

County Planning Commission Seeks New Members, OKs Bylaws

By Jonathan Eppley

The Mackinac County Planning Commission is sending a draft ordinance of its proposed bylaws to the Mackinac County Board of Commissioners for approval. The bylaws will bring the planning commission into compliance with the State of Michigan Planning Enabling Act, which requires all planning commissions in the state to adopt bylaws by 2011 to outline meeting procedure, policy, and action.

Michelle Walk, liaison to the planning commission from the Michigan State University Extension office in St. Ignace, said the bylaws are very general.

The only discussion concerning the bylaws at the Wednesday, August 5, commission meeting was whether the eight-member commission should seek another member for a vacant ninth spot, or reduce its membership to seven. The discussion to reduce the number of commissioners came about owing to a vacancy left by commissioner Judy Luoma, who recently left the commission for personal reasons. The commission has seven sitting members with Ms. Luoma's resignation.

According to the proposed bylaws, the commission has to have an odd number of members to ensure that there are no tie votes on a given topic. The commission decided to keep nine members and will seek replacements for the two vacancies.

"The more people you have

around the table, the better the discussion is," said commissioner Dean Reid. "To go down to seven I'm not sure is a good idea."

A replacement for Ms. Luoma will be sought to complete the remainder of her three-year term, which ends December 31. The commission may take longer to appoint a ninth member, who would be appointed for a full term.

Commissioners are appointed to three-year terms by the county board of commissioners and are paid \$60 per meeting, plus reimbursed for travel expenses to attend monthly meetings. The county planning commission is seeking two individuals wanting to actively participate and dedicate their time to the commission, which meets on the first Tuesday of each month at the Mackinac County Airport in St Ignace.

"I would rather see us have nine people on the commission and not fill them until we find the right people," said commissioner Cheryl Schlehuber. "I would rather have an open seat than have [the county board of commissioners] appoint somebody just to appoint somebody."

In other business, the commission further reviewed questions for a survey to be asked to the townships in the county concerning the formation of a county-wide economic development corporation (EDC). Once the commission is satisfied with the list of questions, it will send out a request for proposal for a third-party vendor to

conduct the survey.

Sending a copy of the completed survey to township officials and residents to be filled out at their own leisure was discussed, but turned down because the commission believes an in-person interview will provide them with the types of answers they want from the survey in a more timely manner.

"It's like pulling teeth to get people to fill out surveys" on their own accord, Mrs. Schlehuber said.

The goal of the survey is to help

the planning commission decide whether to recommend to the county board of commissioners that a county-wide EDC be formed. The board of commissioners asked the planning commission in May to research EDC formation.

The county estimates that at least \$100,000 a year will be needed to hire an EDC director and staff a nine-person EDC board.

The planning commission will next meet Wednesday, September 2, at 2 p.m.

Clerks of St. Ignace Since 1882 Named on City Hall Plaque

Mayor Paul Grondin honored the clerks of St. Ignace during the July 20 city council meeting. He presented a plaque with the names of all the clerks since 1882 to the three most recent clerks in the city's history. The plaque will be displayed in the clerk's office for everyone to see.

The following people are honored on the plaque with the year they first served:

Village Clerk:

Ambro Bettes-1882

City Clerks:

Cornelius Y. Bennett-1883

Robert R. Elliott-1885

E.H. Hall-1886

Frank S. Walker-1887

Alfred J. Gennell-1888

Frank S. Walker-1890

Alfred J. Gennell-1891

Clarence W. Rogers-1913

Margaret Tromblay-1919

Rose E. Vallier-1927

Mayme E. Michelin-1930

Lydia M. Conlogue-1931

Guinevere Therrien-1933

Florence M. Heenan-1935

Elizabeth R. Johnston-1953

Virginia M. Olmstead-1954

Aldyth Steel-1978

Larry E. Morris-1978

Renee D. Vonderwerth-1995

Group Asks That Great Lakes Study Conclusions Be Changed

Great Lakes United, an international coalition to protect the Great Lakes, disagrees with the International Upper Great Lakes Study Board that water loss in the Great Lakes is owing to natural causes, not man-made, and has asked the board to change its recommendation that nothing be done to correct conditions in the St. Clair River.

