25/25				\$100.00	
05/05/25				\$52.00	
05/06/25			\$78.00		
05/07/25				\$14.60	
06/01/25				\$989.20	
06/01/25				\$250.00	
06/14/25			\$200.00		
30-Jun			\$0.07		
Subtotal	\$1,523.75	\$481.07	\$278.07	\$1,405.80	\$396.02

EXPENSES PROJECTED THIS PERIOD

MN Lakes and Rivers Membership	-\$100.00
INCOME PROJECTED THIS PERIOD-MLCV Grant Reimbursement	\$322.00
Subtotal:	\$222.00

BALANCE AFTER PROJECTED INCOME & EXPENSES:

\$618.02

Blaze Checking Account 07/16/2025	\$285.72
Blaze Share/Savings Account 07/16/25	\$110.30
BALANCE:	\$396.02

Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group
 Healthy Land, Healthy Lake Expo '25
 Financial Report, Final
 Request for reimbursement under MLCV Grant

DATE	Expense	Income	Budget
06/01/25			
03/04/25	Confirmed MLCV Grant	\$1,000.00	
	Expenses paid by Aitkin SWCD per MLCV Grant		
05/04/25	Host venue rental Tulibee's: Pd by Barb 7/3/25 requested direct reimbursement by Aitkin SWCD	\$300.00	\$300.00
04/23/25	Mille Lacs Messenger Ad	\$278.00	\$278.00
03/04/25	Fiscal Agent Expense (Aitkin SWCD)	100.00	\$100.00
	Reimburse to MLLWG for below expenses	\$322.00	
	TOTAL:	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00

06/01/25 MLCV Grant Reimbursement	\$322.00
06/01/25 MLLWG Gen Operating Funds	\$141.37
Vos donation	\$250.00
Eller donation	\$250.00
Weber donation	\$250.00
HLHL Donations on-site	\$78.00

06/01/25	Marketing & Promotion		
	Remaining budget after ML Messenger Ad		\$922.00
	SpeedPro Hard Surface Stands (2)	\$158.46	
	VistaPrint Signage (4 directional signs, 1 thankyou sign)	\$200.16	
	FedX: Print of handouts, entry forms	\$104.54	
	FedX: tape, pens, markers	\$9.32	
	Meta: Facebook advertising	\$266.72	
	Pearson Promotion and Production (25.5 hrs)*	\$250.00	\$250.00
	Brucciani Lyon Promotion (40 hrs)*	\$250.17	\$250.00
05/04/25	Bakery	\$52.00	\$60.00
	SUBTOTAL:	\$1,291.37	\$1,291.37
	Aitkin SWCD paid direct expenses:	\$678.00	
	TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$1,969.37	\$2,160.00
	Under Budget:		\$190.63

*NOTE: Reimbursed under 2024 Volunteer Rate of \$36.31/hr
 Pearson and Burcciani Lyon were reimbursed only partially under this budget. The remainder were volunteer hours.
 Thank you.

Attachment 2. Draft Articles of Incorporation Minnesota NonProfit Corporation | ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF

Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group

The undersigned incorporators are individuals 18 years of age or older and adopt the following articles of incorporation to form a nonprofit corporation in accordance with MN Statutes, Chapter 317A.

ARTICLE I — NAME

The name of this corporation shall be **Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group**.

ARTICLE II — REGISTERED OFFICE ADDRESS

The place in Minnesota where the principal office of the corporation is to be located at **12722 350th Street, Onamia, MN 56359 or the mailing address of the currently elected Treasurer.** <Note: this is typically the Chair, however, when we applied for our EIN, the Treasurer's address was used>

ARTICLE III — PURPOSE

This corporation is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes as specified in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, including for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

The purpose of this corporation is to protect and enhance the water quality, ecosystem health, sustainability, and resilience of the waters and lands of the Mille Lacs Lake Watershed (MLLW) through a stakeholder-driven educational forum that encourages a partnership among individuals; businesses; local and state governmental units; and sovereign nations.

