

Mille Lacs Lake Watershed Management Group
Meeting Minutes – March 20, 2017
Hazelton Town 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 Co SWCD; Ted Kostecka, Kathio Township; Susan Shaw, Mille Lacs SWCD; Janet Smude, Aitkin Co SWCD; Laurie Westerlund, Aitkin County Board.

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am by Chairperson Laurie Westerlund.

2. Administrative Details: An attendance sheet was circulated and introductions made. The agenda was approved with the addition of the Jack & Marilyn Anderson Project Proposal.

3. Minutes from the February meeting of the Group were reviewed and approved as presented. M/S/C Bob Janzen / Barb Eller.

4. Financial Report: A report for the month of February 2017 was shared. Expenses totaled \$ 190.00 and were to Red House Media for design of Compass promotional materials. The report was approved as presented. M/S/C Ted Kostecka / Al Close.

5. Old Business:

5.1. Watershed Coordinator Position Update: Susan Shaw, Mille Lacs SWCD District Manager, shared the current draft of the Watershed Organizer / Coordinator Position Description. The Mille Lacs County Human Resources Department is reviewing this. The next step is to determine the pay scale for the position, based on the position description. Comments are requested by the end of the week. The Group discussed that a natural resources background may not be the most important qualification. A background in public relations, communications, civic engagement, and/or community organizing might serve the position better. The staff person will be housed at the Mille Lacs SWCD office, but will work throughout the watershed. Laurie Westerlund was asked to be part of the interview committee, as the Chairperson of the MLLWVG.

5.2. Community Incentive Program/ 2016 Media Campaign: Lynn Gallice shared the latest draft of the Compass Review / Compass Survey. Suggested changes have been incorporated. This will be used when meeting with landowners and determining their level of participation in the Mille Lacs Compass program. The scoring system was adjusted. It is now 100 pts, with points needed in 4 categories. It is meant to be a discussion with the landowners. Comments are still welcome as we move toward a final copy.

Lynn Gallice also shared that the Shoreland Stewardship Plan template is being updated. The goal is to create a standardized plan, that can be personalized for each property enrolled in the Compass program. What to include / not include is being determined.

Updates on Compass Program communication tools were provided. The Rack Card has been completed and copies were shared. The series of three postcards are being refined by Red House Media

The Mille Lacs SWCD Board has asked Lynn to attend the Mn Assn of Conservation Districts Legislative Briefing Day. She will be sharing the Compass program with area legislators and promoting the program. A contribution to the costs of this promotion effort was requested. A motion approving a contribution of \$ 75 to the Mille Lacs SWCD in support of this effort was made. M/S/C Al Close / Bob Janzen. It was also noted that this program needs to be communicated with the Crow Wing and Aitkin County SWCDs.

5.3 2017 Aitkin County AIS Grant: This grant will support two “town hall” style meetings and information folders. Janet Smude has been working with Red House Media on the information folders. Laurie Westerlund and Dave Oslund will participate in the town hall meetings. We will also invite the new DNR AIS staff person to participate. Dates will be set at a future meeting.

5.4. Aitkin County Contractor Workshop: Janet Smude is cooperating with Becky Sovde from the Aitkin County Environmental Services Office to host a workshop for contractors. Topics to be covered include changes to the Aitkin County Shoreland Management Ordinance, Mn DNR Waters regulations, AIS, alternative shoreland stabilization techniques, and erosion control products. The workshop will be held in April 6th at Long Lake Conservation Center. So far 26 contractors are registered for the workshop.

5.5. 2017 Lake Health Conference: Lynn Gallice has received price quotes from McQuoid's and Appledorns. Prices are based on 50 participants for the day, and 25 for an evening launch. Both sites are available on August 7th. A motion was made to book the event at McQuoid's. M/S/C Al Close /Barb Eller.

Potential programs were discussed. These included the Mille Lacs Compass program, completed shoreland stabilization projects, DNR AIS, Eco-Building displays from the Mn State Fair, MLBO – PTM Ap modeling with Mark Deutschmann, rain barrels, forestry for water quality. Ideas will be refined as we move forward.

5.6. MASWCD Resolutions: Barb Eller reviewed the two resolutions that were proposed last year regarding tax incentive payments for shoreland stewardship work. She has learned that a SWCD cannot bring the same resolutions forward twice. Crow Wing SWCD may be able to bring these forward. Aitkin County SWCD is not a member of the Minnesota Association of SWCDs. Jeff Forester with the group Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates is working on a similar proposal that would mimic the Sustainable Forestry Incentive Act. Comments and suggestions would be welcomed by Barb.

6. New Business:

6.1. Aitkin County Rivers and Lakes Fair: This event is scheduled for Saturday June 17th at the high school in Aitkin. Programs this year include Tips for Shoreland Landscaping, Fishers and Minnesota Furbearers, and Beekeeping as a Hobby. The day also includes booths by the Minnesota Zoomobile, Audubon Center of the Northwoods, and Long Lake Conservation Center. The Group agreed to have a booth again this year. Mike and Barbara Macioch will be asked if they are available to staff it. The new coordinator may also be asked to help. A motion approving a donation of \$ 300 from the Clean Water Partnership Grant was made. M/S/C Bob Janzen / Barb Eller.

6.2. Lake Monitoring 2017: The CWP Grant workplan included 2 years of monitoring on Big Pine, Round, and Kenney Lakes. Work on Round and Kenney Lakes has been completed. There is still funding for monitoring 2 lakes this summer. The group agreed to support sampling on Big Pine Lake. Al Close will discuss that with the Lake Association. Melissa Barrick at the Crow Wing SWCD will be asked if there is a lake in the Crow Wing County portion of the watershed that she would recommend monitoring.

7. Subcommittee Reports:

7.1. Media Committee: A sign up sheet for the Topic of the Month articles was circulated. Mitch Lundeen, North Region Forester will be asked to write an article on forestry and water quality.

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.

7.3. Membership: No additional information was shared.

7.4. Citizen Comments / Fisheries Input Group: Laurie Westerlund expressed her frustration with the Mille Lacs Fisheries Group article in the Star Tribune. Misinformation was shared and she was misquoted. Large Northern Pike in Borden Lake, and the Carp barrier were discussed.

8. Agenda Additions: A project proposal for Jack and Marilyn Anderson was shared. The Anderson have a cabin on Smith Lake and a home on a backlot of Borden Lake. At the cabin site they would like to install a basin to trap runoff and a shoreline buffer. At the home they plan to install a rain garden. \$ 2,918.30 in cost share assistance is requested for these projects that manage stormwater. A motion approving the requested funding, not to exceed 50% of the total eligible project costs was made M/S/C Barb Eller / Al Close.

9. The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, April 17th. It will be held at the Kathio Township Hall. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 am M/S Barb Eller / Ted Kostecka.