

MCT Constitution Reform Convention December 17, 2021 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

HOSTED BY MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE

Zoom Only Via Zoom ID: 818 6912 7860 P/W: 690980

Attendees: Birdie Roberts MLB (host), Michael Smith Jr., Sandra Borden GP, Carol Janick, John Roterman FDL, Maria Costello, Mike Davis ML, Michaa Aubid, Mil Holmes BF, Lorna LaGue, Perry Skinaway ML, Cheryl Edwards FDL, Michele Hakala-Beeksma GP, Salley Fineday LL, Tom Benjamin, Al Olson ML, Wayne Dupuis FDL, Tracey Verminllion BF, Wally LL, Sharon Olson, Marilyn Turvey GP, Raymond Bellcourt, Douglas (Moto), Joy Annette, Maureen Jones, Celeste, Sybil Gund WE, Lawrence Fairbanks, Annette Budrow WE, John & Victoria McMillen, Nanci GlennStone

9:10 am Facilitator - Birdie Roberts Welcome - Birdie Roberts gave an overview of the agenda

9:15 am Delegation Roll Call. Housekeeping Reminders. Housekeeping Topic was the Seven Grandfather Teachings (Love, Respect, Bravery, Truth, Bravery, Truth, Honesty, Humility, Wisdom).

9:20 am Education – MLB Report, 34 pages, (not to be distributed outside of ML until permission is granted). There was a review of documents (Wheeler-Howard Bill, Indian Reorganization Act, Solicitors Opinion, MCT Original Constitution 1936, MCT Revised Constitution 1963, Mille Lacs Charter, Haws (?) Report).

Raymond Bellcourt- we must take a stand on our sovereignty and get out from under the IRA.

Mille Holmes- The MCT wants us to take the Secretary of Interior out of the Constitution to allow us to rewrite our Constitution as we want.

John Roterman- Agrees with what has been presented. I wish that ML had worked with the MCT Constitution Reform delegation instead of MLB. I presented a form of government where the people are the oversight using the clan system. We are the Ojibway/Anishinaabe of 250 reservations, etc. (more than individual bands, etc.

Birdie- We (MLB) are focused on Education, priority one. We have an obligation to our members first.

Wally- Are we dependent on the Federal government, on illegal laws? My concern is what will replace the Federal support if we are independent. We no longer have the power to declare war which is problem.

Raymond Bellcourt- How are we going to be independent (financial support)? On the positive side there are treaty rights. Some potential financial solutions are let us keep the taxes we pay to others. We could bring in industry by giving tax incentives.

10:29 am Break

10:45 am Continuation of the **MLB Report**. Al Olson spoke about an historic two-and-a-half day meeting in Hayward WI which used an interpreter for the dialog on IRA and the Wheeler-Howard Bill and which presented a lot of smoke and mirrors, sales pitch. The document was signed off without much input.

Michaa Aubid- 1934, the US Gov't came out to Rice Lake/Sandy Lake. Rice Lake was removed from 1934 to 1940.

Ray Bellcourt- US Constitution- He read from a paper that he wrote. Indians are excluded from the United States because they are not taxed (1886). The 14th amendment also excludes Indians who are not taxed. We are totally sovereign.

Sally Fineday- according to Ray's paper, there is no reason to vote in state and federal election.

Birdie did a review of the IRA- Looked at 5 provisions: 6 & 7 land, 16 & 17 common welfare, Section 19 who is an Indian [(1)Indian descent under Federal jurisdiction June 18, 1934, (2) June 1, 1934 who were descendants and live on a reservation, and (3) all Indians who had ½ blood). Adult equals 21 years.

Birdie- Solicitors Opinion on IRA – It is Administrative in what its intent is.

Raymond- We voted on the MCT Charter, but we were never given the opportunity to vote it out. The MCT is a financial institution, clearing house for funding.

The MCT is the only organization of its kind in the US.

Michaa Aubid- We all owned it all (MCT) together. Red Lake broke away 1924. In 1934 only 20% of our people spoke English; the people voted to be together. The MCT is a position of strength.

