**Keweenaw National Historical Park AC Meeting**

**July 29, 2021**

Present: Commissioners

Glenn Anderson, State of Michigan

Karin Cooper, Houghton County

Keith Koppernolle, Calumet Township

Gerald Juntunen, at-large

Dan Jamison, at-large

John Sullivan, Franklin and Quincy Townships

Absent: Dave Geisler, Village of Calumet

Present: Executive Director

Sean Gohman (also recording Secretary)

Present: National Park Service (NPS)

Wendy Davis, Superintendent

Brian Hoduski, Museum and Archival Services

Steve DeLong, Landscape Architect

John Arnold, Historical Architect

Present: Guests

Marcia Slater, Hanka Homestead

Jean Ellis, Keweenaw Heritage Center

Michael Maas, owner of Agassiz House

Dean Juntunen, Ontonagon County Historical Society

Dave Bishop, Ontonagon County Historical Society

Bob Langseth, Keweenaw Heritage Center and former Commissioner

Chris Guibert, Keweenaw Mountain Lodge

Sharon Turovaara, Calumet Theatre

**Call to Order**

A regular meeting of the Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission was opened

at 1:05 p.m., Monday, July 29, 2021.

**Approval of Agenda.**

Moved by John Sullivan and seconded by Keith Koppernolle to approve of the agenda for July

29, 2021. Motion carried unanimously. (6/0).

**Approval of Minutes of April 19, 2021.**

Moved by John Sullivan and seconded by Keith Koppernolle to approve of the minutes of April

19, 2021. Motion carried unanimously. (6/0).

**Superintendent’s Report**

Superintendent Wendy Davis provided an overview of recent news and summaries of key

accomplishments of the various park divisions.

A schematic design to repurpose the C&H Warehouse #1 as a curatorial facility for KNHP,

Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, and Isle Royale National Park has been approved to move

forward. Construction for the project is slated for 2025, barring unforeseen shovel-ready projects

jumping the line as per the Great American Outdoors Act.

Staff changes:

• John Arnold has been in the Historical Architect position since December, 2020.

• Steve Hermanson has come on as Lead in Facilities and Maintenance. Hermanson brings

several years of experience and has been integral in facilitating contact with the Village

of Calumet at the EPA regarding the Calumet 5th Street fire and the Calumet Theatre.

• Valerie Newman has left the Park and is now living in WI, while Kathleen Harter has

moved on from KNHP to take on a role with the Portage Health Foundation.

• Chris Amadon(sp?) from Isle Royale NP will be working a 120-day detail to take on

Harter’s position until a permanent replacement can be found.

The Abandoned Mine Lands program has put the Keweenaw in its sights. Funding through AML

has assisted with ongoing repairs at the Quincy Mine Hoist House and will also go towards

stabilization and re-roofing at the Quincy Smelter dockside warehouse next summer.

Park staff and the Advisory Commission have worked to acquire $50,000 for the purposes of

creating a building assessment of the Calumet Theatre so that the Village of Calumet can

prioritize needs at the property to preserve and protect it into the future.

Youth Crews have been working diligently this summer in both the Calumet and Quincy park

units. Also likely getting out to a couple Heritage Sites to assist with various projects.

Finally, NPS and KNHP look at local impacts to determine how covid will influence operations

in the coming months as new variants threaten to appear in the area.

**Executive Director’s Report**

Executive Director Sean Gohman reported on how the goals of the Advisory Commission were

supported during the quarter.

It was hoped that the updated National Historic Landmark nominations for Calumet and Hecla

Mining Company Historic District and Quincy Mining Company Historic District would be

approved this fall, but due to covid-related delays, these amendments to the landmark

designations likely will not be up for review until next spring.

A funded project to stabilize and replace the roofing on the Quincy Smelting Works dockside

warehouse is set for next summer. This building is in pretty good shape considering its age, but

this work will create a drier, more structurally sound space for the temporary storage of Park

equipment as well as future planning for the site.

• I met this week with NPS staff and representatives of the Abandoned Mine Lands program

(part of the Bureau of Land Management) to discuss the just mentioned warehouse project

and to identify other similar projects at the Quincy Smelter that AML could assist with

funding. These include replacing failing windows, mitigating overhead hazards, to surface

cleanup, to the removal of pigeon droppings. This program could be a boon to the

Keweenaw, and discussions are ongoing.

• Park day labor crew installed a temporary cover and handrail over a scale in the Mineral

House at the smelter. This will improve access to the building, and mitigates a potential step

hazard.

The Commission has recently fulfilled its authorized funding limit of $250,000 for fiscal year

2021. These funds will be directed towards a variety of projects taking place next year.

• $50,000 has been allocated to the Commission to fund a building assessment of the historic

Calumet Theatre. There are many building maintained issues that need to be dealt with at the

property, and this assessment will aide in the prioritization of those issues and just what can

be done to address them.

