

**2017 Great Lakes Islands Summit:
“Laying the Foundation for a Great Lakes Islands Coalition”**

**Beaver Island, Michigan
September 25-26, 2017**



Photo Credit: Mackinac Island Town Crier

**Meeting Summary
FINAL 11/18/2017**

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A. Background

Great Lakes Island Communities

There are at least 30 year-round island communities in the Great Lakes, geographically distributed across all five of the Great Lakes (Lakes Erie, Huron, Michigan, Ontario and Superior) plus several of the connecting channels (St. Marys River, Lake St. Clair, Detroit River, and the Niagara River). Additional island communities are found in the St. Lawrence River region, the downstream outlet of the Great Lakes. To our knowledge, approximately one-third of these island communities have a bridge or tunnel to the mainland. The others are reached by some combination of ferry, airplane, or personal watercraft, often with seasonal limitations. The islands vary greatly in terms of physical size, population, distance to the mainland, and other factors that influence island character.

Despite their uniqueness, it appears that most of these island communities share in common some key challenges which span the economic, social, and environmental spectrum. Underlying these challenges is the observation (though anecdotal) that island demographics may be changing at great speed and dimension. In addition to well-known metrics like population size, median age and household income, more nuanced changes are reverberating across many of the island communities, such as shifts in resident status from year-rounders to seasonal cottagers and transient (tourist) populations. For these small and remote places, the relative impact of a rapidly changing society can be enormous, perhaps even threatening their long-term viability and sustainability.

Challenges can persist on islands for several reasons, including:

1. Small and seasonal populations create limitations on local capacity (availability and expertise of community members) to attend to the root causes and mitigate the symptoms.
2. Limited access to information, such as grant opportunities, updates on changing government policies, and the latest research by technical experts, compounds the challenges.
3. There is extremely poor awareness about island living among mainland-based decisions-makers in government, other organizations, and the general public.
4. There is a lack of data specific to island communities by which conditions and trends can be assessed (for example, changes in demographics, property ownership, etc.). Where data do exist, they are often misleading or inaccurate.

It is true that the above challenges are not uncommon for many small, rural mainland communities. However, the threat is exacerbated for isolated island communities where populations are relatively small and there are no adjacent communities able to function as safety valves for services and other needs. On islands, changes can have a disproportionately large effect.

One simple way to mitigate these challenges is to form a peer-to-peer network where information can be exchanged between like-minded groups, resources can be leveraged, and collectively, voices can be elevated. It is likely that some islands have already identified best practices and solutions that have worked, as well as some ideas that have not worked.

At present, there appears to be little regular communication or collaboration between the populated islands across the Great Lakes region. This is somewhat surprising, given that the Great Lakes region is awash in partnerships¹ that bring together and advance the common interests.

¹ Existing partnerships exist for the governors and premiers of the region's states and provinces; the major cities; environmental organizations; lake-dependent industries; and a slew of others that seek to advance specific priorities.

Origins of the 2017 Great Lakes Islands Summit

The origins of the Summit can be traced to discussions in 2014 among staff at the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes² (OGL). The OGL had recently become aware of the Island Institute (Institute), a non-profit organization based in Rockland, Maine. Formed in 1983, the Institute's mission is to "sustain Maine's island and coastal communities, and exchange ideas and experiences to further the sustainability of communities here and elsewhere." As staff from these two very different organizations, from two very different regions, started to talk and compare notes, it became clear that the Great Lakes region was missing something important. The Institute has been achieving some very real successes by improving the lives of Maine islanders, both through its fully-staffed, dedicated program areas, but also through its facilitative role in bringing together 15 year-round island communities under the communication and collaboration structure known as the "Maine Islands Coalition."

A stand-alone organization like the Institute does not exist in the Great Lakes, nor does there appear to be any existing structure supporting regular communication among Great Lakes islands, akin to the Maine Islands Coalition. In fact, upon cursory searches, there was a surprising lack of information about the universe of Great Lakes island communities – how many of them exist, what it is like to live on them year-round, what are their needs, etc. Upon being contacted, even some Great Lakes islanders professed to be unfamiliar with their counterparts on most of the other islands.

To determine whether similar efforts at inter-island collaboration could prove valuable to Great Lakes islands, the Institute recommended starting with a "knowledge exchange," where islanders visit each other's communities, attend each other's meetings, and witness the various challenges first-hand. Starting in 2015, members of the Beaver Island, Michigan community visited several islands in Maine; later, they hosted a reciprocal visit for a cohort of Maine Islanders. In fall 2016, several Beaver Islanders made a similar exchange trip to Madeline Island, Wisconsin, accompanied by representatives from OGL and the Institute. While in Wisconsin, they were joined by staff from nearby Northland College who specialized in working with rural communities; they agreed that islands appear to be a unique, underserved class of rural community.

Over the course of several years, the case was slowly being made that island communities, while each unique, did have much in common with each other, sometimes more so than the adjacent mainland. There was growing evidence and interest in determining whether regular communication could yield tangible benefits.

Of course, a network of Great Lakes islands would need more than one or two member communities. Rather than spend many more years trying to reach each island community one by one, it was decided that a meeting dedicated to island leaders should be convened. Beaver Island was chosen as the preferred location due to the established support within the island community, as well as a more central location for most of the Great Lakes islands.

The proposed event, dubbed the "Great Lakes Islands Summit" (hereafter, Summit), would not be a large, public conference, but rather a smaller retreat-style gathering where a handful of dedicated individuals could start the conversation. Faced with space and funding limitations – and the very real predicament of trying to identify who exactly are the "island leaders" for each community – advanced notice about the Summit was limited and measured. Inquiries were sent through individual connections and some word of mouth; cold-calling was the last resort. Contacts were made to local island elected officials, Chambers of Commerce, leaders of school and

² A state governmental office based in Lansing, Michigan, the OGL leads policy development and implements programs to protection, restore, and sustain the Great Lakes and supports the sustainability and resiliency of the coastal communities that depend on them.

other community organizations, and the like. It was recognized that this process was not perfect, and would inevitably omit individuals and maybe entire islands, however it was attainable using the limited resources that were available. Unsure of appropriate expectations, the original hope was that a few individuals from 5-6 islands might be willing to attend.

