

Marina Report: Small Boats Aren't Traveling This Summer

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also is reflected in boat launch revenue, which is down 50% through July, from \$3,313 last year to \$1,695 this year.

"Small boats aren't operating, nor are they coming into our marina," he said. "They aren't moving, they aren't buying any gas, they aren't coming here."

After Labor Day, the St. Ignace marina will close at 4 p.m., two hours earlier than now.

Included in the revenue figures for this year is \$8,000 from the Chicago Yacht Club for the rental of 105 slips during the Race to Mackinac this year. That check has not yet arrived, however.

The Chicago Yacht Club already has committed 120 boats for the marina for the 2009 race.

State-wide, overnight slip rental at state-operated marinas is down 12.5% through July 29, Mary Dettloff of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) told The St. Ignace News Tuesday, August 19.

The decline is attributed to high gas prices, she said, but weather is always a major influence on boaters.

"Weather still remains the number-one factor if people are camping or boating," she said.

The new hospital set to open in 2010 will receive a much reduced connection fee to the city's water and sewer system.

The city council acted on a recommendation from the Utilities Committee and approved a \$15,000 tap-in fee for sewer and agreed no fee will be changed to connect to the city water line.

The city ordinance, allows a connection fee of \$115,000 be charged to the hospital for water and sewer. The ordinance is based on the square footage of a building.

The hospital, said City Manager Eric Dodson, has agreed to rebuild a manhole that is just south of the site of the hospital. Also, hospital officials, who did not attend the meeting, have agreed to

add a screening system to their sewer line to block larger items, including clothing, from being flushed into the system.

The city has reduced such fees in the past for public facilities that benefit the community, Mr. Dodson said, including the Community Action Agency building several years ago.

The bus station project continues to move forward. Council is scheduled to award the bid for it Tuesday, September 2.

With a completion deadline of the second week of May, Mr. Dodson said framing work must begin immediately so construction can continue inside through the winter.

Construction is expected to cost about \$1.2 million.

The water fund is in the black \$27,181.31, said Mr. Dodson, and the sewer fund has a balance of \$68,383.05.

Council made an amendment to its ordinance to authorize the sale of bonds to finance improvements to the city's wastewater system. The ordinance called for the principal not to exceed \$3,655,000.

The amendment now sets the principal not to exceed \$4 million and came at the recommendation of the city's bond attorney, Miller Canfield, as a contingency.

In the city's efforts to battle the Emerald Ash Borer, DNR has awarded a grant for \$5,250 to conduct a tree survey and management plan. The city must match the grant and spend it by September 15.

The DNR required the survey and management plan be done first, said Mr. Dodson, and did not approve an application for up to \$20,000 to replace trees. The possibility still exists, said Mr. Dodson, to get that funding.

Recreation Director Scott Marshall told Council 20 more players are participating in soccer this year, which added two teams to the roster.

The new youth football program already has about 60 players

signed up, which will make six teams. Next year, the program will include more age groups.

The community pool hours have been reduced because only one part-time lifeguard is available. Hours now are from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Mr. Marshall said he is trying to get a lifeguard training class scheduled so more lifeguards will be available in the future.

The first year of the family recreational weekend, St. Ignace Summer Daze, had a small turnout, Mr. Marshall said, although it was successful and is something that can be further developed. Next year, he plans to advertise the event and post a Web site.

"To sell our area is not hard at all," he said. "People are just

looking for an excuse to come to our area."

Work on the fitness center addition continues and construction of walls is about to begin.

He also wants to schedule dance classes this fall and over the Christmas holiday.

A resolution was adopted acknowledging the assistance given from both the Mackinaw City Fire Department and the Brevort Township Fire Department for their assistance with last week's fire at Mackinac Ford Sales.

St. Ignace Fire Chief John "Bucky" Robinson said a mutual aid agreement between local communities increases the success of controlling fires.

With the next council meeting falling on Labor Day, Council changed its next meeting to Tuesday, September 2, at 8 p.m.

New Signs Installed at St. Ignace

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The aluminum framed and powder coated signs, he said, are built not to rust if they are chipped.

The signs are designed to be changeable, and updates probably will be made every one or two years.

A new brick walkway and swings could be added to American Legion Park this fall, said Mrs. Evashevski, if a grant is awarded for the project.

A \$60,000 match grant that focuses on neighborhood preservation was presented to the board by Lori Pieri, executive director of Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) of Mackinac County. The grant, said Mrs. Pieri, is designed for organizations like HOME and it also fits the city's need. HOME has built 14 houses in three neighborhoods within the city in the past seven years. Improvements and updates made to the park, she said, would enhance those neighborhoods.

In July, the DDA began working on developing a five-year plan for downtown upgrades, including at the park.

The board agreed to partner with HOME in seeking the grant. HOME now will make application for the funds. The DDA will contribute \$13,500 to the project and the Department of Public Works would contribute \$6,500 in labor.

If the grant is awarded, it would make about \$85,000 available for work at the park.

The grant will be awarded in September.

Plans call to replace a limestone path, which is difficult to navigate for strollers and wheelchairs, with brick, and extend the walkway for \$30,000 in grant funds, with the city's contribution at \$5,000. Swings would be added to the north side of the playground for \$10,000 in grant funds, with the city's match of \$3,570. All 20 low level lights at the park, some of which have been vandalized, would be replaced with a new lighting system of \$13,000 in grant money, with the city's match at \$5,000. Upgrades would be made to the landscaping, planted in 1994, that no longer fits the needs of the park and sprinklers would be added to maintain the lawn with grant money of \$12,000, with the city match at \$6,620. Administrative fees of \$5,000 would be covered as a match from the DDA.

The Neighborhood Preservation Initiative Challenge Grant is offered by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. Statewide, \$1 million is available through the program with a maximum \$60,000 per application.

The DDA next meets Friday, September 12, at 8 a.m. at city hall.

Play Group Hosts Bubble Time



"It's going to be fun," said Rose Siebigteroth, 5 (left), while her brother, Jeffery, 3 (center), says his favorite part is popping the bubbles. Liam McGreevy, 3, who used a bubble machine, said bubble making is really fun. The children took part in the Infant-Toddler Play Group Tuesday, August 12, at the St. Ignace Elementary School playground. The group, which meets two times a month, is for children up to five years of age, although older siblings are welcome. Each month, different activities are offered. The next play group meeting is Tuesday, August 26, at 2 p.m. at the playground. For more information, call group coordinator Laurie Siebigteroth at (906) 298-2223.

Rendezvous Is This Weekend

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learn about container making and deer hide tanning, and the making of beads. Items will be available for purchase and food vendors will be on site.

The event is being sponsored

by the St. Ignace Special Events Committee, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, the St. Ignace Chamber of Commerce, Michilimackinac Historical Society, and the St. Ignace Visitors Bureau.

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City Firemen Seek Vintage Photos

St. Ignace firemen are seeking vintage photographs of the fire department clowns to be used in a display at the department's banquet this fall. Those who are able to submit photographs are asked to drop them off to Tom Colegrove at the St. Ignace Fire Department weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

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