

# Michigan Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

April 7, 2016

Michigan Historical Center

702 West Kalamazoo Street, Lansing, MI

Board Room

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

**Excused Absence:** Larry Wagenaar

**Staff:** Sandra Clark, Michelle Davis, Rebecca Schmitt

**Others:** Dr. William Moritz, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Director; Mark Hoffman, DNR, Chief Administrative Officer; James Brennan, Director of Information Technology, City of Port Huron.

President Dempsey called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

**Approval of Agenda:** Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Truscott, and was unanimously approved.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Capuano made a motion to approve the January 21, 2016, meeting minutes as amended; the motion was seconded by Truscott, and was unanimously approved.

## Legislative Update:

- **Senate Bill No. 521(SB 521), Senate Bill No. 522(SB 522), Senate Bill No. (SB 523)**
  - ◆ Clark distributed a Legislative update on SB 521, SB 522 and SB523 prior to the meeting.
  
- **Marker Act Amendments Process**
  - ◆ Clark distributed a Points of Difference Summary prior to the meeting. After discussion, the Commission agreed that the Marker committee will schedule a meeting to go through the summary with staff and recommend language. The meeting will be run in compliance with the Open Meetings Act if it applies.

**Conversation on DNR budget planning: Director Moritz** – Director Moritz noted that three different budgets are always active: the FY2016 budget is being implemented; the FY2017 budget has passed both houses, and natural and cultural resources have fared well; the FY18 budget is in the beginning stages of development. Looking to FY18, the department is focused on infrastructure.

Each fiscal year, each Division/Office within the DNR puts together budget recommendations for both restricted and general tax funds. The DNR has a \$400 million budget and typically will have proposals totaling over \$100 million. The Department evaluates and prioritizes the

proposals creating six to eight recommendations to take to the Governor during the first part of October. Several ideas may be combined into a single proposal.

Some ideas take time to build the social and legislative support to make them happen. The Center has had a strong proposal that continues to be carried forward about using Preservica as a software system to help communities throughout the state archive their official records. Infrastructure may interface well with this proposal because there it goes beyond physical need.

There are four questions that should be considered when seeking funding:

- ◆ How much money will be needed?
- ◆ Where will the money come from?
- ◆ How will the people of the State benefit?
- ◆ Who are the champions (who is going to help get this done)?

Over the past several years, the DNR has been very strategic about having an outcome-based presentation for the Legislature; showing the investments, projecting the return on those investments, and presenting the outcomes. The DNR tries to share a solution instead of focusing on its piece of the pie. Finding both public and political champions to build support for the desired outcome is essential.

The Governor recently announced the formation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure Commission. Michigan has 25 million visitors each year to its state parks and cultural resources, and strategic infrastructure investment in those improves the quality of life. That quality of life is what makes Michigan - Michigan! DNR believes it is essential to build strong relationships with communities in order to become successful at leveraging dollars instead of competing for them. Funding proposals need to have both the sizzle and the substance to get it done.

Commissioners talked about the importance of the marker program to quality of life and tourism.

Hoffman explained the importance of looking at the bigger picture on how the marker program and other responsibilities of the Commission can connect with larger infrastructure plan, as well as in the overall role of tourism.

### **Marker Program:**

- **Approval of Marker Applications** – Rebecca Schmitt provided written background on five new marker applications. (Appendix A)

Safford made a motion to approve the following five applications as recommended; the motion was seconded by Johnson, and they were unanimously approved:

- ◆ **Baw Beese Lake, Hillsdale, Hillsdale County**
- ◆ **David Whitney Building, Detroit, Wayne County**
- ◆ **Charles Brotherton House, Escanaba, Delta County**
- ◆ **Tawas Point Light Station, East Tawas, Iosco County**
- ◆ **Edith C. Munger, Oceana County**

The following marker concept was brought to the Commission for its opinion prior to working on a marker application:

- ◆ **Smiths Creek Train Depot, Manistee, Manistee County**

After discussion, the consensus of the Commission was the sponsor should move forward with submitting an application. Egen offered to share The Henry Ford research files on the depot.

➤ **Approval of Marker Texts:**

Schmitt presented five new marker texts for Commission review and approval:

- ◆ **Applewood Estate, Flint, Genesee County**
- ◆ **Eastern Liggett School/Detroit Waldorf School, Detroit, Wayne County**
- ◆ **Genevieve Gillette, Honor, Benzie County**
- ◆ **Walker Tavern, Brooklyn, Lenawee County**
- ◆ **Wayside Memorial Park, Litchfield, Hillsdale County**

Egen made a motion to ratify the previous e-mail approval of the Applewood Estate marker text; the motion was seconded by Capuano, and the text was approved. Calvaruso made a motion to approve the Eastern Liggett/Detroit Waldorf School marker text; the motion was seconded by Egen, and the text was unanimously approved. Capuano made a motion to approve the Genevieve Gillette marker text subject to provision of a precise location and owner's permission; the motion was seconded by Calvaruso, and the text was unanimously approved. Safford made a motion to approve the Walker Tavern marker text with minor modifications; the motion was seconded by Truscott, and the text was unanimously approved. Calvaruso made a motion to approve the Wayside Memorial Park marker text as amended; the motion was seconded by Safford, and the text was unanimously approved.