The Summit planning team consisted of islanders from Beaver and Madeline Islands, plus a few staff people from the OGL, Northland College, and the Institute. A webpage was created to provide background and to support the registration process: <http://www.northland.edu/great-lakes-islands>

The organizers quickly recognized that there was no easy, ready-made playbook for doing this. Notably, there is not even an agreed-upon definition of what constitutes an “island community.” For the purposes of convening this Island Summit, organizers sought out island communities with sizeable year-round populations (at least 50 people) and no permanent connection to the mainland (i.e., no bridge or tunnel). The line of thinking was that these communities would find most value in this effort, as distance and isolation drives many of the challenges of living on islands. In the end, the Summit included representatives from several island communities not meeting these criteria, each of which found the experience worthwhile. Organizers were happily proven wrong.

B. Recap of the 2017 Islands Summit

Logistics

The Summit was hosted by the community of Beaver Island, located in State of Michigan waters in northern Lake Michigan. The meeting occurred at the Central Michigan University Biological Station. This facility was uniquely qualified to offer modern meeting space (including large and small meeting rooms, audio-visual and wireless internet), on-site lodging and meals, and island transportation.

All attendees were asked to pay for their own travel costs to Beaver Island (mainland travel plus the ferry or air ticket to the island). Once on the island, they were offered complimentary meals, transportation, and lodging, though some attendees elected to stay off-site or bring their own transportation, at their own cost. There was no meeting registration fee. Most of the event costs were covered by the OGL, although significant contributions of time (including meeting planning and leading field trips, as noted below), food and beverages, and other amenities were generously provided by members of the Beaver Island community. The OGL also assisted with overall planning for the event.

As part of the registration process, organizers asked each registrant to identify the “Top 3 Challenges” and “Top 3 Successes/Points of Pride” for their island. While organizers recognized these responses would be subjective and not necessarily representative of the full community, it gave a glimpse of the types of issues that are important to Great Lakes islands, which aided in planning an effective meeting.

Who Attended

The final head count included 72 registrants (see Appendix B), plus a handful of additional walk-ins, representing 12 different island communities:

- State of Michigan: Beaver, Drummond, Harsens, Les Cheneaux, Mackinac, Neebish
- State of Ohio: Middle Bass, South Bass (aka, Put-in-Bay)
- Province of Ontario: Manitoulin, Pelee
- State of Wisconsin: Madeline, Washington

Islanders came from extremely variable backgrounds. Roles/titles included: local elected officials (mayors, township supervisors and town board members), business owners, non-profit directors and board members,

Chamber of Commerce directors, tourism officials, and others active in their island community including EMS/fire departments, schools, libraries and museums. Even though participants had individual interests and particular areas of expertise, all appeared willing to explore subjects outside their familiarity, or even immediate relevance to their island. It was recognized that on islands, people often “wear many hats,” out of interest but also necessity.

Partners from the three mainland organizations were also in attendance:

- The Island Institute (Rockland, Maine)
- Michigan Office of the Great Lakes (Lansing, Michigan)
- Northland College’s Center for Rural Communities and Academic Affairs (Ashland, Wisconsin)

Additionally, there were several attendees with media credentials.

It was duly noted that many of the Great Lakes island communities were not in attendance, including most of the islands with a permanent bridge or tunnel (Manitoulin Island was the only attendee with a bridge). Additionally, not all sectors were represented. Notably, the gathering lacked representation by native peoples, including the sovereign Tribes in the U.S. and multiple First Nations from Canadian islands.

Meeting Objectives

The Summit is believed to be the first-ever convention specifically for Great Lakes islanders. On a basic level, it served as a forum to introduce island communities to one another. On a more advanced level, it was used to scope out the potential for an inter-island network or coalition. An existing model of island collaboration is in place in Maine – is there interest in adapting this model to meet the needs of the Great Lakes?

The goals of the 2017 Island Summit were to have islanders:

1. Gain familiarity with the other year-round island communities in the Great Lakes region;
2. Brainstorm the primary challenges unique to living or working on islands,
3. Compare solutions or best practices that have been developed and enacted on individual islands; and
4. Determine if there is critical mass to form a peer-to-peer network of Great Lakes island communities and if so, how could it function and what would it seek to achieve.

Agenda

The agenda spanned two full days, Monday September 25 and Tuesday September 26, 2017, with travel days on either end. A copy of the final agenda appears in Appendix A.

The morning of September 25 was used to “set the stage.” Attendees heard brief overviews of all 12 island communities present; an introduction to the concept of community indicators and how data specific to islands (i.e., demographic, economic, social, etc.) is currently limited or inaccurate; and a description of the Island Institute’s programs and visiting Institute staff perspectives from Maine. The morning of September 25 was videotaped. The recording can be viewed here:

<http://beaverislandnews.com/2017%20September%2025%20Island%20Summit%20Presentations.html>

In the afternoon, attendees split into smaller groups for field trips to visit sites of interest on Beaver Island. Three clusters of trips were offered (themes included biological/natural resources, historic/cultural/social, and government/infrastructure), each narrated by members of the Beaver Island community. The evening of September 25 featured a pig roast that was open to the broader community; the well-attended event drew in more than 50 additional Beaver Islanders.

The second day of the Summit was facilitated by Institute staff. By then, it was anticipated that participants might start seeing the potential value in cross-island collaboration, at least at the 40,000-foot level, but would be wondering about details and how collaboration could work in practice. The Institute facilitators used a variety of meeting management techniques and tools to take attendees through a series of small and large group discussions. The participants started small – thinking of their own needs as individuals and single islands – then were asked to think bigger and consider if and how a cohort of islands from around the region would benefit from working together.

