

Mackinac Island State Park Commission  
Role and Responsibility  
July 1, 2023

OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Mackinac Island State Park Commission (MISPC) is responsible for determining the philosophy, policies, goals and objectives of the Mackinac State Historic Parks (MSHP) which includes Mackinac Island State Park, Michilimackinac State Park, Mill Creek State Park and all of the museums, historic sites and other properties within these parks. The Commission's overall management responsibility is expressed in its mission:

**We protect, preserve and present Mackinac's  
rich historic and natural resources to provide  
outstanding educational and recreational experiences  
for the public.**

To implement this mission the Mackinac Island State Park Commission appoints a Director to whom it delegates the necessary responsibility and authority to hire the staff and carry out the operation of MSHP. The Commission is responsible, in general, for directing the management and control of MSHP business, finance, property, natural resource protection and museum programs. The Commission is accountable to the public.

STRUCTURE

Four committees have been established.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE consists of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary and acts on behalf of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission between meetings of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission in the restricted areas of legal, bylaw, financial, and other matters as defined by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission. Any action taken between meetings must be reported immediately to all commissioners.

THE FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE, consisting of three commissioners, is responsible for reviewing the monthly and annual financial and investment reports prepared by the director. The committee also reviews and, with the full commission, approves the appointment of auditors and reviews the annual audit of the Revenue Bond operations. The committee meets annually prior to the December meeting to review the audit and any other financial and investment priorities.

THE AIRPORT, BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE consists of three commissioners and reviews the annually updated Airport Improvement Program, reviews and makes recommendations for changes and additions to Commission properties. The committee meets annually prior to the May meeting.

THE FUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE consists of three members and works with staff, Mackinac Associates, and community members on developing and implementing strategies for

securing annual operational and capital improvement funding. The committee meets annually prior to the July meeting.

## FUNCTIONS

The functions of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission are as follows:

1. Goals and Objectives--The Commission determines general goals and objectives for MSHP. With Commission participation, review and approval, staff creates five-year strategic plans that are implemented through the annual planning process.
2. Policies and Programs--The Commission considers and approves broad policies and programs in order to achieve our stated goals. These policies and programs are to be executed by the Director and staff.
3. Organization—The Commission elects the Chairman of the Commission and appoints the Director who is supervised by and reports to the commission through the Chairman. It selects, upon recommendation of the Director, the audit firm, concessionaires, and other consultants.
4. Funding--The Commission oversees the process of securing and providing adequate funding for operations and capital development.
5. Capital Investment—The Commission approves the issuance of revenue bonds for the improvement of the MSHP historical facilities. It approves, or through delegation authorizes, the making of new capital investments and the sale and exchange of assets.
6. Licensing and Leasing--The Mackinac Island State Park Commission issues licenses and leases within the State Parks. It determines the policies and terms of these licenses and leases and oversees the enforcement of terms by the staff.
7. Evaluation and Appraisal--The Commission reviews and appraises the results of State Park activities and performance against the mission, policies, procedures and plans. Through the chairman, it evaluates the annual performance of the Director. It monitors the legal and ethical conduct of the business to ensure the protection and the rights and the interests of the public.
8. Budget and Auditing--The Mackinac Island State Park Commission has responsibility for overseeing the annual budgetary process. It also reviews monthly financial statements and, upon recommendation of the Finance Committee, selects outside auditors and provides direct access at all times for reports and recommendations from these outside auditors.
9. Counsel to the Commission—The Michigan Attorney General's office provides counsel to the Commission on all matters regarding the legal jurisdiction and authority of the Commission.
10. Counsel to Administration--Individual Mackinac Island State Park Commission members

are responsible for providing counsel on general management matters; they must not, however, assume the role of administrator or executive officer.

## METHOD OF OPERATION

The Mackinac Island State Park Commission meets in Commission meetings as a total Commission, not as administrative members reporting to outside Commission members. Management (the Director plus other members of the management staff) report and propose action to the Commission. The link between management and the Commission is the Director, who is responsible for providing to the Commission the necessary perspective on the reports and proposals submitted.

## MEETINGS

While the number of yearly meetings is not set by statute, regular meetings are conducted on a carefully scheduled basis to ensure the completion of the necessary actions and to give adequate opportunity for the Commission to carry out its responsibilities. By statute, meetings are held in compliance with the open meetings act. At the discretion of the chairman, meetings may be broadcast.

The Commission generally meets five times a year, usually in December, March, May, July, and September. Meeting venues are not mandated, but traditionally summer meetings are held at the Straits of Mackinac. The December and March meetings are usually held in various locations downstate, the May meeting is usually in Mackinaw City and the July and September meetings are usually on Mackinac Island. Special meetings of the Commission and committees are held as necessary. The annual election of officers takes place at the July meeting.

## COMPENSATION

There is no compensation for services on the Mackinac Island State Park Commission. Commissioners are eligible for reimbursement for travel expenses per State of Michigan guidelines.

## TENURE

Commission members serve for terms of six years, by appointment of the Governor. There is no limit to the number of times a commissioner may be reappointed.

October 1985

Updated, April 2013; September 2015; March 2023