• Another $80,000 is coming directly from Keweenaw NHP and will be spread over 4 or so

projects, the details of which are currently in the works. I hope to be able to report on more

specifics at our next quarterly meeting, though I do know some money will be devoted to the

Quincy Smelter with some dedicated to interpretive and landscape management projects

within the Park’s two units as well.

This May, the Commission hosted its annual spring Heritage Sites meeting virtually over Zoom.

Attendees discussed the Heritage Site program: what they saw as benefits of the program, what

they felt being a Heritage Site meant, what an expanded program could look like, etc. Attendees

also heard from Marcus Robyns of the Northern Michigan University Archives on UPLINK, the

Upper Peninsula Digital Network. UPLINK is a recently funded digitization project that is

interested in helping small museums and heritage organizations digitize and store their

collections.

Earlier this month, I and Superintendent Davis met with members of the Americana Foundation,

a philanthropic organization devoted to the protection of natural and cultural resources and the

sustainable development of agriculture and food systems. Several Heritage Sites have received

American Foundation grants in the past, and they are interested into expanding their focus to this

area in the future, and some members may be visiting in the fall. I am currently working to

schedule a discussion with Foundation board members as well as its director as well this fall,

possibly as part of our annual Fall Heritage Sites meeting.

The Commission would like to thank Bay Electric for donating some time and labor to remove a

lighting fixture from a failing pole at the Quincy Smelter’s dockside warehouse and move it to

another

**Commission Committees and Projects**

**Announcements / Executive**

Commissioner Geisler announced that there will be a memorial service at 2:00pm on Sunday

May 20th at the Chassell Pavilion to remember former Commissioner Steve Albee.

Motion for the Advisory Commission to approve the handling and storage of Calumet Theatre

archival materials by Keweenaw NHP for a period of 5 years (with option to extend).

• Superintendent Davis informed the public and commission that this need for approval from

the Commission is part of the park’s management plan and in keeping with Keweenaw

NHP’s partnership park model.

• Brian Hoduski, of Museum and Archival Services at Keweenaw NHP stated that they hold

collections for the Village of Calumet, Keweenaw County Historical Society, and

Coppertown Museum. The materials will be held at the History Center (historic C&H

library).

• Motion made by John Sullivan and seconded by Jerry Juntunen to approve of the agenda for

July 29, 2021. Motion carried unanimously. (6/0).

Motion to gift the Quincy Smelting Works to the National Park Service (via a letter to the

Regional Office).

• Sean Gohman provided a brief history of the Advisory Commission’s ownership of the

smelter. Acquired in 2014 with the intention of protecting the facility from demolition or

inappropriate re-use, the Commission has always intended to donate the property to the

National Park Service. NPS however, was unable to accept due to numerous identified

environmental liabilities on the property. The Commission has spent the last seven years

addressing those liabilities, but its authorized spending limits make this a difficult task. It is

felt that it is time to formally inform the Midwest Regional Office that the Commission

would like NPS to now either accept the property or, if they cannot, that an itemized listing

of liabilities and mitigating actions be provided to the Commission so that it can better

preserve the facility and protect the property for future use.

• Commissioner Sullivan pointed out that the Commission is not authorized to sell or donate

the property to outside, non-governmental entities, and that this makes it difficult for the

Commission to take on its other responsibilities.

• Commissioner Anderson asked when the Commission should expect a response from the

Regional Office and wanted to know Keweenaw NHP’s stance on this proposal.

o Superintendent Davis responded that a month is a reasonable period and that

Keweenaw NHP supported this proposal.

• Motion made by Karin Cooper and seconded by Jerry Juntunen to approve of the agenda for

July 29, 2021. Motion carried unanimously. (6/0).

Motion to re-establish a Quincy Smelter Steering Committee to help direct future uses for the

property.

• Gohman informed the public that a steering committee created a decade ago took on this very

task. The result was a decision to support the moving of Isle Royale National Park

headquarters and dock to the smelter property. This never occurred, and with NPS not taking

the smelter from the Commission, perhaps it is time to start thinking of a new plan for the

property with a variety of local stakeholders.

• Commissioner Anderson felt that this decision should be postponed until after the

Commission hears back about the aforementioned motion above (gifting the smelter to NPS).

• Decision was postponed till next meeting (Oct 18, 2021).

**Budget / Finance**

Moved by Sullivan and seconded by Jamison to approve bills in the amount of $135,588.20, plus

wages and tax payments of $16,949.44 for $152,537.64 total. Motion carried unanimously.

