

# **KEWEENAW NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION**

## **Minutes of the meeting, October 26, 1999**

### **Present:** Commissioners -

Kathryn Eckert, At-Large, National Parks/Historic Preservation  
Reverend Robert Langseth, Houghton County Board of Commissioners  
Larry Lankton, At-Large, National Parks/Historic Preservation  
Paul Lehto, Calumet Township  
Tom Nemacheck, State of Michigan  
Clyde Raasio, Quincy/Franklin Townships  
John Garber, Village of Calumet

### National Park Service -

Joseph Balachowski, KNHP Historical Architect  
Frank Fiala, KNHP Superintendent  
Brian Hoduski, KNHP Interpreter

**Absent:** Lynn Bjorkman, KNHP Community Planner  
Rodney Larsen, KNHP Administrative Officer

**Recording Secretary:** Lisa Dwyer

### **Call to Order**

A regular meeting of the Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission was held Tuesday, October 26, 1999, in Calumet, Michigan, at park headquarters.

Paul Lehto reported that Advisory Commission member, John Garber, who represents the Village of Calumet, recently submitted a letter of resignation stating that he must resign from the Advisory Commission due to health reasons. However, Garber, who was in attendance at today's meeting, stated that he would like to withdraw his letter of resignation. Frank Fiala noted that the Village of Calumet, in response to Garber's recent withdrawal letter, has already taken action to begin looking for a replacement for Garber and has accepted nominations. Fiala said that he is meeting with Garber after today's meeting to discuss how to resolve the situation.

### **Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved with no additions or corrections.

### **Review of Minutes**

The minutes of August 24, 1999 were reviewed. It was clarified that the preservation architectural firm recently engaged by the Calumet Theater to do some preliminary preservation planning mentioned in the minutes was identified as Kessler and Associates from the Detroit area. The minutes were approved.

### **Introductions**

Guests in the audience were introduced. Among them were Sue Cone, Comptroller of the Village of Calumet, Tony Bausano, President of the Calumet Village Council, Diana Charles of U.S. Senator Carl Levin's office, Amy Wisti of U.S. Congressman Bart Stupak's office, Glenn Anderson, City Manager of Hancock, and Erik Nordberg, Archivist at MTU.

Students from a Hancock Central High School history class, Liz Peterson, Barb Gustafson, and Danielle Lypsinmaa, were also introduced.

Jana Gross, Historical Architect from the NPS Midwest Regional Office in Omaha, and Kimberly Mann, Historical Architect from Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park in Lower Michigan were introduced. They are visiting KNHP sites in order to help park officials plan future projects.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Frank Fiala introduced Geri Larsen, wife of the new KNHP administrative manager Rodney Larsen. Larsen was not at today's meeting. He is currently out of town attending training sessions related to his new position with KNHP. Fiala also introduced new KNHP park employee, Brian Hoduski.

Fiala distributed a copy of the letter dated August 24, 1999, sent to Paul Lehto from U.S. Congressman, Bart Stupak. In the letter, Stupak expressed his assurance to Lehto that he is actively working on the passage of the bill, H.R. 748. H.R. 748 would amend the terms under which the Secretary of Interior may appoint Advisory Commission members. The bill clarifies that while the Secretary must consider State and local nominees, he may appoint commission members at will. This correction should help the commission to obtain its operating powers. Fiala added that the bill has passed in the House of Representatives. It will move on to the Senate.

Fiala suggested that commission members draft a letter to send to legislators requesting the funding needed for the Advisory Commission once it receives its operating powers.

Fiala announced that the park received a \$20,000 grant from the state of Michigan to do some documenting and inventorying of resources in connection with the historic preservation ordinance on which the village of Calumet and Calumet Township are working.

Lynn Bjorkman will be leaving her position with KNHP by April 1, 2000. She is to be married and will be leaving the area.

Josef Balachowski is leaving his position at KNHP in January of 2000. He will be taking the position of Historical Architect at the Western Regional Office in San Francisco.

Fiala, Balachowski, and Jana Gross recently visited the Women's Rights National Historic site in Seneca, Falls, NY, in order to get some renovation ideas for the Union Building. A building located there is similar to the Union Building. Fiala commented that it was a real eye opener to learn what is necessary to sustain this type of historic site once it is established.

Fiala recently went to Washington DC to discuss issues with legislators regarding the park. He then traveled to Harper's Ferry for a week's orientation to learn what the obligations are for both Rodney Larsen and KNHP regarding Larsen's new position with the park.

