

Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group
Meeting Minutes – February 27, 2017
Isle City Hall

Attendance: Perry Bunting, MLB DNRE; Al Close, Hazelton Township; Barb Eller, Mille Lacs SWCD; Lynn Gallice, Mille Lacs SWCD; Dillon Hayes, Mille Lacs County; Bob Janzen, Aitkin County SWCD; Ted Kostecka, Kathio Township; Janet Smude, Aitkin Co SWCD; Chad Weiss, MLB DNRE; Laurie Westerlund, Aitkin County Board.

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:10 am by Chairperson Laurie Westerlund.
2. Administrative Details: An attendance sheet was circulated and introductions made. The agenda was approved with the addition of Resolutions Review. M/S/C Barb Eller / Ted Kostecka.
3. Minutes from the December meeting of the Group were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C Ted Kostecka / Al Close.
4. Financial Report: A report for the months of December 2016 and January 2017 was shared. Expenses totaled \$ 2,863.49 and were all from the Clean Water Partnership Grant. The report was approved as presented. M/S/C Bob Janzen / Al Close.

The Mille Lacs SWCD submitted an invoice for services and materials provided for implementation of the Clean Water Partnership Grant, May to September 2016. There was consensus among the group to pay the Mille Lacs SWCD the invoiced amount of \$ 217.50.

5. Old Business:

5.1. Watershed Coordinator Position Update: Barb Eller shared that Susan Shaw, Mille Lacs SWCD District Manager, is working on the final position description. The Mille Lacs County Human Resources Department will review and edit this before to job opening is posted. The Group will also have an opportunity to comment before it is finalized.

5.2. Community Incentive Program/ 2016 Media Campaign: Lynn Gallice shared a revised draft of the Compass Review / Compass Survey. This will be used when meeting with landowners and determining their level of participation in the Mille Lacs Compass program. Comments were shared. The Group discussed the scoring system – ease of becoming a bronze member. It was suggested that points be needed from each category or multiple categories. It was also suggested that this be tried on sites we are familiar with, as examples. This will need to be applicable to the entire watershed. Comments are still needed and welcome and can be sent to Lynn.

Lynn Gallice also shared a draft of a Shoreland Stewardship Plan template. The goal is to create a standardized plan, that can be personalized for each property enrolled in the Compass program. The Group agreed that this was a good starting point. Comments on this should also be returned to Lynn.

Updates on Compass Program communication tools were provided. The Rack Card has been completed. 2,000 copies will be printed. Signs for enrolled properties have been completed. We have 60 signs total. The series of three postcards were presented for comments. The white letters on card # 1 should be more prominent. Cards # 2 and # 3 need personalization / local quotes. Laurie Westerlund and Al Close volunteered to be quoted on the cards. Materials will be useful at the Legislative Briefing Day. Kurt Beckstrom, Bob Hoefert, and Lynn Gallice from the Mille Lacs SWCD will be sharing the Compass program with area legislators at this event.

5.3 2017 Aitkin County AIS Grant: This grant request was approved. Funds will support two “town hall” style meetings and information folders. Janet Smude has been working with Red House Media on the information folders. These are nearing completion and should be available soon.

6. New Business:

6.1. Legislative Contacts: Janet Smude shared that she has compiled a list of Senators and Representatives that represent this area. These contacts will be added to correspondence lists for activities happening in the watershed. The goal is to keep them informed.

6.2. Clean Water Partnership Semi-Annual Report: A report on grant activities and expenditures during the second half of 2016 was prepared and submitted to the MPCA. Copies were shared. The Group was thanked for completing their volunteer log forms. Contributions of time and funds totaled over \$12,000 during this period. This was more than enough to make the required match.

6.3. Aitkin County Contractor Workshop: Janet Smude is partnering with the Aitkin County Environmental Services Office to host a workshop for contractors. Topics to be covered include changes to the Aitkin County Shoreland Ordinance, DNR regulations, alternatives to stabilization with rock rip rap, aquatic invasive species, and available soil stabilization tools. The workshop is scheduled for Thursday April 6th at Long Lake Conservation Center. A donation of \$ 250 that will be used for presenter fees was requested. A motion approving the requested donation was made. M/S/C Al Close / Ted Kostecka. Contractors from Mille Lacs County will also be invited to the workshop.

6.4. Lake Health Conference: Planning began for the 2017 Lake Health Conference. Proposed dates were August 7th or August 14th. Locations were also discussed. Lynn Gallice was asked to check with McQuoid's and see if they had either of the preferred dates available. The Conference will be condensed into one longer day, with a launch in the afternoon or evening. Supper could potentially be served on the launch. The Compass programs will be highlighted at the conference.

7. Subcommittee Reports:

7.1. Media Committee: The Topic of the Month articles will be continued. A sign up sheet for 2017 was circulated. Volunteers were sought to write an article.

7.2. Fundraising / Grant Writing: The Group was asked to watch for grant opportunities. We may need additional funds for Compass Program materials and promotion of the Compass program. Opportunities to support staff time dedicated to this program should also be sought.

7.3. Membership: Meeting information should be sent to the Mille Lacs Messenger for inclusion in their calendar.

7.4. Citizen Comments / Fisheries Input Group: Perry Bunting shared that the Mille Lacs Band DNRE is working on a PTMapp – Prioritize, Target, and Map - project. The final product of this application will identify project needs, and potential project locations. Results will be shared when this is complete.

8. Agenda Additions: Barb Eller shared that two resolutions relating to the Shoreland Steward / Mille Lacs Compass program were submitted at the Minnesota Association of Conservation Districts convention last year. Neither resolution passed. These are being refined, based on comments from last year and new input. The Group was asked to review the proposed resolutions and share comments. The resolutions will be submitted again in 2017.

9. The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, March 20th. It will be held at the Hazelton Town Hall, if the meeting room is available. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 pm M/S Ted Kostecka / Al Close.