Due to the nature of the event and its objectives, breaks and ample “down-time” were purposefully built into the itinerary so that participants could have time for one-on-one conversations, as well as time to reflect.

Topics Discussed

The following list of subjects was developed by Institute staff to guide the conversation on Day 2. The topics were identified based on information each participant submitted during the registration process, as well as the Institute’s practical experience developing implementable actions in Maine. These are not presented in any priority order.

- Conservation/Environment
- Infrastructure/Broadband
- Transportation
- Education
- Energy
- Governance
- Small Business Development
- Housing
- Eldercare/EMS/Medical
- Tourism

A series of flip charts were used to record participant ideas. For each category, participants were asked to identify: (1) questions they had about the topic, (2) challenges related to living or working on islands, and (3) solutions or successes that have already been enacted on islands (which could possibly be transferred elsewhere). Participants were allowed to float between charts; not everyone contributed to each subject. A compilation of raw notes (transcribed from a series of flip charts) can be found in Appendix C.

This served as a brainstorming exercise and was not intended to reflect every need of island communities. Additionally, many of the comments received could be deemed subjective and are based on individual experiences and opinions; the results should not be construed as the top priorities of an entire island community.

There was overlap between some of these subjects, and most were just scratched on the surface – each could be the focus of an entire meeting. The idea was to start thinking in a bit more detail and identify examples of information sharing opportunities between islands.

Some subjects appeared extremely important to some, but not all, island communities. For example:

- Schools – eight of the twelve participating island communities have schools, though they vary by enrollment, number of grades, etc. Some participants noted that their schools were the life blood of their community, not only as an attractant for families but a focal point which knits together the entire community. Many island schools are facing declining enrollments and other challenges. Participants

spoke of wanting to share ideas about soliciting and keeping qualified teachers, creating diverse academic curricula, offering a variety of sports and other experiences, and more. As one example solution, the Institute sponsors an annual Island Educators Conference which brings together a unique target audience composed specifically of island teachers, administrators, and advocates.

Some challenges appeared germane to every island. For example:

- Natural Resources/Environment – protecting and conserving natural resources and maintaining environmental quality is a common theme across all islands, regardless of their size, land use, demographics, etc. This may include: managing harvestable resources (timber/forests, game species); protecting non-game species (e.g., rare and endangered species); maintaining water, land, and air quality; promoting environmental education and fostering an environmental ethic; and supporting trails and other uses dependent upon good environmental quality.

One islander aptly noted that while her island may not face some of these challenges today, it may face them tomorrow. A network of island communities may thus provide an element of foresight and equip members with greater awareness and preparedness so future issues can be mitigated, or maybe even prevented.

For many of the challenges, it was demonstrated that innovative solutions may already exist. Many islanders were not aware of the solutions already in place on other islands. To that end, the Institute discussed their “What Works Solutions Library” (<http://www.islandinstitute.org/what-works-solutions-library>) which houses island-derived solutions to island challenges. The Great Lakes islands were invited to view the solutions already entered into this inventory (most of which are from Maine) and encouraged to add new ideas from the Great Lakes. Expanding the scope of this solutions library is a two-way street and would benefit all involved.

In response to the various challenges, islanders started discussing some specific initiatives/projects that could be of particular interest to multiple islands and which may be easier to implement together rather than individually. For example:

- Challenge: lack of capacity to undertake island priority projects
- Solution: Island Fellows Program – many islanders were interested in learning about this program (<http://www.islandinstitute.org/program/community-development/island-fellows>), one of the Island Institute’s signature achievements. This program provides participating islands with an “extra set of hands” – typically recent college graduates – for two years to carry out a project identified as a high priority need by the island community. The Institute has placed over 100 Fellows since the program’s inception. [In fall 2018, the Institute placed an Island Fellow on Beaver Island. The placement of a Fellow outside of Maine was a unique, one-time situation. The Institute remains focused on the Maine islands and understandably is not able to place Fellows throughout the Great Lakes or elsewhere in the country.]
- Challenge: increasing awareness about islands for families and broadening the tourism audience
- Solution: collaborative marketing – ideas included:
 - Development of a regional guide to Great Lakes islands
 - Create a tourism “passport” with discounts, stamps, etc. to entice tourists to visit all the islands
 - Concerted effort to reach new audiences through traditional media (newspapers, radio) and social media (e.g., a dedicated Facebook page)

Opportunities for Inter-Island Collaboration

In the final phase of the meeting, attendees were asked to reflect on the past two days and discuss whether more collaboration is needed between Great Lakes islands (the “why”), the potential benefits of doing so (the

“what”), and mechanisms by which it could occur (the “how” and “who”). The raw notes (transcribed from flip charts) are in Appendix D of this document.

Everyone seemed to support the general idea of collaboration. The trick is how it is done. Below are some broad tenets that were discussed relative to the formation of a new inter-island network:

- ❖ Communication is critical; it must be effective, fairly regular, and involve the right people
 - *Virtual meeting tools*: The enormous geography of the Great Lakes region and distance between the islands presents some very real logistical and cost constraints. Fortunately, technology (web-based tools for topical webinars and virtual conferencing, as well as electronic mail) is now fairly commonplace and can help shrink the distance, even for isolated places like islands (though ironically this may be dependent on internet/cell connectivity which varies by island).
 - *In-person Meetings*: Participants noted the value of face-to-face meetings and wished to visit each others islands to see sites and talk to islanders. Representatives from Madeline Island, buoyed by the apparent success of the 2017 Islands Summit, proclaimed that this should be an annual event. They offered to serve as host a 2018 Islands Summit and invited everyone to visit their community.
 - It was suggested that a new cohort of Great Lakes islands could use a combination of techniques. Communication should be frequent throughout the year, occurring remotely using electronic means, with an annual face-to-face meeting at a different island each fall.

- ❖ Collaboration must be strategic
 - Based on the breadth of Summit discussions, it would be easy to get spread too thin; perhaps the group should tackle a few key priority ideas, either the most important ones (to whom?) or those where quick progress can be demonstrated (“low hanging fruit” or “winnable battles”).