Fiala said the President has not signed the Interior Bill yet. The 1.7 million dollars that had been allocated to KNHP for property acquisition purposes remains in tact in the bill. He feels that the funding will remain in the bill when the President signs it.

A grant for the Seaman Mineral Museum relocation project, a grant for the Houghton County Historical Society's railroad, and A Save America's Treasure grant have been applied for by KNHP, according to Fiala.

Fiala distributed copies of documents that were circulated in the Daily Mining Gazette in preparation for a public forum held September 28, 1999, and hosted by the Copper Country League of Women Voters. The documents included the Record of Decision that validated the GMP, the Integrity and Impact Assessment Report for the Quincy and Calumet NHL, and the Memorandum of Agreement issued March 1998 in connection with the City of Hancock water improvement project. Fiala noted that about 120 people attended the forum.

Fiala said the next crucial document needed for the park is an interpretive plan. Fiala assured the commissioners that they would be asked for their input when the interpretive planning process begins. He again stressed the need for the Advisory Commission to be given its operating powers. Once these are in place, the commission will have a key role in park development. John Garber commented that former Advisory Commission member, Peder Kitti, who was a former NPS employee could be a valuable source of information regarding interpretive planning since he did this type of planning as a park employee.

### **Old Business/Reports**

Commission members were asked to report on several items discussed at the previous Advisory Commission meeting. Possible action was going to be taken by commission members regarding these items.

-Larry Lankton reported on the ball mills located on their original site at the White Pine Mine. They are thought to be the last in existence in the area. The Copper Range Company has indicated that it would donate the site to KNHP. Lankton visited the site recently. He suggested that the park could accept the donation of the site and hold it until a decision is made on how to handle the mills. He also suggested that possibly one or two of the mills could be brought to this area since there are none remaining in the Copper Country. Nemacheck commented that the mills might be interpreted better if left at their original location at White Pine.

-Tom Nemacheck was going to check on whether an addendum regarding cultural heritage tourism could be added to the testimony generated during hearings held by the Republican Caucus on Public Policy. Further testimony could not be added to the hearings, according to Nemacheck.

-Frank Fiala reported that he would be speaking with Secretary of State Candace Miller in November (rather than former Lt. Governor Connie Binsfield as suggested at the last park meeting). He will ask her to use her influence with Governor Engler on decisions the governor makes regarding funding on grant requests for St. Anne's Church as well as funding by the state in support of the Advisory Commission once it receives its operating powers.

-Kathryn Eckert indicated at the last meeting that the Americana Foundation is exploring the possibility of holding a meeting in the Keweenaw area next summer. A decision on this visit should be made sometime in November. She feels that foundation members are particularly interested in visiting St. Anne's Church.

-There was discussion at the last meeting that the Advisory Commission send a letter to Quincy and Franklin Township suggesting that they each begin looking into the process of beginning to establish an historic district ordinance. At today's meeting, Fiala suggested to Reverend Langseth, that since he represents the Houghton County Board of Commissioners, he approach the county board members to see how they feel about the looking into the establishment of a countywide type of ordinance that may be applicable for historic preservation purposes.

-A motion passed at the last meeting that Fiala draft a letter to make formal notice to our federal representatives to encourage them to pursue the "Lands at Risk" acquisition money requested by KNHP for the purpose of purchasing select tracts of property within the NHL districts. Fiala said he has not done this yet.

### **Reports and Comments from Commissioners**

Kathryn Eckert reported that she and other Advisory Commission members toured the Quincy Hoist and Smelter area to better understand some of the potential land development issues there. She also toured the Mary Perry house in Hancock with Jana Gross and Kimberly Mann. The Perry house is the birthplace and childhood home of Mary Perry the founder of Pewabic Potter.

The City of Hancock has acquired the property. Eckert feels that it has the potential to be an important tourist destination particularly for people who are interested in women's history. She noted that the Perry house is the oldest house in Hancock. Eckert toured the Central Mine site to look at some restoration work being done by the Keweenaw Historical Society. She stressed her concern regarding the disappearance of the poor rock piles at Central Mine and recommended that local units of government be notified that removal of these piles would

compromise the historical integrity of the sites. Eckert invited people to view a video that Kimberly Mann brought with her regarding historic preservation at Sleeping Bear Dunes Park after the meeting today. The video demonstrates citizen participation and partnerships regarding historic building restoration at Sleeping Bear.

