

Michigan Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

September 1, 2015
Post Hospital Board Room
Mackinac Island, MI

Commissioners in attendance: Joe Calvaruso, Joan Capuano (by phone), Jack Dempsey, Brian James Egen, Kimberly Johnson, Richard Micka, Susie Safford, Thomas Truscott and Larry Wagenaar.

Staff: Sandra Clark, Michelle Davis

Others: Mark Hoffman, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Chief Administrative Officer

President Dempsey called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and thanked Phil Porter for customary hospitality. He noted the anniversary three days prior of how on August 28, 1915, to mark "Lewis Cass Day" the Mackinac Island State Park Commission and the Michigan Historical Commission had jointly unveiled a bronze tablet marking "Cass Cliff" just east of Fort Mackinac by.

Mackinac Island State Park Director Phil Porter welcomed the Commission. He reported that Mackinac is celebrating three anniversaries this summer: the tri-centennial of the founding of Michilimackinac, the bicentennial of the end of the War of 1812, and the centennial of the first museum, opened in 1915 in the officer's stone quarters, which was done in conjunction with the Michigan Historical Commission.

Dempsey thanked Safford for the fantastic tour on Monday, August 31, 2015, of Emmet County historic sites.

Approval of Agenda: Micka made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Calvaruso and was unanimously approved.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Dempsey indicated he had been asked to pass over this item temporarily.

Legislation:

- Dempsey reminded the Commissioners of Hoffman's emails to them since the last meeting, and that this was the first opportunity for Commissioners together to actually engage with him. He expressed appreciation to Hoffman for being present. He asked if there were questions of Hoffman as consideration of this item began. A discussion began with Johnson stating a need for clarification of the expectations or role of the Commission. She noted that most of the 211 boards/commission within state government target very specific groups or goals.

Hoffman explained that there are two issues at hand. One is related to the clean-up of existing legislation at the direction of the Governor and the need to reflect significant changes in the law that began in 1965. He noted that the Michigan Historical Marker Acts gives the Commission a very specific duty and that the Mackinac Island State Park

Commission is the only Type I commission under the 1965 law associated with the DNR. Hoffman stated that the Commission plays an important part in the success of the department. The second issue relates to the role of the Commission going forward. Hoffman recommended proceeding with updating the statute as presented and addressing the role of the Commission at a future meeting.

Calvaruso stated that the Commission exists to assist the DNR in making Michigan a better place for visitors and tourism. The intention is not to interfere with DNR staff; the Commission hopes to be better utilized in the future.

Dempsey clarified that a few years ago, after the elimination of the Department of History, Arts and Libraries (DHAL), he and Johnson took the initiative and met with Director Creagh to represent what they felt was the Commission's viewpoint: that the Michigan Historical Center is vitally important to the history and the fabric of the state and should receive departmental support. Dempsey and Johnson expressed concern that they had not seen that demonstrated since the demise of DHAL. The discussion centered on a need for a positive forward vision to support Michigan history in state government, and Director Creagh indicated he was looking into funding changes such as use of bond authority.

Calvaruso made a motion that the new Michigan Historical Center Act be supported except for section 12, which should be removed in its entirety; that the attached "Draft 1" of the Commission Act and the attached draft of amendments to the Marker Act be supported; that these three pieces of legislation be presented to the Michigan legislature as a package, as best furthering the public interest; and that a legislation workgroup be created to continue development of a broad legislative vision for Michigan's heritage, to consist of Vice President Capuano and Commissioners Micka and Safford; the motion was seconded by Safford. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Wagenaar stated that he could not support the proposed "Draft 1" of the act because it totally divorces the Commission from the DNR. He saw Section 12 in the DNR draft as the appropriate description of the Commission and the specific role it plays. He noted that several other independent statewide entities that do history work in Michigan and the Center staff's work on the marker program. He also questioned the process of developing "Draft 1," saying he had not seen it prior to it being emailed to Hoffman.