In a response to the board's draft report, "Impacts on Upper Great Lakes Water Levels: St. Clair River," the New York-based group asks that the board change its two primary recommendations: that no action is needed to correct dredging of the St. Clair River because the dredging didn't contribute to continuing water loss from the upper lakes, and that water loss mitigation should be

studied only in view of climate changes.

In its comments filed August 1, Great Lakes United contends that the board should acknowledge the man-made effects on water loss, caused by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredging in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and that mitigation studies should include compensating for that damage, in addition to mitigating losses owing to the climate.

The Les Cheneaux Islands Association, several years ago, joined the Georgian Bay Association of Canada in calling for the study.

The draft report was released in May and a final report is due to be published this fall, following public comments solicited through the summer.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A Great Time in St. Ignace

To the Editor:

St. Ignace throws a great party. Our boat club, the Great Lakes Grand Banks Association, recently held our annual rendezvous in St. Ignace during your Fish Feast weekend. We had 73 people visiting the city, either by boat or car. Everyone in town, from Gene Elmer, Jeff Davenport and his fine staff at the marina, the folks at the Chamber of Commerce and the Little Bear East Arena Conference Center, to the various vendors who helped with food and transportation, was cheerful, helpful, and a pleasure to work with. There was great food, music, and fun at the Fish Feast, and the fireworks show was spectacular.

Everyone who made us feel so welcome. We hope to be back in your harbor for future events.

Floyd and Maggi Lewis

2009 Rendezvous Chairperson

Rochester Hills

St. Ignace News Policies

Letters:

All responsible letters will be considered for publication and may be edited. They must be signed and a telephone number must be included for verification. Personal thank-you notes, personal attacks against other people, form letters, and letters promoting political candidates are not accepted, although letters for or against ballot proposals are welcome.

Obituaries:

The St. Ignace News maintains a policy of not charging for obituaries and we do often add information or rewrite them for clarity and reader interest. Obituaries that the family wants published exactly as submitted can be placed in the newspaper for \$75. Photographs are welcome at no charge.

Weddings:

Weddings with photographs are published without charge within 45 days of the ceremony. After 45 days, a photograph can be included for \$35.00.

Internet:

The complete edition of The St. Ignace News is available online at stignaceneews.com.

Contact:

The St. Ignace News

359 Reagon Street

PO Box 277

Saint Ignace, MI 49781

(906) 643-9150 (phone)

(906) 643-9122 (fax)

e-mail: news@stignaceneews.com

Michigan Politics

By
George Weeks



Tourists, Yes – Terrorists, No

Pure Michigan ads to attract tourists was a smart move. Penal Michigan to house suspected terrorists would not be.

Michigan, which has the nation's highest unemployment rate, faces the prospect of more job losses from the October 1 closing of eight correctional facilities as part of Governor Jennifer Granholm's effort to balance the state's seriously unbalanced budget.

Among closings is the maximum security prison at tiny Standish in Arenac County near Saginaw Bay, about 25 miles north of Bay City. With 300-plus workers and a capacity of about 600 inmates, it is the area's largest employer.

Standish Max, as it is called, is one of two sites under active consideration to house detainees currently held at the U.S. Navy Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba that President Barack Obama -- perhaps unrealistically since no alternative site has been selected -- wants to close next January. The other site is the 134-year old military penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas.

Standish is in the sprawling district of U.S. Representative Bart Stupak (D-Menominee), who, along with Senator Carl Levin, conditionally supports making it Gitmo North if there is strong community support.

There is substantial support for economic reasons. But here's the rub: Many current jobs may not be saved.