- ❖ External capacity support may be needed
 - While island communities are not lacking in passion, many are burdened by limited capacity (time, manpower) to undertake new endeavors. For this new networking opportunity, partner organizations (including the three present at the Summit – OGL, Northland College, and the Institute) could help provide capacity (planning, communications support, and group facilitation), access to wide-ranging information and experts, and related guidance. If mainland-based organizations are relied on for assistance, the needs and wishes of the island communities themselves must remain the primary driver of activity (a similar tact is taken by the Institute, which is guided by the needs of the Maine island communities).

- ❖ Data specific to Great Lakes island communities are incredibly important, yet appear to be severely lacking
 - Basic data on island populations, economics, social programs, etc. are needed to assess the current condition of island communities and analyze trends. Accurate data are critical when comparing islands to rural communities on the mainland, and when attempting to measure progress resulting from projects, programs or policies. There are many complicating factors that affect data collection and analysis for Great Lakes islands, namely the multiple federal and state/provincial jurisdictions involved and the many units of local government that encompass islands. Additionally, the Institute has shown that some types of island data collected by governments are not accurate and must be ground-truthed, island by island. The Institute offers a summary of its data inquiry process here: <http://www.islandinstitute.org/waypoints>

The Island Institute offered the Maine Islands Coalition (MIC) as one model of inter-island collaboration. There, representatives from the 15 Maine islands come together four to five times per year. Representatives are chosen by the island community. Each meeting includes general updates from each island and deeper dives on

particular subjects. The Institute performs a facilitative role for the MIC, but it is the needs of the islanders that drive the MIC agenda. To learn more about the MIC, see <http://www.islandinstitute.org/program/community-development/mic>

Outcomes

Overall, most of the participating islanders expressed great satisfaction with the event. Some used descriptors such as “hope,” “anticipation,” and “comradery.” A surprising number acknowledged having little awareness of other islands.

Though this Summit barely scratched the surface of what is possible, attendees acknowledged the untapped potential that could exist when these communities find common ground. Though no formal poll was taken, all participants appeared interested in learning how their island community could participate going forward.

An entity like the Island Institute does not exist in the Great Lakes. Further, the Institute is already offering a full slate of programming for 15 islands in Maine and is not looking to expand into another region. Participants wondered whether one day, if and when there is significant interest and resources, a stand-alone, non-profit organization dedicated to islands may be created in the Great Lakes. Until that time, the partner organizations (Michigan OGL, Northland College, and the Institute itself, in an advisory role) offered to help (see below), in part to replicate some of the functions that the Institute performs in Maine. Specifically, they spoke of facilitating communication and collaboration through the formation of a new Coalition.

It was suggested that, with the proposed fall 2018 Islands Summit on Madeline Island as a target, the interim year could be used to develop the nuts and bolts of a “Great Lakes Islands Coalition,” such as a mission statement, membership, roles, objectives, and tasks. Participants liked the idea of having a Coalition through which islands could regularly share information and knowledge, and possibly occasionally speak in a shared voice. Islands would not be ceding their independence – what is done with any newly-learned information would be left up to each community.

Others, while recognizing the necessity of the somewhat mundane process of creating an organizational structure, wanted to immediately start working together on particular issues. As one tangible idea, it was suggested that the group start a series of webinars/seminars around subjects of interest to islanders, and invite only islander communities to participate. Others noted that there is nothing stopping individuals, using their newly found relationships, from immediately starting to share information and work together in small groups on items of mutual interest.

C. Next Steps

The 2017 Islands Summit successfully seeded the idea for the creation of a new partnership, tentatively called the “Great Lakes Islands Coalition.” The task now becomes making this peer-to-peer network a reality. Below are some of the next steps.

Islanders:

- Awareness – all islanders will go back to their communities and share what they’ve experienced with the individuals and organizations that need to know, particularly local elected officials. They were promised a meeting summary which will record the details of what occurred (this document). Updates will be provided at island meetings and information will be added to island websites, newsletters, etc. Efforts to reach island media outlets will be up to each participant.
- Representation – island cohorts will begin discussing who should/could “represent” their island in a future coalition. In the Maine Islands Coalition model, each island community picks a single

representative. Some participants spoke of forming a new committee on their island which would get additional people involved and help “share the load.”

- Immediate Implementation – individual islanders may begin pursuing specific ideas already learned from other islanders; as examples, some participants planned to pursue an island composting program, to seek support for establishing a daycare center, and to start a basketball tournament for island schools.
- 2018 Islands Summit – the team from Madeline Island will begin planning a 2018 Islands Summit, including scoping out possible venues and creating timelines, tasks, and budgets.

Each of the three mainland-based partner organizations committed to assisting the islanders by doing the following:

Michigan Office of the Great Lakes:

1. Meeting summary – draft a summary for the 2017 Islands Summit. A long version (i.e., this document) and a short version (one or two pager) will be developed. [COMPLETED]
2. Participant survey – create and circulate a post-Summit survey to all participants. These results will help inform the 2018 Islands Summit. [COMPLETED]
3. Regional Coordination – continue to advance the broader, on-going discussion between islanders and partners to flesh out the necessary components of a Great Lakes Islands Coalition. This includes:
 - a) Lead the drafting, relying heavily on islander input, of a foundational document (e.g., a Charter, Strategic Plan, or similar) around which the nascent Great Lakes Islands Coalition could come to life. The 2018 Islands Summit was floated as a possible target date to have this plan ready for unveiling or endorsing.
 - b) Facilitating regular communications between everyone at a frequency (e.g., monthly or quarterly) and method (e.g., email, conference call, virtual meetings) to be determined next.
 - c) Investigating the use of periodic, “one-off” webinars/seminars as a means to hear topical experts and advance islander collaboration on specific subjects.
 - d) Creating an islands resource directory, i.e., a living, updatable “who’s who” for islands. This may include contacts by sector/issue (e.g., medical center director, school principal, township officials, etc.) as well as links to major island plans, studies, etc. (e.g., master plan, energy study).