Dempsey noted the DNR request for comments by August 15, 2015 and that he had made contact with every Commissioner and asked for input. He then compiled all the input received into the documents shared on August 14.

Egen commented that the current role of the Commission goes beyond advising to active involvement in the MAK Award, the Civil War Sesquicentennial, the Grant House project and markers.

Micka handed out a packet related to heritage and called attention to the importance of sustaining Michigan's water heritage and involving heritage in water and land trails.

Truscott expressed his satisfaction with the status quo and the Commission's role in supporting the Center as the heart of history in Michigan and a leader in teaching young people the history of their state. He offered support for the DNR draft.

Capuano expressed support for Calvaruso's motion and recognition that the Commission is more than advisory. She found past transfers of the Commission to different departments to make the failure to mention the DNR in the "Draft 1" proposal irrelevant. Safford also supported the motion.

Hoffman clarified that there are many Type II commissions that are very involved and that statutes don't limit that involvement. However there are certain things agencies cannot do without explicit legal authority, such as receive and expend funds, retain personnel. He found nothing in the current law or the draft clarification of it that would limit the Commission's ability to do great things.

Calvaruso said the intent of the proposed "Draft 1" was to have a working group collaborate with the DNR on this effort.

Hoffman asked for clarification on the motion, noting that the motion appears to present legislation that removes the Commission from the DNR. He asked why the newly proposed Commission work group would then sit down with the DNR for further discussion. He also reminded the Commission that the legislative package not only has to pass the House and Senate, it also has to be signed by the Governor. The direction the DNR has received from the administration is that they will not support legislation that transfers the Historical Commission outside of the DNR or that changes its Type II status.

Calvaruso stated that his motion asked for a Commission work group to have dialogue with the department. He was confident the Governor would support the Commission wanting to form such a group and take time to sit down with the DNR to discuss legislation.

Hoffman reported that the DNR had asked the administration exactly what their position was on the legislation through the Governor's legislative director Dick Posthumus.

After further discussion affirming the value of conversation between the DNR and the Commission, Wagenaar proposed an amendment to Calvaruso's motion; removing the words "removed in its entirety; that the attached "Draft 1" of the Commission Act and the attached draft of amendments to the Marker Act be supported; that these three pieces of legislation be presented to the Michigan legislature as a package, as best furthering the public interest;" and inserting "further explore with the DNR and Center." The motion did not receive a second.

During discussion of the legislative process, Hoffman responded that drafters can be asked to pause while there is internal discussion; however, there is no guarantee of what the legislative branch would do. He also indicated that while all clean-up bills like this

are handled separately, the DNR would like to have everything introduced before the budget starts in February and the legislature becomes extremely busy.

After other language changes to Calvaruso's motion were discussed, Calvaruso asked to withdraw his original motion and Safford, who had seconded it, agreed.

Calvaruso then moved that the new Michigan Historical Center Act be supported except for section 12, which should be removed in its entirety; that the attached "Draft 1" of the Commission Act and the attached draft of amendments to the Marker Act be supported; that these three pieces of legislation be presented to the Governor's Office/ Administration as a package, as best furthering the public interest; and that a legislation workgroup be created to continue development of a broad legislative vision for Michigan's heritage, to consist of Vice President Capuano and Commissioner Micka and Safford. The motion was seconded by Safford.

Wagenaar stated that while he supported further discussion, he could not support separating the Commission from the DNR and the Center.

On a rollcall vote the motion was approved by a vote of seven to two:

Calvaruso	yes
Capuano	yes
Dempsey	yes
Egen	yes
Johnson	yes
Micka	yes
Safford	yes
Truscott	no
Wagenaar	no

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Dempsey returned to the matter of minutes from the last meeting and asked if there were any issues: none was expressed. Micka made a motion to approve the June 23, 2015, meeting minutes as amended; the motion was seconded by Safford, and was unanimously approved.

