

The St. Ignace News

Portage Township Prepares for Millage

By Paul Gingras

Residents of Portage Township will go to the polls and vote on three millages in the August primary. At the regular meeting Tuesday, April 11, township trustees prepared the request for 0.5 mill for the next four years to fund the Curtis Library, one mill for three years to fund road projects, and one mill for the next two years to finance fire and ambulance equipment replacement. The board also discussed the increasing need for fast, reliable Internet service in the area and the construction of a new baseball field for Little League.

Portage Township owns the library building and pays the utility bills, but it has nothing to do with its operations, said Township Clerk Marcia McDonald. Curtis Library is a branch of Bayliss Public Library of Sault Ste. Marie, which also runs Les Cheneaux Community Library, Brevort Township Community Library, Drummond Island Library, and Engadine Library. The township's renewal millage will provide Bayliss with \$22,000 a year for services at Curtis Library, such as buying books and paying staff.

The Portage Township board has discovered that it needs an additional one mill to handle upcoming road projects. Township Supervisor Donald Ferris is working with the Mackinac County Road Commission to establish which roads take priority, and the board passed a resolution to chip and seal Long Point Road, a project which began last year. The road will be finished this summer, provided sub-grade work has been completed and sufficient funds are available, Mrs. McDonald said.

Prior to beginning the upgrade, the road had deteriorated badly, she said. In fact, when an ambulance was sent down Long Point Road during the spring thaw, the town-

ship had to send one four wheel drive vehicle ahead of it and another behind, both loaded with cables, in case it got stuck. There are many year around residents who live on Long Point Road, she added.

The board will make a plan to employ a high speed Internet service provider at the next meeting Tuesday, May 9. Township officials are having increased difficulty keeping up with their work, as more and more government agencies and other organizations rely on the Internet. The township hall has only one dial-up connection, which, according to Mrs. McDonald, requires hours to download a document. The township board sought the advice of Peter Copenhaver of the Symbios computer company in Germfask to conduct an Internet assessment Friday, April 21, to determine the township's needs. AT&T had promised to provide service by the end of the year, both for the township hall and the town of Curtis, but it appears that will not be soon enough, Mrs. McDonald said.

In addition to the township

administrators, Internet access is needed by the ambulance corps, the assessor, the fire department. Program updates can take hours to download, and hog the line so that others can't use it.

"The current system is not meeting our needs," Mrs. McDonald said.

In other business, both chassis for the township's new fire trucks have been paid for, and at least one truck is expected to arrive in July, Mrs. McDonald said. The second truck will arrive next fall.

The board commended Bill Berry of Curtis for his efforts to create a new baseball field for the Little League.

The project has been going on since last fall when Fred Burton began clearing trees, said Trustee Patrick Abram.

The field will be adjacent to the softball field behind the new section of the Woodlawn Cemetery. The Little League had been playing on the field at Curtis Elementary School, but needed a new field better suited to its needs, Mrs. McDonald said.

Candidate Petitions Due for August 8 Primary; General Election Nov. 7

The August primary election will be Tuesday, August 8, and the general election will be Tuesday, November 7, and candidates for office must have their petitions on file at the county clerk's office by Tuesday, May 16, at 4 p.m., said Mary Kay Tamlyn, Mackinac County clerk. This deadline includes precinct delegate candidates, though not judicial candidates, whose petitions were due in March and early May and are filed at the state level.

Candidates for a city office file with the city clerk, while candidates for township office file with the township clerk.

Republican and Democratic candidates seeking state, county, and township partisan offices must file a partisan nominating petition and an affidavit of identity by the May 16 deadline. Those seeking the office of state representative or a county office may file a \$100 filing fee in lieu of a petition.

Candidates without party affiliation who seek a partisan office must file a qualifying petition for the November general election and an affidavit of identity by 4 p.m.

Thursday, July 20.

Write-in candidates must file a Declaration of Intent form for the November general election by 4 p.m. Friday, November 3.

Candidates for the state House of Representatives or the U.S. House of Representatives, whose district is wholly contained in one county, file with the county clerk. Those whose districts fall in more than one county file at the Bureau of Elections in Lansing.

The filing deadline for write-in candidates for the primary is Friday, August 4, and Wednesday, November 3, for the general election.

Registered voters in Mackinac County will cast their votes for governor, secretary of state, attorney general, U.S. Senator, U.S. Congressman for District One, State Senator for District 37, and State Congressman for District 107.