Northland College:

1. Data – continue to create, refine, and report out on data indicators which could be used to help understand the status and trends related to island living.
2. Website – maintain and enhance the web presence (which was set up specifically for the Summit) to include additional information about the growing Coalition.
3. Island Fellows – investigate the feasibility of starting a Great Lakes Island Fellows Program, borrowing heavily from the Island Institute model but adapted to our regional needs.
4. 2018 Islands Summit – assist the Madeline Island community with the planning of the next Summit.

Island Institute:

1. Advisory – continue to serve as advisors, particularly related to coalition-building, developing a Great Lakes fellows program, sharing solutions with Maine islands via the What Works Inventory and other methods, and offering guidance on specific subjects where the Institute has programmatic expertise or experience.

Finally, all participants will be needed to engage additional island communities and island constituencies that were missing from the event. Similarly, there may be additional non-island, mainland partners that could help share the load and perform certain tasks.

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Appendix A – Final Agenda

2017 Islands Summit: Laying the Foundation for a Great Lakes Islands Coalition

Event Hosts: The Beaver Island Community

Central Michigan University Biological Station

Beaver Island, Michigan

September 25-26, 2017

Sunday, September 24

6:00 pm Group Dinner, Meet & Greet for Sunday arrivals

Monday, September 25

7:00 – 8:30 am Breakfast and coffee

Session 1: Setting the Stage (Auditorium)

9:00 am Opening Remarks

- Welcome, Summit structure & objective, housekeeping (Bob Anderson, President, Beaver Island Association)
- Background (Jon Allan, Director, Michigan Office of the Great Lakes)
- What is Possible (Karen Burns, Chief Talent Officer, Island Institute)

9:30 am Overview of Islands of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Region (Matt Preisser, Michigan OGL)

- Rapid fire, island-by-island attendee introductions & “My Island in 5 Minutes” (All island communities present)
- Other attendees

10:30 am Break (Foyer)

11:00 am Island Data & the Value of Indicators (Brandon Hofstedt, Associate Professor and Faculty Director, Center for Rural Communities, Northland College)

- Q&A

11:20 am Sharing the Maine Experience

- The Island Institute: History, Programs, Roles (Karen Burns)
- Example Solutions: Community Indicators, What Works Inventory, Island Fellows Program, Conferences, Maine Islands Coalition (Kate Tagai, Community Development Officer, Island Institute)
- Q&A

12:00 pm Lunch

Session 2: Beaver Island Community Tour (Off-site)

1:00 pm Field Trips – see last page (convene 1:00 pm at parking lot, departure by 1:15 pm)

4:00 pm Conclude Day 1 (down time, informal networking, optional sight-seeing or shopping)

6:00 pm Dinner & evening bonfire (Biological Station & beach) – broader Beaver Island Community invited

Tuesday, September 26

7:00 - 8:30 am Breakfast and coffee

8:30 am Welcome back & recap Day 1 (Bob Anderson, BIA)

Session 3: Exploring the Needs of Great Lakes Island Communities (Auditorium & Adjacent Rooms)

Facilitated by Karen Burns and Kate Tagai, Island Institute

Goal: identify links between islands, including common challenges & opportunities

8:40 am Expectations and instructions

8:45 am Small group discussions ("World Café")

10:00 am Break (Foyer)

10:30 am Gallery Walk

11:00 am Small group discussions

11:30am Share outs to full group

12:00 pm Lunch

Session 4: Big Picture - Community Collaboration (Auditorium)

Facilitated by Karen Burns and Kate Tagai, Island Institute

Goal: determine how island communities may benefit from communication & collaboration

1:00 pm Small groups (Activity: 1-2-6-12)

2:00 pm Share outs to full group

2:30 pm Break (Foyer)

2:45 pm Small group discussions by island

3:15 pm Full group discussion - First Steps

3:45 pm Reflections

Islands Summit Wrap-Up

4:00 pm Concluding remarks (Bob Anderson & Beaver Island Community)

4:30 pm Formal Summit ends

6:00 pm Group dinner for those remaining

Thank you for attending!

www.northland.edu/great-lakes-islands

Final Sept 20, 2017

Sept 25 Field Trips ("Boodles")

Field Trip Boodle #1: Beaver Island Natural Resource Boodle with Dr. James Gillingham

Begins at CMU's Biological Station and visit Little Traverse Conservancy preserves (Little Sand Bay, Barney's Lake), Gull Harbor, CMU Mesocosom, St. James and Wagner Campgrounds, and other natural areas as time and weather permits. Additional trips will be directed by Ed and Beth Leuck.

Field Trip Boodle #2: Beaver Island Cultural Boodle with Kevin Boyle

Site visits to Beaver Island Historical Society Museum (Native American and early European cultural history), WVBI (radio station), Community Center, Library, School.

Field Trip Boodle #3: Governmental/Infrastructure Boodle with Bob Tidmore and/or Pam Grassmick

Site visits to EMS/Fire/Medical Center, Township Airport, Transportation Authority/Boat, Waterways and Birding Trail, Beaver Island Resilient Master Plan discussed.

Appendix B – Registration List

2017 Islands Summit: Laying the Foundation for a Great Lakes Islands Coalition

Event Hosts: The Beaver Island Community

Central Michigan University Biological Station

Beaver Island, Michigan

September 25-26, 2017

Attendance List: Islanders

Beaver Island

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Appendix C - Topic Area Brainstorming (raw flip chart notes)

**2017 Islands Summit
September 25-26, 2017
Beaver Island, Michigan**

Topic Area Brainstorming (raw flip chart notes)

The following are the raw notes from smaller breakout discussions. Not all attendees visited each flip chart. Where they felt comfortable, attendees were asked to name the island associated with a particular comment (some are abbreviations; e.g., SBI is South Bass Island and MI is Madeline Island). The results of this brainstorming session do not represent all of the perspectives in each island community.

