

**Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Advisory Council**

- June 17, 2008 Meeting Minutes-

Date: June 17, 2008

Time: 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Location: Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, 500 W. Fletcher Street, Alpena, MI

MEETING ATTENDEES

NOAA: Jeff Gray, Russ Green, Jean Prevo, Mary Beth Stutzman, Pat Labadie

State of Michigan: None.

SAC Members: Steve Kroll, Karen Tetzlaff, Lynda VanDusen, Olin Joynton, Jerry Meek, Dennis Bodem, Don Beem

SAC Alternates: Vera Kavanaugh, John McVeety, Shari Davis, Chuck Weisen, David Dekett, John McConnell, Mike Lakin

Ex-officio Member: Rick Houchin, USCG

Public: Sheila Phillips

Media: None.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Steve Kroll welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Steve spoke briefly about the recent SAC Chairs/Coordinators meeting held at the *Monitor* NMS, he will talk about it more at the August meeting.

Thunder Bay NMS was chosen as the location for the 2009 SAC Chairs/Coordinators Meeting. It is scheduled for the week of May 4th.

SANCTUARY UPDATE:

Exhibit Opening & Gala. A gala fundraiser was held on Saturday, June 14, to celebrate the grand opening of the exhibit and kickoff the local development program. Senator Levin was the key note speaker.

Public Openhouse. On Sunday, June 15, the sanctuary hosted a public openhouse. Sanctuary staff estimate that 1,500 - 2,000 people were here to tour the exhibits. The sanctuary received many positive comments throughout the day.

Director of the National Marine Sanctuary Program, Dan Basta attended the gala and the public openhouse and was blown away with the exhibit and the community's support and response.

The GLMHC summer hours are Monday - Saturday, 10am-5pm, and Sundays, 12pm-5pm. These hours will run through Labor Day and the new schedule will be determined after that. The sanctuary has hired three new Visitor Center Experience Specialists for staffing the exhibit and running the store. These employees will be focusing on visitor service and making sure they have a positive experience.

The next position that will be filled is for a Visitor Services Coordinator. The sanctuary is looking for someone with experience in museum coordination. The VSC will oversee the Visitor Experience Specialists, work with volunteers, and will be in charge of scheduling programs.

Thirty bus tours are already scheduled for this summer, as well as numerous local groups (e.g. class reunions, meetings, and a daycare).

Carol Shafto is in Washington, DC to testify before a House committee on Sanctuary Reauthorization on Wednesday, June 18, it will be broadcast at 2:00 on the C-Span website.

Hyperbaric facility was reopened on Monday, June 16, at the Alpena Regional Medical Center.

Dan Basta, Director of the National Marine Sanctuary Program, Alpena Regional Medical Center staff, and Alpena Community College staff are working to form a partnership with staff at the sanctuary in American Samoa. Representatives from each of these entities will be traveling to American Samoa in early fall to meet and discuss partnership opportunities.

The Immanuel Lutheran ROV team will be competing this weekend in San Diego.

The Thunder Bay Maritime Festival will be held on July 4th, 10am-6pm. Please see Jean for flyers and brochures to distribute.

The *Pride of Michigan* and Sea Cadets will be here for the next month. They continue to look for funding to transfer their program to Thunder Bay NMS permanently.

There is a digital kiosk outside on the Maritime Heritage Trail that provides information on shipwrecks, the sanctuary program and it plays a short video. We are hoping to have a second one installed at the marina this summer.

Foundation Update. Mary Beth spoke about the status of the local development program. In the last three months we have raised \$36,800. The gala was phenomenal, 250 people attended. She feels good about the community response to the local foundation. The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation currently has 250 members nation wide, 145 of those members are from our region.

As the development program moves forward, Mary Beth would like to continue giving updates at the SAC meetings and welcomes input from the SAC.

Alpena Community College - Dr. Olin Joynton

Mission of ACC - To meet lifelong learning needs by providing educational opportunities through effective stewardship of resources.

Olin gave a presentation on ACC fundraising efforts and the mission of ACC. He asked everyone to spread the word to vote “yes” at the upcoming August 5th election.

Sinkhole Presentation - Steve Ruberg, Observing Systems Researcher, Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab

GLERL received a grant from Ocean Exploration to conduct studies of the sinkholes in Thunder Bay NMS. The study is focused on the sinkhole’s ecosystems.

Announcements. A SAC Lunch is scheduled for July 15 at noon and the next meeting is August 19th. Karen Brubek, the National SAC Coordinator, will be here for the August meeting.

Public Comment. None.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm.

Action Items:

Sanctuary staff will draft and mail meeting minutes to council members.