On the local level, voters will consider five county commission seats that hold a two-year term; one six-year term road commission seat; and one six-year term for 6th District Probate Court. St. Ignace



Coast Guard Helicopter Airlifts From Bois Blanc, Searches for Kayaker

A teenage girl was airlifted by Coast Guard helicopter from Bois Blanc Island Thursday, April 27. Suffering from complications of recent surgery, she was transported to Air Station Traverse City, where an ambulance was standing by to take her to a hospital. On the same evening, the Traverse City Air Station crew assisted in a search for a possible missing kayaker in Lake Michigan near Chicago. (Photograph courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City)

voters will cast ballots to fill one St. Ignace City Council seat to complete the balance of the term ending in 2007. A Brevort trustee seat will be filled for the balance of the term ending in 2007.

Petitions for local questions to be on the August primary ballot are due by Tuesday, May 16, and those for the November general election ballot must be filed by Tuesday, August 15.

Mrs. Tamlyn said there is a possible county tax allocation millage renewal that will be on the primary ballot and townships could have ballot millages also, though at this time none have been filed.

Island Officials Crack Down on License Violators

By Karen Gould

Restrictions placed on the 2006 business license that was issued to Sunset Condominiums, Inc. of Mackinac Island will allow the city to examine rental books at any time. City Council approved the new license with the codicil Wednesday, April 26, one week after revoking the company's 2005 license because of previous renting violations.

"It's a matter of occupant safety," said city attorney Tom Evashevski.

The property management company, which is owned by Dennis and Jeanie Reimer, administers vacation rental programs for property owners. The city has documents proving rental violations, which the company has acknowledged. The company also agreed to the new license restrictions.

"The agreement provides us with the ability to look at their rental records to assure they are not renting in violation of the ordinance," added Mr. Evashevski.

Sunset Condominiums was booking short-term rentals for less than 30 days in a structure that could not be licensed as a hotel and that is in violation of zoning and building codes, Mr. Evashevski explained.

"We have been very concerned about these types of violations for a number of years, but we've never

been able to get proof so we could act on them," explained Mr. Evashevski.

A disgruntled former employee alerted the city that the company was violating Island regulations by renting houses on a weekly basis and provided copies of rental records to allow Mr. Evashevski to move forward with the revocation process of the 2005 business license.

When confronted, the company owners acknowledged that violations have occurred and agreed to the revocation of their 2005 business license. They also agreed to have conditions placed on the new business license that are designed to monitor and make sure no similar violation occurs in the future, said Mr. Evashevski.

The City of Mackinac Island is concerned over renting violations because it is a serious violation of zoning and building codes, explained Mr. Evashevski.

The zoning ordinance that clarifies the violation states that "a rental period of less than 30 days shall be considered a hotel usage."

With zoning codes, renting a house in a residentially zoned single-family (R-1) district for a week or two at a time is a problem because the important aspect of an

R-1 district is the stability of the occupants, he said. In an R-1 district, people know their neighbors and with those homes becoming short-term rentals, it changes the character of the neighborhood, he added.

Residential homes are not built with the intention of being used short-term, he noted. A short-term occupancy building requires the fire protection, stronger building materials, and construction requirements of a hotel.

Household residents are familiar with their surroundings and know how to get out in case of an emergency, he said, while short-term renters don't. Lit exit signs, posted floor plans, fire walls and stairway fire doors are required in a hotel, but not a home.

Foundation Awards \$16,670 in Spring

The St. Ignace Area Community Foundation will award \$16,670 in scholarships and grants for its spring cycle Monday, May 22, at 5 p.m. at the Community Room of the St. Ignace Public Library. The public is welcome to attend.

Grants are awarded semi-annually. The Foundation has set aside \$8,000 to be awarded in the fall.

DeTour Church Birthday Banquet

The DeTour Union Presbyterian Church will host its annual Birthday Banquet Thursday, May 4, at 6 p.m. There will be entertainment and a family-style meal. Tickets will be available at the door for \$6 per adult, \$3 per child age 12 and younger.

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Prizes & Auction Items: Autographed Books & Celebrity Photos • Shakespeare Ugly Stik Package

3rd Annual Moose for Mutts
Sunday, May 7th
4-8 p.m.
St. Ignace Moose Lodge, Mackinac Trail

Chicken Dinner
Adults \$8 • Under 12 \$4

Silent Auction • Drawings
50/50 • Door Prizes

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
by Lynn Dionne

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Green Bay Packer 2005 Autographed Collector's Football
Autographed Books & Celebrity Photos ~ Shakespear Ugly Stik Package
US & MI Flags Flown Over Capitols ~ Many Gift Certificates ~ Ferry Line Tickets
Kewadin Casino Packages ~ "Price Is Right" Script • Local Artists' Photography, Pottery & Slippers
Bissell SpotBot • Apparel • Rattan Dog Kennel

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Local Artists - Original Photographs, Pottery & Slippers • Rattan Dog Kennel

Mackinac Bridge Tour • US & MI Flags Flown Over Capitols • Many Gift Certificates