11:45 am Lunch

12:45 pm Continuation of **MLB Report**

Al Olson discussed the Nelson Act and the members roll. The 1964 Revised Constitution referenced the wording of the Nelson Act. The original IRA or Constitution does not reference the ¼ blood.

Sally Fineday: I am going to ask our citizens if we should draft an ordinance to get rid of the BQ.

Birdie: Conclusion of MLB Report. Protect sovereignty. Goal to be 100% sufficient. MCT is not a tribe, but an organization. Eliminate the MCT Constitution and create MLB constitution. MLB should participate informally with the MCT Constitution Reform. Disagree with all statements related with the Referendum on Enrollment, waiting on voice of the MLB citizen. We are 100% behind an alliance created under our own tradition. Get out from under US Law.

Michaa Aubid- 1985 the MLB asked Congress to be break off from MCT and allow Sandy Lake to replace MLB. Our charge is to write a new Constitution. We need to work together to form a new document.

Sally Fineday LL- We at Leech Lake have decided that Leech Lake should decide their membership. Let's look at Ray's and John's organization recommendations over the next six months.

Birdie- Wants 3 months pause to allow communication with MLB.

Michaa Aubid- We should increase the number of meetings; add a meeting before the MCT meeting.

Birdie- Our people work and do not have time for more meetings.

Sally Fineday LL- The TEC subcommittee should meet before the TEC meeting. All voices are welcome at our meetings.

1:20 pm Roll Call again; all bands represented.

1:21 pm **Committee Reports**

- **TEC Committee** All committee members spoke at the TEC Special meeting. LL voted no. Char Ellis we need to talk to our people. MLB does not want a referendum. FDL was in agreement with the referendum but we need to discuss it with the community. GP voted yes. BF left this meeting so there was no feedback from BF.

Wally- until our Constitution is revised, we are still constrained by ¼ BQ.

Ray Bellcourt- The RBC and MCT are constrained by the Constitution, they are not elected to represent us, they were established to handle finance.

Patty Straub- Washbourn Decision- That should be our guidance.

John Roterman- People should have the oversight. We (people) should meet before the TEC. Let's get councils meeting including descendants. Need to start the Councils.

Note: TEC meeting is January 27-29 at Grand Portage

<https://www.mnchippewatri>

QUARTERLY TEC MEETING DATES & LOCATIONS

Calendar Year 2022

Format and date(s) subject to change based on COVID-19 Pandemic Restrictions

January 27/28, 2022 – Grand Portage

April 28/29, 2022 – Bois Forte

July 11, 2022 – Fond du Lac

October 27/28, 2022 – Leech Lake

- **Education**-Next topic is the Rights of Nature.

- **Finance Committee** – no report

- **Education Committee**- John Roterman volunteered to work on Rights of Nature.
- **Survey Committee** – We have met and did a great deal of work. Need to report out at next meeting.
- **Drafting Committee** – no member present. Recommendation made to take the two draft constitutions done by the bands and share with all.

Cheryl- would like us to work on both enrollment and governance with a 3-month schedule as we agreed to in the Leech Lake Process, to gather input from the community on governance. Grand Portage abstain on the vote for 3 months deadline. Cheryl comments – no need for a vote; this is the process that delegates have already established.

1:45 pm Break

2:05 pm Structure of Government – What is the question on the ballot Resolution regarding non-delegate, enrolled members working on committees

John Roterman- there is a document that I presented and that Michal Smith edited that we have and should work with.

Cheryl Edwards: Both White Earth governance structure and John Roterman’s Government Structure are on the FDL website under Education.

Motion: Non-delegates can serve on our Constitutional Convention Committee. Non-delegates can be community members and/or descendants, enrolled members of other MCT reservations, not to include non-natives. Committee work must be presented by a delegate.

Leech Lake: Agreed. 2nd the motion.

ML: All members/delegates are enrolled. Subcommittees-yes

White Earth- Char has not talked to anyone. I will get back soon.

FDL- yes

GP- yes

BF- yes

Result of motion: awaiting White Earth’s vote

3:45 pm - 4:00 pm **Next Zoom meeting** date January 21, the host is White Earth.

Facilitation Meeting is to be held after this meeting.

2:20 pm Adjourn