Conservation/Environment

- Topics
 - Recycling opportunities
 - Composting fish guts and organics
 - Agriculture nutrient runoff
 - Farmers testing soil
 - Lower phosphorus in fertilizer
 - No legislation
 - Sewage treatment
 - Common issues?
- Questions
 - How to support paid positions? (SBI, MI)
 - How to fund new initiatives? (SBI, MI)
 - What is the path to engaging community leaders/businesses in conservation? (MI)
 - What success has your island had with recycling metal- junk cars, refrigerators?
 - How to stop transfer or invasive species to other trails, islands, or inland lakes?
 - Does your island have community gardens?
 - How best to do interpretive signage?
 - Who should set conservation policy priorities?
 - How do we start/create/get/become a dark site? Madeline, Beaver?
- Challenges
 - Land Purchase Price \$65,000/acre inland/wetland (SBI)
 - Limited properties available to conserve
 - Overuse of limited resources – Madeline
 - Trampling of sensitive areas
 - Junk cars (BI)
 - Getting them off island/crushers/\$
 - Stone water runoff/horse waste + no poo bags (Mack)
 - Not historically correct
 - 4 capped landfills- to main land (BI and Mack)
 - Promoting clean boating/trail riding and education
 - Maintain/Obtaining open space
 - Lack of adequate funding
 - Decrease in volunteers due to aging population
 - Limited interaction with professional organizations due to increased costs
 - No cleaning stations or policies congruent for forestry cleaning practices

- Utility line clearing
 - Invasive species to islands
 - Beach bark disease
 - How to handle wastewater/sewage
 - Almost all of Manitoulin is privately owned
 - Disposal of fish guts, aquatic vegetation collection, yard waste - need compost facility
- Successes
 - Nature camp taking conservation messages home-SBI
 - AmeriCorps internship program-SBI
 - University Partnerships- Madeline, SBI, BI
 - Rhodes Scholar Program
 - Conservation Realtor- Great resource
 - Composting! (Mack)
 - zero waste and economic benefits!
 - Transfer Plant (B.I.)
 - Golf Carts and Alternative Transportation to Woods (South Bass)
 - Trails and signage
 - Horses/tourism – Mackinac, Wash. Island
 - Little Traverse conservatory (B.I.)
 - “wipe your feet” at trail head (Charlevoix Co/B.I.)
 - North Huron Birding Trail (DI)
 - Water Trails created around Drummond Island
 - Three Shores CISMA (Cooperative invasive species management area) active on our island (DI)
 - Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council is a resource for policy advocacy, education, restoration - B.I.
 - We have a long range of resource management plan in place (Drummond Island)
 - CMU Biological Station (B.I.)
 - Northern Michigan Island Collaborative- moderated by the MDNR
 - Active member on the Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council/MDNR planning
 - Promote “quiet sports” - Kayaking, hiking, trails (D.I.)
 - N. Lake Michigan Islands Collaborative (B.I.) - DNR and Tribes organize
 - Invasive Species Control- BI
 - B.I. – birding trail, water trail, 1/3 of island is publicly owned
 - Invasive species awareness intern - Manitoulin
 - “Dump Days” to remove large metals, tires, etc. to be recycle each spring (D.I.)
 - Early days of B.I. Dark Sky project!
 - Lake Erie Islands Water Trail, LEIC, LEINWC PIBTD
 - Invasive species control with Native Predators (LCI)
 - Eurasian watermilfoil- mycoleptodiscus Teretris. Mt.

Infrastructure/Broadband

- Topics
 1. Information on grant availability/technical assistance/provide decisions- good to gather and share
 2. Broadband is a thread in many other issues- education, healthcare, tourism
 3. Difference in results- Madeline gets fiber with no ask; Wash. gets fiber after near revolt- others various results

4. Criticality of broadband to economic development and attracting visitors/residents
 5. Paved road doesn't equal ditches and wide rights of way (cleared) and may not equal asphalt
 6. Better roads attract cyclers and others
 7. Mobile phone access is common issue on remote islands
 8. Information sharing on waste management
- Questions
 - How to get companies/service? –Neebish
 - Rural Grants?
 - Who should pursue service; local government, NGO's?
 - How to write grants- templates available?
 - Database of island resources for each state or province?
 - Challenges
 - Internet- Neebish, Beaver, Mackinac, Washington, South Bass, Drummond, Maritoulin
 - Not always reliable
 - Satellite- Neebish
 - Electrical
 - Only one man-Mackinac
 - No one on island- Neebish
 - Road funding- Beaver, Neebish
 - Congestion downtown-Mackinac
 - Communications Tower- space and location- Beaver, Mackinac (someone donated tower)
 - 911 challenges- Drummond
 - Cell Phone Coverage- all
 - Ferry Schedule- Neebish
 - Landline- Drummond, Neebish
 - Minimal Speeds required with Rural Grants- Too slow especially when tourists/summer residents come
 - Affects businesses (slow transactions)
 - Prefer cash (most islands)
 - Working vacations/college students
 - "Rural" is not only farms but islands too
 - Disaster planning/preparedness
 - Coordination on mainland, reporting mechanisms for damages/needs
 - Success
 - Solar energy system (Library and clinic electric) - Madeline
 - Transfer station- beaver
 - Composting program- Mackinac
 - Crushed glass/MI recycling -> Lansing (roads/beach)- Madeline
 - Paved roads- Madeline, Washington, Neebish
 - Fiber optic broadband- Madeline (rural economic development grant)
 - Livestream meetings
 - Full time medical clinic (dentist/optometrist)-Washington
 - Water- South Bass (treatment plant)
 - Getting Michigan Broadband fiber- Drummond
 - Radio station for emergency communication- Beaver