U.S. Representative Pete Hoekstra of Holland, who, as ranking Republican and former chairman of the House Intelligence Committee is well plugged into such matters, told me that rather than retain current guards at Standish, there is "a high probability" that military personnel would be rotated in and out of there on six or 12-month shifts, as they are at Gitmo.

In fact, many residents have questioned how many jobs local workers would retain if federal officials bring in the 230 or so suspected al-Qaida and Taliban terrorists.

"We're not going to be utilized by the Gitmo prison anyway," said prison guard Thomas Kerrins, chief steward of the Michigan Correctional Organization that represents local workers and was outside the prison as federal, state and local officials arrived for a Thursday tour as part of the assessment of the suitability for the facility. "They're going to kick us down the road. They're going to use their own people."

Clearly, though, there would be some positive economic impact if military personnel were brought in. They'll patronize restaurants and other establishments.

But Hoekstra, who seeks the 2010 GOP nomination to replace term-limited Granholm, said the detainees are "a different breed -- relatively sophisticated" and require special handling.

"These people are trained psychologically and operationally to commit murder, and mass murder is better for them," U.S. Representative Mike Rogers (R-Brighton), a former FBI agent and a Capitol Hill leader on homeland security issues said in a press conference call with Senator Pat Roberts (R-Kansas) and reporters from the two states.

Congressional opponents to moving the detainees to U.S. prisons say that one problem is the threats that their sympathizers might pose to the families of any local workers at the prisoners.

Prison guard Kerrins said, "You almost are putting a bulls-eye on the whole area."

Hoekstra last week sent letters to federal authorities asking them to allow him to lead a delegation of local and state officials and the media to Gitmo "to better understand the special circumstances and the challenges that these detainees present by moving them to Michigan."

But Hoekstra and other Republicans in the Michigan congressional delegation declined to sign a Stupak-authored letter signed in early August by three other Democratic members to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons (which had officials in Standish last week) urging it to "look at vacant facilities in Michigan as potential locations for federal prisoners under the jurisdiction of the FBOP that are currently held in domestic facilities within the continental United States.

"Contracting with the state will not only address the serious problem of overcrowding in federal prisons, but will also save the federal government money by using existing infrastructure and help stave off further job losses in Michigan.

Hoekstra, who declined to sign, wanted the letter to include language assuring that Gitmo detainees would not come to Michigan.

Meanwhile, Granholm is pitching use of Michigan prison space by states with overcrowded facilities. California and Pennsylvania are said to be interested, and several other states are possibilities.

A good alternative to the Gitmo guys.

On Duty for Schuette

In 2002, ex-congressman Bill Schuette was elected to a six-year term on the Michigan Court of Appeals in a district that included all of the Upper Peninsula and more than 40 counties below the bridge.

Schuette did not seek a second term on the court because he's running for next year's Republican nomination to replace term-limited Attorney General Mike Cox, who's running for governor.

Schuette on Saturday rolled out an impressive list of endorsements from 95 district and county officials, including 10 Republican county chairs in the U.P. and 15 in the northern Lower Peninsula.

Early endorsements from local party leaders are significant because many of them are likely to be influential delegates to the state convention that will nominate the GOP candidate.

Schuette was elected to the House in 1984 at age 31 and served three terms. In 1990, he challenged Senator Carl Levin, who won with 57% of the vote. Before his 2002 election to the appeals court, he served as state agriculture director and state senator.

Select Michigan

Granholm did a wise thing in having State Agriculture Director Don Koivisto deliver the administration's weekly radio address on her behalf, pitching the Select Michigan label that can be found on products sold at grocery stores, farmers markets, and on individual farms.

Koivisto, former state senator from Ironwood, said:

"People today are eating healthier by including more fruits and vegetables in their diets. Locally-grown food is healthier than food shipped long distances, because many fruits and vegetables can lose up to half of their nutrients in just five days. And the best-tasting fruits and vegetables are the ones that ripen close to your home."