➤ **Requests to move/replace markers;**

- ◆ Request to move the Ford Hunger March marker - Wayne County, S365. The Commission reviewed a request submitted by the Local 600 U.A.W. to move the marker to the Local 600 U.A.W. Union Hall in Dearborn. Capuano made a motion to approve moving the marker subject to receiving a plan showing how the marker will be displayed at the new location and a label including a picture of the marker at its original location. The motion was seconded by Egen, and was unanimously approved. The Commission also discussed the historic importance of the original site and requested that a new marker focused on the site instead of the now replaced bridge be part of the site interpretation. Hoffman agreed to take the lead on working with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) if needed on the new marker.
- ◆ Request to move the Fort St. Joseph marker – Port Huron, St. Clair County, S80: The City of Port Huron, represented by James Brennan, asked to move the marker to a more historically appropriate location on the south side of Elmwood Street between Forest Street and the Thomas Edison Parkway. Micka made a motion to approve relocating the marker to the proposed location; the motion was seconded by Johnson, and was unanimously approved.
- ◆ Request to move Sheldon's Corner's marker – Canton, Wayne County, L1238C: Canton Township has requested moving the marker to 44649 Michigan Avenue,

Canton. Truscott made a motion to approve relocating the marker to the proposed location; the motion was seconded by Johnson, and was unanimously approved.

- ◆ Request to move Union Pump Company marker – Battle Creek, Calhoun County, L1225C: Safford made a motion to approve moving the marker subject to receiving a plan showing how the marker will be displayed at the new location and a label including a picture of the marker at its original location. The motion was seconded by Calvaruso, and was unanimously approved.

The Commission discussed the need for guidelines on moving a historical marker to artifact status. Clark agreed to develop a draft and circulate for review.

- **Conservation Heritage Marker Trail Report** – The Genevieve Gillette marker will not be ordered until a confirmed location has been determined and an appropriate owner's signature obtained. Those involved will be notified that it can take 8-12 weeks for an order from Sewah Studios to be completed. The Edith C. Munger marker application is the next conservation heritage marker initiated for the thematic marker trail. Rebecca Schmitt is researching the text. Johnson will distribute the document she has been using that has 38 conservation markers in 30 counties. Director Moritz noted that moving forward with these markers it may be beneficial to look into conservation milestones such as when the Audubon and the Michigan Audubon were first created. They were instrumental in the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and getting the first refuges established to protect many bird populations.
- **Database Project, Marker Fund and Status Reports**
  - ◆ The marker database project continues to move forward with inputting, reviewing and updating the information in the database. It is important to avoid being too general with search tags to minimize searches that produce too many records. There is the option to do a word search without using a tag. Johnson asked if it is timely for Commissioners to begin adding marker information when they attend a dedication. Clark responded that instructions need to be finalized.
  - ◆ The Marker Fund and Marker Status reports were distributed prior to the meeting.

### **Commission Projects**

- **Milliken/Adams/Kelley (MAK) Award**
  - ◆ Capuano distributed MAK Award Committee meeting minutes from March 23, 2016, prior to the meeting.
  - ◆ Kerry Chartkoff will be awarded the MAK Award on July 9, 2016, at 1:00 p.m., State Capitol east steps. This coincides with the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First Return of the Battle Flags and the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Save the Flags program.
  - ◆ The Committee is hoping for more promotional assistance with the MAK Award, especially from Commissioners. One idea was to have it promoted at the Local History Conference, with Wagenaar's approval and assistance. Clark noted that the MAK application will be available on the MHC website year around. She also noted that the Abrams Foundation Family History Seminar will be held at MHC on July 7-8, 2016, and would present a good opportunity to promote the award.
  - ◆ Capuano presented the Committee's report for the 2016 MAK Award. After discussion, it was agreed that Commissioners should review the nomination packet(s) and discuss this at the next Commission Meeting.

- ◆ Clark and Hoffman agreed to request a Governor's Resolution for the War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission. The Commission's Resolution was sent in January 2016.
- **Grant House Relocation** – Dempsey recused himself and left the meeting room during discussion of this item. Clark stated that the lawyer representing the Detroit Edison Public School Academy (DEPSA) is reviewing the formal agreement and will contact Clark with DEPSA's final proposal.
- **Civil War Sesquicentennial**
  - ◆ Egen reported that a survey will be sent out to all involved to compile a list of all events that took place during the Civil War Sesquicentennial. The official end date of the Civil War Sesquicentennial effort will be July 9, 2016. The RFP is in draft format for the Michigan Monument at Antietam and should be finalized soon.

**Old Business:**

- **Director's Report** – The Director's Report was distributed prior to the meeting. Clark noted the meeting scheduled with WKAR on a possible partnership, working on the Seeking Michigan website and the Father Marquette project. Commissioners asked about the Ft. Wayne report.
- **Meeting Locations** – The June 16, 2016, meeting will take place at the Huron Valley Council for the Arts/Highland Historical Society Building in Highland, Michigan. Times will be finalized as Johnson confirms details. Alpena is being considered as the location for the September 20, 2016, meeting.

**New Business:**

- **Güd Brand Strategy** – Clark distributed the draft Brand Strategy Guide Introduction.
- Safford announced that she received a phone call stating she has been reappointed to the Commission.
- Micka noted several things including the River Raisin brochure and information on the controversy around the Historic Districts Act.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2016, in Highland.

Capuano made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Truscott, and the meeting adjourned at 12:57 p.m.



Sandra S. Clark, Executive Secretary