Transportation

- Topics
 - Public transportation, none- Manitoulin
 - Ferry Schedules and rates vary
 - Privately owned vs. transportation authority
 - Have “aging at home” van- Manitoulin
 - Parking issues- S. Bass
 - And congestion
 - Rent golf carts, but then safety issues (follow money)
 - Balance tourism needs vs. safety (street legal)
 - Not all have “commuter passes”
 - People think “no rules” on island
 - All complain about ferry service
 - Schedule, rates...
- Questions
 - What taxes can local government charge to passengers? Pelee Island
 - Franchise fee Mack Island and transient bike license
 - Can we work with barge to haul cars to Beaver Island? (sometimes can't get a car)
 - Is there a need for the local governing unit to own a dock?-Mack Island
 - Can local units of government permit vehicles?
 - Ferry tickets different price based on point of origin of round trip (island vs. mainland)?
- Challenges
 - Limited parking on S. Bass Island- cheaper for folks to bring cars but no parking on Island- golf carts
 - Can local unit of government permit?
 - Limited golf carts- a “Disney world problem” SBASS island
 - Congestion Downtown- Mack Island
 - Very small area (about 2 blocks)
 - Horse traffic- lack of awareness of horse behavior
 - People walk in the road- on Madeline too but accepted
 - Bicycles- people who are inexperienced riders
 - Snowmobile traffic
- Specific islands
 - Harsens: Private Ferry- (2min/.25mi)
 - Regulations
 - Rates/fares
 - Access
 - Rate: \$6
 - Beaver: Private/public (2hrs/31mi)
 - Parking on mainland?
 - Rate: \$345
 - Madeline: Private (25min/2.5mi)
 - Rate: \$53
 - Bass: Private (18min/3mi)
 - Rate: \$60
 - Washington: Private. (30min/5.5mi)
 - Rate: \$53

- Transportation on Island? No public? H.I.
 - Taxi, cars, trackers, golf carts, ATVs, buses, bikes/MC/mopeds, segways
- Water Levels?
- Winter Travel?
- Day trip- limited time (ferry)
- Cost
- Seasonal limitations
- Time-distance
- Poor rental vehicles
- Lack of dock for commercial operations
- Lack of understanding from mainland companies
- Remoteness, especially for Beaver Island
- Possibility of a joint air/boat ticket - feasibility?
- Cost for construction season- Mack. Island
- Ferry has to stop come November 1- Peely's island-> government
- Different priorities than mainland- Mack. Island vs. St. Ignace pond hockey/ winter freight
- Agricultural challenges
- Successes
 - Notification of non-ferry travel - ?
 - Madeline -text/email notifications
 - WI- phone/Facebook/word of mouth/web
 - Short trips- Mackinac Island and docks downtown
 - Competitive ferry transportation – Mackinac island
 - Winter passenger city subsidy- with MDOT help- Mackinac Island
 - Subsidy of aviation travel when ferry stops- Pelee
 - Agriculture- moving grain allows some more passengers- Pelee
 - Ferry franchise with city- essentials, \$500,000 to Mackinac Island
 - Beaver island has barge service-for commercial service
 - Increased policy presence- Mackinac island – but could be improved
- “aging at home” van on Manitoulin

Education

- Topics
 - Need to “get the word out”
 - Communication with media
- Questions
 - How to maintain enrollment?
 - Can we encourage foster parent programs?
 - Main land schools have monitoring programs for teachers. How do we develop young teachers to be the best?
 - How best to communicate successes?
- Challenges
 - Finding quality staff that also fit in with island culture
 - Island life is not just summer, winter happens
 - Staying competitive in attracting staff
 - Providing same quality of education to very small class sizes, multi-grade classes
 - Funding

- Fluctuating enrollment
- “export” of students to vocational school
- Need community center
- Staff housing
- New teachers burdened-student loans
- Reliable internet connectivity
- State and federal regulations constrain flexibility
- Success
 - Internal cooperation with Board of Ed. To decide new superintendent, close-knit decision making
 - Great social skills between generations/class levels
 - Teacher housing (south bass)
 - Students on beaver encouraged to increase their world view through heritage projects
 - Alternative high school offering past-secondary ed. and trades (manitoulin)
 - School composting and recycling grant at Mack.
 - First robotics and programming- BI
 - Media lab integration into ELA and history and social studies – BI
 - Traveling “toy bus” for ECE playgroups/toy loan on manitoulin

Energy

- Topics
 - Everything (almost) depends on energy
 - Without extension cord to mainland sources, islands are dependent on self-generated sources
 - Like or not, it’s a must for the future
 - AHA
- Questions
 - How do we generate interest in clean energy?
 - Who has success stories in sustainable energy production?
 - What models are available?
 - What state regulations promote or slow down sustainable energy production?
 - What state regulations promote or slow down sustainable energy production?
 - Are there island specific energy conservation strategies?
 - What are the economics of an “extension cord” vs. self-generation of clean energy on the island?
 - Is energy independence a doable goal for an island?
 - Dark sky preserve as tourist draw?
 - Impacts of large windfarms or individual owners- or both?
 - Do any islands have a gas well?
- Challenges
 - Financing
 - Changes in Michigan’s net metering law
 - Education/awareness
 - Public perceptions
 - Wing farm was divisive to island community
 - Making sure sited properly to avoid bird and bat migration
 - Conservation
 - Getting up and running again after an outage (manitoulin) due to infrastructure woes

- Reliability because of vulnerability (especially for small business)
- Transition
- Dock inspections for electrical safety
- Successes
 - Beaver island- solar panels McDonough's market this summer
 - Beaver Island- Government looks favorably on sustainable energy, open minded
 - Drummond Island has some totally sustainable islands surrounding the main island
 - Municipalities installing solar panels in the cost saving effort
 - Wind farm (manitoulin)
 - Madeline island- city buildings going solar energy production- saving tax payers \$
 - Back-up generators providing security/reliability
 - Energy co-ops have staff on islands (linemen)
 - Ohio State University Stone Lab (S. Bass) has solar panels for hot water heating
 - Energy committee- Madeline- retired industry expert
 - Grant knowledge- Wisconsin grants 80%
 - Increased number of houses = increased improved weatherization and geothermal heat – Beaver island
 - New street lights- beaver island

