

This Year's Budget Intact for Mackinac Island State Parks

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secure financing for a planned major improvement to the building.

In 1941, the State of Michigan received the hotel as tax-reverted property and deeded it to Mackinac Island State Park Commission in 1946. The park began leasing the hotel in the early 1970s to the Ryba and Callewaert families.

Mr. Porter reported that the Historic Mill Creek and the Voyageur Cafe at Colonial Michilimackinac will offer vending machine services this summer. Last September, the Commission had sent requests for proposals to 17 food service providers for park food concessions and received no responses.

"This is an indication of the economic situation in northern Michigan, with business owners being very cautious," said Mr. Porter.

Food service at these sites is important, Mr. Porter said, and park staff will continue to seek food concessions, although vending machines appear to be the only option this year.

At Fort Mackinac on Mackinac Island, the concessionaire has been Grand Hotel, which provides lunch and, in 2005, dinner at the Fort Tea Room. Mr. Porter said Grand Hotel will not provide the evening food service this summer. The Tea Room served dinner to 3,200 in 2005, he said, and the staff will revisit the dinner issue following the 2006 season.

In another Grand Hotel matter, a two-year use permit for the hotel was approved at a cost of \$100 for land claimed by both the park and the hotel along Cadotte Avenue. The hotel bases its ownership claim on a 1934 survey. The commission believes

that survey is flawed and refers to an earlier survey. If the park is correct, Grand Hotel encroaches with flower beds and a small section of the hotel, but the use permit allows both parties to postpone a possible lengthy and expensive permanent resolution.

"This 1934 survey has caused more grief," said Mr. Cawthorne, referring to a list of disputes arising from it.

Commissioners tabled a request for rate increases from Mackinac Island Carriage Tours, Inc., stating they need more information justifying a rate hike and that they hope more commissioners will be present at the March meeting to review the matter.

Attending the January meeting in addition to Chairman Cawthorne were commissioners Karen Karam, Joan Porteous, and Laurie Stupak. Commissioners Audrey Jaggi, Frank Kelley, and Richard Manoogian were absent from the meeting.

Under a licensing agreement with the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, carriage rates cannot be raised without commission approval.

Commissioner Porteous said she worried about the effect increasing rates would have on visitors.

Carriage Tours is proposing a 25¢ increase to taxi fares, increases in livery fees, and proposes to increase adult sightseeing tickets from \$18 to \$19.

Mr. Horn, an employee of Carriage Tours, said the price reflects increased costs of transporting the horses to the Island, horse care, and employee payroll.

Commissioners approved use of park land for a water line extension from Stonecliffe Road

to Tamarack Cottage, owned by Kay and Larry Berke. The 90-foot line will be installed by the Department of Public Works from a fire hydrant on Stonecliffe Road to the east driveway of the Manoogian Trust property. The line will provide seasonal water service to the cottage, which has been on a line that ran from the Annex through the Cohen property.

Mr. Porter announced that a crew from WGBH Boston, a national PBS station, will meet with staff members at Fort Mackinac, Thursday, February 9, through Sunday, February 12, to tape an episode of the children's show, "Postcards from Buster." The show films stories about children who live in unique areas. The visit, however, was subsequently canceled by station administrators.

Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse in Mackinaw City has a \$189,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Land Trust Fund for site improvements, including new parking lots, sidewalks, signage, and an informational kiosk. Another \$120,000 from the Department of Natural Resources Recreation Trails Fund will pay for reconstruction of the historic sidewalks, an access ramp, and installation of exterior light fixtures.

When finished in May 2007, all exterior work at the lighthouse exhibit will be complete.

To supplement its revenue, Mackinac State Historic Parks has offered to rent the gazebo used in the film, "Somewhere in Time," for \$500 and has, so far, booked one wedding for this summer, Mr. Porter reported.

Commissioners are also considering renting the Geary House on Market Street and the east half of the Visitors Center dock, and selling the sloop *Welcome* to the Maritime Heritage Alliance in Traverse City. The organization has been leasing and repairing the vessel. The schooner was

used to move Fort Michilimackinac to Mackinac Island during the American Revolution and a replica was built by the

park in the 1970s.

The Mackinac Island State Park Commission next meets in Lansing, Wednesday, March 22.

Jeannie Hosé, Robert Traxler Wed



Jeannie and Bob Traxler

Jeannie Hosé and Robert Traxler were married Sunday, January 1, 2006, in the chapel at St. James Catholic Church in Bay City. The couple, who live at Woodbluff on Mackinac Island and in Saginaw, were united by long-time friend Father Bob DeLand.

Caroline Whittington of Reston, Virginia, served as her mother's matron of honor, while Sarah Traxler attended her father in the ceremony. The bride's son, Gregory Hosé of Arlington, Virginia, gave the reading. Also attending were Caroline's husband, Luke, and Gregory's wife, Rosemary.

A reception and dinner for family and several close friends was held at the Atrium in Bay City following the ceremony.

Conservancy: Local Foundation Fund Set Up for Preservation

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the landowner and serves to protect the land for future generations by limiting the property's use in perpetuity.

For example, restrictions could be placed on a piece of property to include a requirement that the land not be subdivided.

Easements also can be set up to include protecting the view or limiting development by capping the number of homes built on that land, said Mrs. Myers.

The conservancy's obligation is to make sure the terms of the easement are never violated.

Eventually, Mrs. Myers said, the Mackinac Conservancy looks forward to working with state and city officials on projects of mutual interest on Mackinac Island, but the Conservancy will not become involved in local politics or zoning.

The Conservancy has established a fund with the Mackinac Island Community Foundation to help with land conservation and educational projects.

The organization also accepts donated property and eventually may be able to purchase land for preservation.

The fund is an unendowed donor advised fund, explained Jennifer Blowski, director of the Community Foundation. Money from the fund can be requested from the steering committee at any time, though it

requires the final approval of the Community Foundation board, she said.

"We could have set up the fund with the Little Traverse Conservancy, but we wanted to be a part of the Community Foundation," said Mrs. Myers, who noted the Community Foundation already has worked with the Little Traverse Conservancy. Little Traverse Conservancy has preserved land in Mackinac County and Cheboygan County.

Mrs. Myers said the Conservancy plans to hold information seminars to let landowners know about the options that are available to them.

An open house is planned for June, with Little Traverse Conservancy Executive Director Tom Bailey scheduled to speak.

The Steering Committee meets twice a year between May and September.

Co-chairs of the organization are Aneka Myers, Steve Murray, and Marta Olson. Steering Committee members include David Armour, Jennifer Blowski, Dennis Bradley, Sr., Brad Chambers, Mark Chambers, Barbara Fisher, Nicki Griffith, Michael Hart, Margaret Horn, Susan Lenfesty, Ann Levy, Susan Lundgren, Mary McCourt-Dufina, Bruce Miller, Thomas Pfeiffelmann, and Christopher Straus.

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