Reverend Langseth said he'd like to thank the League of Women Voters for hosting the community forum "Keweenaw National Historical Park: Current and Future Development." He also thanked Lynn Bjorkman for her work as a staff member of KNHP. Langseth toured the Quincy district yesterday with other Advisory Commissioners and noted that he agrees with the Impact Assessment Report. He feels that in the next 5 to 10 years there will be a major increase in population of anywhere from 1000 to 10,000 people in the Quincy area and feels it will severely impact that area.

Larry Lankton reported on the Keweenaw Heritage Center. It had its first annual meeting recently at which time discussion took place on coordinating with KNHP on what will be exhibited at the Heritage Center. Lankton said he feels that it is essential that sites coordinate with one another to insure that a story does not fall through the cracks or that the same story is not told twice. Fiala agreed and added that the next crucial document needed for the park is an interpretive plan. He informed the commissioners that he is making the commitment to bring in the necessary people to help begin the process of an interpretive plan as well as working on coordination with other local organizations as to what "stories" will be told at the various sites.

Lankton commented that a master's student in the Civil Engineering Department at Michigan Tech did a study of reintroducing light rail such as a trolley system to the Copper Country again. It is not a full feasibility study but it does talk about where a rail system might run, what rails are available, and where reproductions of trolley cars are found. Lankton mentioned the study in case there might be any kind of interest in this type of project.

Clyde Raasio attended the League of Women Voters forum. He said he spoke to the supervisor of Quincy Township after the forum regarding zoning ordinances. Raasio said he feels that the townships would like to embark on zoning but financial resources and the enforcement that would have to come after the zoning is in effect are of concern to them. Raasio said he was a member of a county planning and zoning commission some time ago. The planning commission had unsuccessfully attempted to pass countywide zoning at that time. He still has documents from the plan. Quincy and Franklin Township were a part of that plan. Raasio said he that he told the Quincy Township supervisor that he is willing to provide him with the documents regarding that plan, which include maps. Raasio commented that the location of the parcel of land that the park service is interested in acquiring in the Quincy area would be the best buffer to any encroachment by commercial and private development.

Tom Nemacheck reported that the state held its state tourism conference in October. He explained that the state has a tourist profiling system to track where visitors are from and what sites they visit. The Upper Peninsula looked very strong in cultural heritage tourism. The state invests several hundred thousand dollars a year in profiling who the visitors are and are tying this information to economics. He added that when the user market is known right down to where they live, direct mailing and direct advertising can be done to attract visitors, and visitors bring spending money. Nemacheck said he encourages local businesses and agencies to pay attention to this tourism information provided by the state. He added, "we need to be ready for this type of tourist though."

Nemacheck spoke of having a retreat for the Advisory Commission in order to begin discussing the duties of the commission once it gets its operating powers. Fiala added that he could invite members from other NPS advisory commissions with operating powers to come to speak about their rolls and responsibilities. Fiala said he could also provide various sample copies of job descriptions of an Advisory Commission executive director position. Nemacheck asked for clarification from Fiala regarding the legislation on how the Secretary of Interior makes Advisory Commission appointments. According to his understanding, the language is changed because federal constitutional rules state that the Secretary of Interior cannot be mandated to appoint people to

the commission, but instead takes nominations into consideration. Fiala said this is correct and added that it gives the Secretary the latitude to make a choice.

Paul Lehto reported on Calumet Township activities. There is concern for the powder house. It needs a roof. Lehto explained that when the Keweenaw Printing Company was in operation it was an integral part of the Union Building. The equipment used by the printing company is being acquired and there are plans to make an exhibit of the printing company in the Union building using the equipment. The Calumet Township Planning Commission and the Historic District Commission within the township are active, according to Lehto. They have been meeting regularly and making progress.

### **Comments/Questions from the Public**

Diana Charles of Senator Levin's office said that her office will be working on the budget for next year and if there are any requests for funding in a particular area please let her know by November.

Amy Wisti said that Congressman Stupak is very appreciative of the support and advice that he received from members of the commission and local authorities regarding park legislation.