ARTICLE IV — EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS

At all times the following shall operate as conditions restricting the operations and activities of the corporation:

1. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purpose set forth in the purpose clause hereof.
2. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall constitute the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, or any initiative or referendum before the public, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including by publication or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.
3. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this document, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future tax code, or by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future tax code.

ARTICLE V — MEMBERSHIP/BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This corporation shall have members. The eligibility, rights and obligations of the members will be

determined by the corporation's bylaws.

The management of the affairs of the corporation shall be vested in a board of directors, as defined by the corporation's bylaws. *<Note: MN requires a minimum Board of 3 members>*

No director shall have any right, title or interest in or to any property of the corporation.

Members of the initial board of directors shall serve until the first annual meeting, at which their successors will be duly elected and qualified, or removed as provided in the bylaws.

The Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group may levy dues, assessments, or fees upon its voting members. Further, the Chair is authorized to fix the amount from time to time and determine the methods of collection.

Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the board of directors may be taken by written action signed by the number of board members that would be required to take the same action at a meeting of the board at which all board members were present.

ARTICLE VI — PERSONAL LIABILITY

No member, officer or director of this corporation shall be personally liable for the debts or obligations of this corporation of any nature whatsoever, nor shall any of the property of the members, officers or directors be subject to the payment of the debts or obligations of this corporation.

ARTICLE VII - DURATION/DISSOLUTION

The duration of the corporate existence shall be perpetual until dissolution.

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, assets of the corporation shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

ARTICLE VIII – INCORPORATORS *<NOTE: Only needs to be 1>*

In witness whereof, we, the undersigned, have hereunto subscribed my name for the purpose of forming the corporation under the laws of the State of Minnesota and certify I have executed these Articles of Incorporation this ____ day of _____, 20__.

Incorporator Name _____

Incorporator Address, City, State, ZIP _____

Incorporator Signature _____

Attachment 3. Nonprofit Organization Process

MN Statute 317A Nonprofit Corporation Act

- Articles of incorporation comply with Chapter 317A plus IRC section 501c3. See DRAFT.
- Members vote to elect to be governed by Chapter 317A: “the purpose of this meeting is to consider an election to become a nonprofit corporation governed by Chapter 317A”.
 - This resolution must state that the articles of the corporation conform to the requirements of

Chapter 317A.

- Bylaws consistent with Chapter 317A remain, those inconsistent are not effective. Provisions required by Chapter 317A that do not appear in the articles are read into them as a matter of law.
 - Logo must include “a MN Nonprofit Corporation” (if also filing with the AGO)
 - Record above resolution, applicable minutes, and articles of incorporation with the County Recorder. Obtain certified copy. Cost: \$56
 - File certified copy with MN Secretary of State. Cost: \$70 . Renew annually by Dec 31, no fee.
 - Publish nonprofit articles of incorporation in local newspaper. Cost:
 - Apply for sales tax exemption, Form ST16, Application for Nonprofit Exempt Status-Sales Tax
 - Need MN tax I.D. If we plan to sell products/services subject to MN sales tax. MN Department of Revenue, Application for Business Registration (online). Need SSN of officer(s). No fee.
 - Must register as charity with MN Attorney Generals Office, Charities Division If one or more of below criteria are true:
 - Contributions received past year/anticipated next year are greater than \$25,000.
 - Uses a professional fundraiser
 - The corporations “functions and activities” are performed by paid persons.
- If so, file with AGO a Charitable Organization Registration Statement with copies of Articles of Incorporation, IRS determination letter, most recent financial statement. Fee: \$25
Annual Report Form due July 15 with copy of IRS 990, bank account information, financial statement (audited if income greater than \$750,000),

Federal Regulation IRC Section 501(c)(3), IRS Publication 557

- We currently have FEIN required by bank accounts.
- File Federal form 1023-EZ via pay.gov to obtain tax exempt status under 501c3. Tax exempt letter of determination follows. Cost: \$275
- File Form 990N annually by May 15.