(6/0)

**Other reports from Commissioners**

Dan Jamison reported on the Teachers Conservation Corps were in Phoenix recently to

rehabilitate the Bammert Blacksmith Shop museum and display. After a few days it was plumb

and square again.

John Sullivan stated that the Quincy Mine Hoist Association has a working tram again and that

visitor numbers are up. The tours at the smelter are also going well with higher visitor numbers.

**Comments from Legislators or Legislative Staff**

None

**Comments from Keweenaw Heritage Site Representatives**

Marica Slater of Hanka Homestead stated that the site has been open to the public since July 1st

.

The site was closed in June due to a film crew using the site as a filming location for a movie

that should be out sometime in October. It is hoped to hold a screening at the Calumet Theatre at

that time. Kathleen Ernst, author of The Weaver’s Revenge, will be doing a book signing at

Hanka on August 24th

.

• Attendance and revenue is up this summer.

Jean Ellis of the Keweenaw Heritage Center thanked the Commission for a recent grant to

address a roof leak situated above the organ. An exhibit focusing on the lives of eight Keweenaw

women is up. Attendance and revenue is also way up from previous years, indicating that

charging admission was a good idea.

Dan Juntunen of the Ontonagon Historical Society informed the Commission that they have been

open since June. This year June has been busier than usual. Museum is open Tuesday-Saturday,

10-4p. The Lighthouse, now offering self0guided tours with a docent on site for assistance, is

also open Tuesday-Saturday 11-3p. 20-40 visitors go through the lighthouse a day.

• Wanted to also thank the Commission for recent grants. They have helped with a mold

outbreak that required moving a lot of materials to a new storage facility in Mass City. The

museum “looks empty” compared to previous years due to this, but it’s allowing for a

rethinking of displays.

Sean Gohman read an email sent in from acting Keweenaw County Historical Society President

Karen Hintz.

• “At the Eagle Harbor Lighthouse Complex, Ginny Schubert reports great visitor numbers for

the month of July…higher than usual, despite our raise in admission from $5 to $8 for those

16 years and older. We are getting many families with children at this time of year. The selfguided touring of the Lighthouse seems to be working out. Regarding the Heritage Grants—

Lighthouse Lighting and Connecting—Pasty.NET installed internet service for the

Lighthouse Complex and we are using it to accept credit cards for admissions for the first

time. The electrical upgrades from that grant are also completed by Keweenaw Power &

Lite. Pasty.NET still has projects to complete for us. The rehab and painting of the exterior

brick of the kitchen wing of the lighthouse has been completed by Johnson’s. See picture

below. I hope you have a good meeting. KCHS is very appreciative of receiving the two

Heritage Grants.”

**Comments from the Public**

Bob Langseth informed the Commission that he had a book in his possession that documented a

family history in Painesdale . He was interested to know where the best places would be to gift

this document. Superintendent David and Brian Hoduski informed Langseth of the formal scope

of collections statement used by NPS to assess donations. A committee will meet to discuss and

approve once that statement is created. Over collecting has led to a more “scrupulous” collection

strategy and that Keweenaw NHP will also recommend other possible destinations for such

items.

• Raised the question of signage informing visitors that they are in a National Park. What can

be done to inform? Small yard signs? “It’s a whole different audience now.” What about

story telling hours as a way to reach visitors in new ways with new stories.

• Also informed the Commission that he is meeting with some local CEOs to discuss the future

of Main Street Calumet, and will report on that discussion at the next meeting.

Chris Guibert, representing the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge, wanted to inform the Commission

that the Lodge is interested in becoming a Keweenaw Heritage Site. They are working on

rehabilitating the property, and now offer self-guided historical tours of the property.

Michael Maas, new owner of the Agassiz House, came to the meeting to see what the

Commission was and if they could offer assistance to his group. They own several properties in

the Calumet area, all of which need extensive work. As for the Agassiz House, the plan is to

create a 7-room bed and breakfast within the next 1-2 years. Another building is being used a

temporary housing for their staff, while another is slated to become a 16-room hotel downtown,

but would require about $2.5 million in rehabilitation work.

• Maas’ interest is in how the Commission and Keweenaw NHP can help direct them to

funding sources and expertise in the preservation of these structures.

A discussion ensued about the increase in attention to the local area, and Brian Hoduski pointed

out that Lake Superior Magazine highlighted many Keweenaw attractions recently and it shows

that “We must be doing something right.” Jean Ellis thought this offered a good opportunity to

tell other stories here, and that acquisition and preservation of the Agassiz House helps this.

**Motion to Adjourn**

Moved to adjourn by Sullivan, and seconded by Koppernolle at 2:20 p.m. Motion carried

unanimously. (6/0).

**Next Meeting**

Monday, October 18, 2021.