Marker Program:

➤ Approval of Marker Texts:

Seven marker texts were presented to the Commission for review and approval, several of which had been presented since the previous meeting via email communications for preliminary approval:

- ◆ **Hiawatha Pageant, Bear Creek Township, Emmet County**
- ◆ **Buchanan Downtown and Buchanan North & West Neighborhoods, Buchanan, Berrien County**
- ◆ **Croswell House (Governor Charles M. Croswell), Adrian, Lenawee County**
- ◆ **WQPR-TV, Detroit, Wayne County**
- ◆ **Morton Cemetery, Benton Harbor, St. Joseph County**

- ◆ **Meridian-Base Line Initial Point (Meridian-Base Line Dual Initial Points), Pleasant Lake, Jackson and Ingham County**
- ◆ **St. Anne Church (St. Anne Chapel), Grosse Ile Township, Wayne County**

The marker texts were reviewed and appropriate actions were decided individually. Egen made a motion to approve the Hiawatha Pageant marker text with minor modifications; the motion was seconded by Truscott, and the text was unanimously approved. Egen moved approval of both the Buchanan Downtown and the Buchanan North & West Neighborhoods marker texts; the motion was seconded by Wagenaar, and the text was unanimously approved. Safford moved approval of the Cresswell House marker text; the motion was seconded by Egen, and the text was unanimously approved. Egen made a motion to approve the WGPR-TV marker text with minor modifications; the motion was seconded by Calvaruso, and the text was unanimously approved. Truscott made a motion to approve the Morton Cemetery marker text; the motion was seconded by Micka, and the text was unanimously approved. Wagenaar moved approval of the Meridian-Base Line Initial Point marker text; the motion was seconded by Safford, and the text was unanimously approved with Capuano abstaining. Capuano moved approval of the St. Anne Church marker text; the motion was seconded by Truscott, and the text was unanimously approved.

Wagenaar made a motion for the Commission to write a resolution thanking Boy Scout Benjamin Agay for his diligent research on the Morton Cemetery marker; the motion was seconded by Micka, and was unanimously approved.

- **Approval of Marker Applications:** Rebecca Schmitt provided written background on two new marker applications. Clark noted that marker applications are not being presented to the Commission until staff has found them to have sufficient documentation.

- ◆ **Old Centreville Cemetery**

The application was submitted by Amos Sturgis Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution Centreville Lions Club with a proposed location of Ann Street near the southern edge of the cemetery in Centreville. The sponsor is requesting a small, one-post marker with the same text on both sides.

Residents actively used this cemetery for 138 years, from 1833-1971. Most burials occurred during the 19th century. As of October 2014, there are a total of 266 marked graves and an unknown number of unmarked gravesites. The most prevalent style of grave markers is tablet, and the most prevalent material is limestone. Many of Centreville's first settlers are buried in this cemetery, including Margaret Langley, the first permanent settler. Also significant is "Black Ann" who worked for Mrs. Langley and was "the first negro" in St. Joseph County, according to her 1892 obituary.

Schmitt recommended approval of this maker application as the sponsor provided excellent primary source documentation.

- ◆ **Dougherty Mission House**

The application was submitted by Peter Dougherty Society with a proposed marker location in front of the House, facing Mission Road. The sponsor is requesting large, two-post marker with different text on each side.

The Dougherty Mission House was built in 1842 for Presbyterian minister Peter Dougherty and his family. Dougherty directed a mission to the area's Native American tribes, including such activities as education and translating scripture into Ojibwa. The building is the only surviving structure from this mission. Solon Rushmore purchased the property c. 1861 and farmed the land while using the house as a residence. In 1870, he died, and his cousin Duranty Rushmore purchased the property. He converted the house into a hotel for tourists, one of the first in the region. It functioned as a hotel until c. 1916. The Peter Dougherty Society is currently restoring the house and its outbuildings. The property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2011 for its significance in architecture, association with important events (Exploration/Settlement and Social History/Religion), and its association with Peter Dougherty.

