



Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative 2013 Annual Meeting and Conference



June 19-21, 2013 – Marquette, Michigan

SUMMARY of the 2013 Annual Meeting and Conference in Marquette: A memorable success!



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Cities Initiative Members present in Marquette. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

In June 2013, over one hundred attendees were warmly welcomed by Mayor John DePetro, the beautiful City of Marquette and the Superior Watershed Partnership at the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative's 10th Annual Meeting and Conference. The event offered a forum for mayors and other government officials, private sector representatives, citizen groups, First Nations and scientists to discuss matters of crucial importance to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence.



Camaraderie between our members is an important element of an organization like ours. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

The annual meeting was also the occasion to appoint new officers as Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett passed the torch to Mayor Keith Hobbs of Thunder Bay, the new Chair for 2013-2014. Mayor Régis Labeaume, President of the Québec Metropolitan Community, became Vice Chair, and Mayor John Dickert of Racine the new Secretary/Treasurer. At the members meeting, nine resolutions were carried by the membership. Also at the meeting, awards were given in recognition of outstanding best practices. Delegates were treated to a wonderful evening of entertainment featuring Marquette's Lake Superior Theatre company, mime Gayle Lajoie and the inaugural performance of Cities Initiative's Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River anthem: *Sacred Waters*.



Marquette Mayor John DePetro presenting paintings from a local artist to Mr. Daley and David Ullrich. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

The 2013 Annual Meeting and Conference kicked off with regional meetings on Wednesday, June 19th at the historic Landmark Inn. Mayors from the U.S., Ontario, and Québec gathered to discuss issues and topics relevant to their respective regions. U.S. mayors discussed the *Great Lakes Restoration Initiative*, Asian carp, water levels, and the *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement*. In the Québec meeting, mayors and staff shared perspectives on shoreline restoration, pipelines and the *St. Lawrence Action Plan*.

Finally, in the Ontario Regional meeting, mayors exchanged views on the proposed *Great Lakes Protection Act*, the Enbridge Pipeline Reversal, eutrophication and water levels.



Members of the Marquette High School Choir performing the national anthems of Canada and the United States. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

Following the regional meetings, all member mayors gathered for the annual members' meeting. During this session, St. Catharines Mayor Brian McMullan, Mayor John Dickert of Racine, Mayor Denis Lapointe of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Grand Rapids Mayor George Heartwell and Mayor Paul Dyster of Niagara Falls (NY) were re-elected to

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A panel at the Marquette Regional History Center. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

three-year terms on the Board of Directors. Nine resolutions were approved, including: Resolution #1, *Climate Impacts in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Region and Building Resilient Communities*.



Cities Initiative members' meeting. Photo: Naolo Coulibaly.

David Ullrich and Nicola Crawhall provided an overview of the organization's activities over the previous year to the membership and summaries of the regional meetings were shared by the participants themselves. Additionally, special presentations were made to the mayors about Ontario Power Generation's (OPG) proposed Deep Geologic Repository for long-term storage of low and intermediate level nuclear waste in Kincardine, Ontario. Both OPG and the Inverhuron Committee, a citizens' group opposed to the project, made presentations to the mayors. The presentations sparked a lively exchange on the participation



Members and presenters engage in lively debates during the members' meeting. Photo: Naolo Coulibaly.



Leslie Hornung, Dennis West and Peter Plastrik discuss sustainable economic development in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

of the Cities Initiative in the upcoming hearings on the proposal. It was agreed that the ad hoc committee of mayors would be expanded to consider the Cities Initiative's position on the subject.

Finally, two best practice awards were handed out: the Wege Small Cities Sustainability Award was accepted by Mayor Sandra Cooper of the Town of Collingwood for its Community Pathways Initiative and the Water Conservation



Mayor Hobbs, Rich VanderVeen, Dr. John Lenters and Carl Lindquist during the Climate Change Adaptation and Resiliency panel. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

Framework award went to the Region of Peel for its work on outdoor irrigation audits. The first day of the Annual Meeting and Conference ended aboard the Isle Royale Queen III, cruising on majestic Lake Superior on a beautiful summer night.

The second day of the Annual Meeting took place at the Marquette Regional History Center. The 2013-2014 Chair, Mayor Hobbs, welcomed attendees to the conference and shared his goals and priorities for the coming year. The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Richard M. Daley,

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Keynote address by Mr. Richard M. Daley. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

Mayor of Chicago from 1989 to 2011, and founder of the Cities Initiative. Mr. Daley spoke of the importance of global partnerships and how they can be used by cities to lead the way to a sustainable future.

Following Mr. Daley's address, elected officials and experts participated on four panels: 1) Sustainable Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Economy; 2) Mining, the Economy and the Environment; 3) Climate Adaptation and Resiliency; and 4) Shoreline Mayors Take Action. The second day of the



Conference attendees enjoying dinner on the shores of Lake Superior. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

conference ended with a reception and dinner on the shores of Lake Superior where Mayor Hobbs and a number of past and present mayors paid tribute to Executive Director David Ullrich, for his dedication to the organization over the past ten years. After the dinner, the participants were treated to the wonderful homegrown talents of the Lake Superior Theatre Company and of mime Gayle Lajoie. The performances culminated in the unveiling of *Sacred Waters*. The anthem was penned by Mayor George Heartwell and scored by his son, Damien Heartwell. Special thanks to Jan Brodersen and the Marquette Senior High School Choir for their performance. A video recording of the

premiere of the Anthem is available [here](#). The final day of the conference provided attendees an opportunity to participate in educational tours. Attendees were given the option of three tours: 1) The Rio Tinto Eagle Mine; 2) Marquette's waterfront revitalization and restoration projects; and 3) The Marquette Maritime Museum, historic lighthouse and the new Coast Guard facility.



Marquette High School Choir performing *Sacred Waters: An Anthem for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence*. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

The Cities Initiative would like to extend its deepest thanks to Mayor DePetro, the City of Marquette and its staff, the Superior Watershed Partnership and its Executive Director, Carl Lindquist, for hosting a truly memorable 10th anniversary Annual Meeting and Conference.

For more information, please access the conference presentations, resolutions and other information with [this link](#). The Cities Initiative has also produced a slideshow of the Annual Meeting that you can view [here](#). You may also listen to [this interview](#) with Mr. Daley, Mayor Barrett, Carl Lindquist and David Ullrich on PBS affiliate WNMU-TV, hosted by Bill Hart.



Attendees were treated to an excerpt from *Beacon on the Rock*, by the Lake Superior Theatre Company. Photo: Tom Buckhoe.

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