A welcome break from political pitches.

George Weeks retired in 2006 after 22 years as political columnist for *The Detroit News*. His weekly *Michigan Politics* column is syndicated by *Superior Features*.

McDowell Hosts Town Hall Meetings

State Representative Gary McDowell will host town hall meetings in St. Ignace and northern Michigan for residents to share their thoughts and concerns about jobs, the economy, and Michigan as a whole.

Representative McDowell will be at the following locations:

Thursday, August 20, at 6 p.m. at the Mackinac County Courthouse in St. Ignace; Friday, August 21, at noon at Pellston Village Hall, and at 3 p.m. at the Tuscarora Township Hall in Indian River; Monday, August 24, at 5 p.m. in the Community Room at the Petoskey City Hall.

Scientists Step Up Current To Keep Asian Carp Out of Great Lakes

The current in the electric fish barriers near Chicago is being turned up in a stepped-up effort to keep invasive fish, including the dreaded Asian carp, from entering the Great Lakes, while studies continue to see if the barriers are effective or whether the fish may already be in Lake Michigan.

Studies in late July speculated that the invasive carp, which biologists fear could be devastating to the Great Lakes ecosystem, are within five miles of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, where the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers has set up the electric barriers. The barriers are designed to discourage the carp from swimming through the canal into Lake Michigan, but are still being tested for safety to boats and people.

The Corps announced it had set up a safety zone for the testing

Friday, August 14.

Tests released July 31 indicated silver carp are 10 miles further into the system than anyone had thought. The new testing method samples water for traces of DNA left by the fish. Silver carp are one of three species of Asian carp that have entered the Mississippi River system. The other two are black and bighead carp.

The carp can reach up to 100 pounds and leap into the air when startled. They have reportedly injured fishermen and jet boat operators.

In response to the findings, the Corps doubled the voltage at the barrier from one volt to two volts and is studying the impact of that on boats and people.

Scientists have no proof that the barriers will even work against the invaders.

Secretary of State Offices Closed Fri.

Secretary of State branch offices will be closed Friday, August 21, and Super!Centers will close Saturday, August 22, for a mandatory state employee furlough day.

Licenses and plates that expire on a day when state offices are closed, such as a holiday or weekend, can be renewed the following day without penalty.

The St. Ignace News

and Les Cheneaux Islands Weekly Wave

359 Reagon Street, PO Box 277, Saint Ignace, MI 49781

Telephone (906) 643-9150 • Facsimile (906) 643-9122

www.SaintIgnaceNews.com

USPS Periodical Publication Number - 462-380

ESTABLISHED 1878

Published each Thursday at Saint Ignace, Mackinac County, Michigan

Entered in Saint Ignace, Michigan Post Office as Periodical Mail Matter, Act of March 3, 1879
Periodical Postage Paid at Saint Ignace, MI • Additional Postage Paid at Gaylord, MI
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to St. Ignace News, PO Box 277, St. Ignace, MI 49781

Volume 130, Number 20 Thursday, August 20, 2009

Publisher/Editor
Wesley H. Maurer, Jr.
Associate Publisher
Mary R. Maurer
Publisher 1975-1995
Wesley H. Maurer, Sr. (1897-1995)

Editor

Ellen Paquin, news@saintignaceneews.com

Staff Writers

Karen Gould, karen@saintignaceneews.com

Jonathan Eppley, jon@saintignaceneews.com

Mark Tower, mark@stignaceneews.com

Michael Ayala, mike@stignaceneews.com

Advertising Department

Tammy Matson, David Moyalson

ads@saintignaceneews.com

Print Shop Manager

Sherry Cece

Circulation Manager

Wendy Colegrove



Subscriptions:

\$42 in Mackinac, Chippewa, Emmet, Luce, and Cheboygan counties.

\$52 elsewhere in the United States and military post offices.

\$35 for the Web edition at www.saintignaceneews.com

We take Visa, MasterCard, and Discover