Schmitt recommended approval of this marker application as the sponsor provided excellent primary source documentation.

Calvaruso moved to approve both marker applications as recommended; the motion was seconded by Wagenaar, and they were unanimously approved.

➤ **Marker Fund and Status Reports, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Agreement**

- ◆ The Marker Fund and Status reports were distributed prior to the meeting. Johnson requested that the Marker Fund report show any committed amount so the available net revenue in the fund would be there. Johnson added that the Marker Fund shows 21 markers have been paid for in 2015, which exceeds the goal established of 20. However, the goal for new applications received has not been met, and Commissioners should encourage people to apply.
- ◆ Clark reported that the SHPO Agreement has not been concluded.

➤ **60th Anniversary Commemoration**

- ◆ Minutes from the July 10, 2015, conference call were distributed prior to the meeting.
- ◆ "The Story of Where" website has not been completed, partly because the project is more complicated than initially thought. Each marker file will need to be looked at, which requires more hours than anticipated. At this time the best solution for Commemoration efforts will be to direct individuals to Jim Brennan's Michigan Historical Marker Page at www.michmarkers.com.
- ◆ Clark will register for the October 24, 2015, *USA Today's* "Make a Difference Day" and promote it.
- ◆ Calvaruso made a motion to devote up to \$1,000 to re-erect the Early Detroit: 1701-1760, S38, marker; the motion was seconded by Wagenaar, and was unanimously approved.

- ◆ Dempsey noted that he would not be working on the action items he had been asked and agreed to undertake as recorded in the June 19 call minutes until further clarification from department administration is given to the Commission regarding proposed legislation.
- ◆ Dempsey inquired of Clark whether there was anything else to report on markers, and she replied there was not.

Milliken/Adams/Kelley (MAK) Award

- Minutes from the August 27, 2015, conference call were distributed prior to the meeting.
- A copy of the press release announcing that nominations were being accepted for the MAK Award was distributed prior to the meeting.
- Three nominations for the 2015 MAK Award were received. The subcommittee proposed that the Commission endorse the nomination of Kerry Chartkoff for the MAK Award. Truscott made a motion to support the MAK subcommittee's nomination and to approach the Governor for a proclamation acknowledging the significant contributions of the Michigan Commission on the Commemoration of the Bicentennial of the War of 1812. The motion was supported by Johnson, and was unanimously approved. Given Kerry Chartkoff's involvement with the Michigan State Capitol marker, the subcommittee agreed to give further thought to combining the October 27, 2015, marker dedication date with the MAK Award. Capuano thanked Egen for his donation to the MAK fund and encouraged other donations.

Historic District Study Committee Report

- Addendum to the Market and Main Street Local Historic District and the West End Local Historic Districts, Mackinac Island

Johnson made a motion to accept the Historic District Study Committee Report; the motion was seconded by Egen, and was unanimously approved.

New Business:

- Dempsey asked members to look at Michigan Historical Commission meeting dates for 2016, indicating one likely in January and one required in June per the bylaws, avoiding conflicting dates such as Historical Society of Michigan Conferences, and requested Commissioners to think creatively of new location possibilities.

Old Business/Commissioner Reports:

- The Grant House Project Report was distributed prior to the meeting.
- The Director's report was distributed prior to the meeting
- Truscott reported on the marker dedications he attended over the past couple of months: St. Francis Solanus Indian Mission, Elk Rapids Golf Park, Kauffman House, and the Scout Barracks.
- Wagenaar reported that the State History Conference is on September 25-27, 2015, in Saginaw. He distributed the most recent issue of *Michigan History for Kids*.
- Safford distributed the *Essence of Emmet* publication.
- Micka reported on the Willow Run Bomber Plant re-dedication. He also thanked Safford for the wonderful tour she organized for the Commission.

Public Comment: None

The next meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2015.

Safford made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Johnson, and the meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra S. Clark". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Sandra S. Clark, Executive Secretary