Governance

- Topics
 - Facebook page at middle bass island
 - Summer property owners association – another voice (s. bass)
 - Live, video-broadcast and archived meetings as a way to provide communication to not only year round but also part time residents (Madeline/Sand)
- Questions
 - How to improve relationship between island and mainland governments?
 - How do tribal governments fit in with community governance, funding, plans?
 - How can islands as an interest group speak together on issues?
 - How to balance business/private interests with public funding?
 - How to retain public services? (police, fire)
 - Would it be beneficial if islands to have a unified government?
- Successes
 - Small group of uber-engaged individuals filling the gaps (M.B.)
 - Effective committees that report to town board (Wash)
 - Regular meetings with county leaders (Wash)
 - EMS collaboration-island/county (Wash)
 - Support of ALS by voters (Beaver)
 - Technology created transparency (Beaver)
 - Private-public partnerships- Beaver, Madeline and MI chamber?
 - M-134 Scenic Byway connects Les Cheneaux Islands and Drummond Island to work collaboratively to promote areas and opportunities
- Challenges
 - Shortage of talent-nepotism
 - Consideration of island issues by off-island government (lack of communication) lack of interest (M.B. and Wash)
 - Capacity to fill local positions (Beaver, M.B. and wash)
 - Few people

- Lack of time
- Year round vs. part timers (Beaver, M.B. and wash)
 - Taxation without representation
- Ad hoc groups making decisions without input from elected officials and others (MB and Wash)
- Availability of meeting records-communicate about government actions (beaver)
- Island vs. county relationship (ie: distribution of tax dollars, effective town voice in county gov.) - Madeline and Beaver island
- Local leaders have day jobs - SBI
- People with money exploit zoning loopholes
- Resistance of township to (use) local talent

Small Business

- Topics
 - We are all in the same boat. We all have similar issues/challenges.
 - Tourism dominant focus on small businesses (+/-)
- Question
 - What business needs does the island have?
 - Creating a skilled workforce, training?
 - What small business supports are in place? Financial? Mentoring? Incubator model specific to islands
 - Are only schools doing technical training?
 - How many islands have fiber optic service directly linked to the main land?
 - What do island businesses do to engage mainland commerce?
- Challenges
 - Employees- not enough people for jobs open (s bass)
 - Skilled workforce/workforce in general
 - Housing for workers –BI, S. bass, madeline
 - S. Bass employee housing rent supplies to other business
 - Pelee- arrange housing from unoccupied housing stock; 1 on 1 relationship with property owners
 - Year round positions
 - Balancing a lack of summer staff funding and finding year round staff
 - Participation in local chamber of commerce/don't see benefit
 - Internet capabilities
 - Lack of skill/knowledge of tourism office to promote local business
 - Tech support
 - Lack of technological knowledge-willingness to use (madeline)
 - Education- early school starts cut work force last 2 weeks of august
 - Time of transfer compliance for new owners
 - Short earning season/small customer pool
 - Lack of new business support
 - Manufacturing logistics
 - Lack of basic marketing/branding pan
 - Commercial space too expensive for small businesses
- Successes
 - Special training at the high school level done under the guide of a charter school (Drummond)

- Chamber of commerce-led training sessions (Drummond)
 - E-communication/social media/work with Michigan SCORE
- Robotics program (beaver)
- Business assistance corporations (Manitoulin)
- Business improvement association (Manitoulin)
- Culture of mentoring from a young age (Madeline)
- Trade fair – who?
- Multitasking people
- Instore and online sales (Madeline)
 - Successful business model
- Small business advocate (Madeline)

Housing

- Topics
 - Housing issues and availability of land affect all islands
 - Government and regulation play an important role
 - Mackinac Island housing corporation- authority is something to look into- an option worth explaining (Beaver Island)
 - Rental management company- could provide management structure for city/board-owned housing development (mack island)
 - Affordable single-family homes, which are essential to the longevity/sustainability of vibrant island communities
- Questions
 - How Authorities form (Madeline)
 - How can cities get involved
 - Government
 - How to transfer public property into private
 - Is it a question for government to solve?
 - Grants to address housing (Mackinac)
 - Make sure zoning is involved in making them down?
 - Any government programs available for young families?
 - Don't allow weekly rentals in your housing district?
 - Any successful condo associations with "micro houses" with shared utilities (ie well, septic...)
- Challenges
 - Lack of affordable housing (SBI)
 - Inventory (Madeline)
 - Seasonal/rental properties
 - Employee housing/housing conditions (Wash. Island)
 - Young family housing (Wash. Island)
 - Not available
 - Rental management/ winter expenses are too expensive
 - NIMBY in community vs. needs
 - Not willing to develop
 - State land (Mackinac)
- Successes
 - Housing Cooperative
 - Private corps (Mackinac)

- New found interests to provide housing
- Tribal support/loans
- Disability assistance/city help
- Senior housing/low income with waiting list (B.I.)
- University Study
- School and business housing
- Possible state funding/grants- WHEDA (Wash. Island)

Eldercare/EMS/Medical

- Topics
 - Very diverse, from competent to non-existent spectrum for healthcare of island communities
 - How little some islands knew – important elements of pre-hospital designations and care
 - Protocol confusion
 - Lack of direction/leadership
 - Funding instability
 - Eldercare: eldercare for profit-islands uniquely situated for eldercare facility to keep residents and summer residents
 - Ex: Maine Islands Aging in Place. Utilize Nurse practitioners and EMS
 - Medical: Affiliation with hospital-mainland increases support, expanding services, lowering costs related to medical records pharmacy and increased competency of staff
- Questions
 - Middle Bass-45 minute ferry ride in summer and planes in winter
 - No batt in defibrillator
 - Zero med. -> put-in-bay (South Bass)
 - Macinac- EMC changes- who is in charge- maintenance
 - 403 runs-100 transfers
 - Madeline- Volunteers- compensated by calls.
 - Benefits- longevity funding, basic life support
 - Exc. EMT's – Ambulance director- volun. Training
 - