



Minutes of Meeting Monday, 15 December 2025, 10:05-11:40 am (Zoom)

Present: Jake Janski, ViceChair, Mille Lacs SWCD Supervisor; Barb Eller, Sec/Treas, upper Rum River Watershed; John Pearson, Communications, South Mille Lacs; Molly Clyne, Mille Lacs SWCD staff; Perry Bunting, Director, MLBO DNR Environmental Services; Ellie Joing, Aitkin SWCD Staff; Bob Janzen, Aitkin SWCD Supervisor; Guy Haglund, NE Mille Lacs; Cynthia Johnson, Platte Lake, Milaca, Sustainable Ag; Pat Murphy, Pres. ACLARA; Rob Wall, MLBO DNR Watershed Coordinator; Ann Brucianni Lyon, ML Keep It Clean; Bonnie Goshey, MPCA Rum River Watershed; Chad Weis, MLBO Water Resource Manager; Greg Berg, ML Area Fisheries Supervisor; Aaron Schultz, Climate Change Fisheries Biologist, Great Lakes Tribal Fish and Wildlife Service

1. Welcome and Introductions – Meeting called to order at 10:05 AM by Jake. Thanks to Jake for serving as our ViceChair for the past 4 years! Jake was also elected as the Sec/Treas for the MASWCD. Congratulations!

2. Agenda – Approved by ViceChair as presented.

3. 10/24/25 Meeting Minutes. Approved by ViceChair as presented.

4. Financial Report – See Attachment 1. **M. Cynthia 2nd Ann. Approved.** Barb to prepare year-end financial report for approval at January meeting. This will be used for IRS 990N filing May 2026 by Guy.

5. Organization

- Nonprofit status update: The MLLWG is a MN Nonprofit Corporation as of Jul 24 2025 and we are a 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit as of Sept 4 2025. Barb notes our next phase is ensuring we educate our officers and members about nonprofit operations. A beginning reference:

<https://minnesotanonprofits.org/resources-tools/principles-practices-for-nonprofit-excellence> Barb notes that the Officers have been functioning well as as a Board of Directors and there are just a few statutory requirements to keep in mind. These are noted in the linked document. John & Ann will send email to members before year end r.e. Nonprofit status, tax deductible donations, mailing address.: Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Group, 12722 350th St, Onamia, MN 56359. Barb check if/when 1099 is required for donations. Continuing education can be provided at each meeting.

•Looking ahead to 2026:

- **Goals and activities:**
 - **Healthy Land, Healthy Lake Expo '26 May** : See below.
- **Partner with other aligned organizations:** MN Lakes and Rivers Advocates, Aitkin County Lakes & Rivers, Keep It Clean, continuing relationships with Mille Lacs, Aitkin, Crow Wing SWCDs.
- **Website Updates:** Add Donate Button, recommend financial intermediary, ensure funds accountability and donation acknowledgements, determine budget, raise funds. **Plan for updates to be presented at January meeting (Guy , John, Cynthia).**
- **Review/update 10 year Plan:** TBD in conjunction with a review of the [Rum River Comprehensive Plan](#), Work Plan and Budgets. (all) The RRCP work plan and budget for FY26 is done; now working on FY 27 to be done about June '26.
- **Funding needs:** HLHL '26 covered. Remainder TBD.
- **Meeting schedule:** John notes there were 7 meetings in 2025. We recommend change to 2nd Monday in 2026 to avoid conflict with holidays. **Next Meeting January, 2nd Monday, Jan 12, 2026.** Jake recommends we keep two in person meetings/year in April and October. 2026 meeting schedule TBD at the January meeting with proposals by John included in the agenda.
- **Becoming Member of Keep It Clean:** Membership allows us to use all developed marketing materials and resources. The Keep It Clean Coalition is primarily an education and outreach

organization. **M. Barb 2nd Cynthia Approved MLLWG for membership in Keep It Clean.** Barb to do before 12/31/26.

6. Rum River Watershed Partnership Update (Molly Clyne): Thanks Molly for excellent presentation. It can be viewed on the recording of this meeting. Molly presented on her work with the Rum River Watershed Partnership, focusing on stakeholder outreach and forestry coordination. She explained the importance of a civic approach in addressing environmental issues, considering social, environmental, and economic impacts.

7. Healthy Land, Healthy Lake Expo 2026

- As noted in Financial Report, the Initiative Foundation Grant for \$2500 was received for HLHL'26. Barb used the 2025 HLHL budget for this grant, plus 10%.
- Update subcommittee: Cynthia Johnson, Barb Eller, Guy Haglund, John Pearson (support). John to set up subcommittee Zoom for 1st week of January and **subcommittee will give report at January meeting. We need more volunteers to help!**

8. Continuing Projects and Activities

- Keep It Clean and Lake clean-up efforts (Ann): Visit <https://millelacstrashtracker.org/> >2000# and >100 volunteer hours. Grants received include: \$1000 from Mille Lacs Area Community Foundation for basic needs year 25-26; \$24,000 from MN Board of Water and Soil Resources for 2 year funding. Aitkin SWCD is the fiscal agent for both grants. Ann notes that James Romano, USGS continues study of microplastics in Mille Lacs. Results of sediment samples available in 1-2 years. Thanks Ann!

9. New Business and Open Discussion:

- Pat will provide update on Aitkin County shoreline ordinances . Final vote is 12/23. He will also attend the DNR Roundtable Jan 9. Thanks Pat!
- Aaron notes: The Tribal Climate Adaptation Menu may be of interest <https://glifwc.org/stewardship/climate-change-program> . Also take a look at the Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership. Lots of information re natural shorelines . <https://midwestglaciallakes.org/>

10. Next Meeting: January 12, 2026, 10-11:30 am via Zoom

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Eller

Sec/Treas

ATTACHMENT 1. Financial Report

MLLWMG Financial Report 15October-31 December 2025

DATE	MLLWMG FUNDS INCOME – Jan Beginning Balance	Budget Balance	Income Previous Periods	Spent Previous Periods	Income this Period	Spent This Period	Current Balance
	15-Oct Balance Forward	\$1,254.73					\$868.03
	10/19/25 Office supplies		\$1,900.17	\$2,286.87		7.07	
	10/21/25 Refreshments for October meeting					10.28	
	11/01/20 Reimburse Barb Eller for: Nonprofit filing, County & State					\$146.00	
	11/26/25 Initiative Foundation Grant for HLHL '26*				\$2,500.00		

Savings Interest

Subtotal \$1,254.73 \$1,900.17 \$2,286.87 \$2,500.00 \$163.35 **\$3,204.68**

EXPENSES PROJECTED THIS PERIOD

Subtotal: **\$0.00**

BALANCE AFTER PROJECTED INCOME & EXPENSES:

\$3,204.68

Blaze Checking Account 12/15/2025	\$3,094.37
Blaze Share/Savings Account 12/15/25	\$110.31
BALANCE:	\$3,204.68

	Expense	Income
Initiative Foundation Grant for HLHL '26		\$2,500.00
Tulibee Tavern Event Center fee	\$300.00	
Marketing & Promotion	\$1,700.00	
Speaker Stipends	\$500.00	
TOTAL:	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00

"This project is funded in part by the Initiative Foundation, a regional foundation."

Separately account for funds received under this grant, retain records for four years.

All expenditures related to this grant to be reported to Barb Eller with copy to Guy Haglund.