Sue Cone expressed concern about the language in the H.R. 748 bill by which the Secretary of the Interior appoints members to the Advisory Commission. Cone feels that the language the way it is written now would allow anyone to be appointed as a commissioner rather than someone recommended by the local units of government. Fiala explained that the language allows nominees from designated local authorities here to submit more than one nominee. He added that if only one nominee is submitted to the Secretary of Interior, in effect, he is being told whom he has to appoint which violates the constitution. The language is very specific as to where this commission should come from and how it is derived. Nominations come from local authorities. He added that it would be extremely poor policy and judgement for someone occupying the superintendency of this park to go against local nominees. The Secretary has the authority to reject a nominee but it does not give him the authority to superimpose a nominee.

Ed Yarbrough, manager of the QMHA, offered to donate the excess corrugated tin from the Quincy #2 mineshaft restoration to Calumet Township for stabilization of the Powder house roof that Lehto spoke of earlier.

Joseph Mihal, member of the Village of Calumet council said he like to pass on a comment to the legislative representatives that the village is in need of infrastructure money for roads and sidewalks. There is a need for grants to finish Fifth Street with brick. Sixth Street is in need of repair. The village would like to restore the original look of brick on Sixth Street, but it's very costly. However, with National Park status, it would be preferable to bring it back to the original streetscape. Diana Charles asked Mihal to give her something in writing regarding these funding needs.

Mrs. William Liddecott, landowner at the Central Mine area, asked if any progress has been made regarding the preservation of some of the poor rock piles in the area. Fiala said he is trying to research whether there is money from federal highway programs tied in with the use of the poor rock piles. He will use the Section 106 process. He'll investigate to see if the Department of Transportation at the federal level is financing the state to buy mine rock within the NHL districts as well as National Registrar districts. Erik Nordberg suggested drafting a letter to send to owners of the poor rock piles notifying them of the historical significance of the rock piles. Clyde Raasio mentioned that the commissioners could send a joint letter to the owners expressing concern.

Erik Nordberg said he would like to stress the importance of the need for local agencies and organizations who are not cooperating sites to work together with the park and the commission on park planning. Nordberg also commented on the White Pine mine area saying that the potential is there to tell a unique mining story. He feels it is a very interpretable site that would attract visitors. Nordberg also suggested that the park look at genealogy tourism. He feels it is becoming a very popular vacation pursuit. The MTU Archives had a busy

summer with visitors using the Archives for their genealogy research. The Archives began a project last summer of collecting cemetery information, according to Nordberg. There are plans to have a web site up and running by the end of the year with the cemetery information allowing web site users to search for surnames. This project was initiated through a small consortium of libraries and archives in the region. Larry Lankton agreed with Nordberg, saying that while doing research recently at the Detroit Public Library he noticed the large number of visitors doing genealogy research. He also sees this as a growing part of tourism.

Reverend Langseth mentioned that at the League of Women Voters forum it was suggested that a spokesperson should be selected who could act as a mediator for the issue of historical preservation versus development. Nordberg added that developers need to be made a part of the preservation planning process in order to work toward something cohesive. Kathryn Eckert reminded everyone of the comment made some years ago by Frank Gilbert, attorney with the National Trust who came to the area, to talk to the commission about preservation planning. He said that development is going to occur, but the key is to direct it into something that you want.

Dennis Borst said the Houghton County Historical Society is considering sponsoring a monument for the miners who died in the mines. Ed Yarbrough said that the QMHA is currently in the process of raising money for the same type of project. It was noted that this points out the fact that there is a definite need for cooperating sites to meet together periodically to keep each other informed of activities and prevent duplication of projects. Yarbrough said he thought that at one time there was talk about forming a group with one representative from each cooperating site in the group and perhaps even some sites that are not cooperating sites but have a strong vested interest in the park. Nemacheck suggested that a member of the Advisory Commission could take on the job of coordinating such a group and meet with them and then report back to the commissioners.

Three Hancock High School students, Liz Peterson, Barb Gustafson and Danielle Lypsinmaa, introduced themselves saying they were attending the meeting because of a history class assignment. The students volunteered to send letters to the owners of the poor rock to express their concern for the depletion of the rock piles. Reverend Langseth told the students to convey to their class that the Advisory Commission welcomes students to commission meetings.

Reverend Langseth suggested that Fiala arrange another tour for the commissioners possibly of the Calumet district preceding the next Advisory Commission meeting. It was also suggested to expand the Commission meeting to include a retreat for the purpose of initiating the interpretive planning process. It was decided that the retreat would be held. It will begin at noon on Monday, March 6.

Advisory Commission meeting dates for Y2000 are March 7, May 23, August 22, and October 24.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

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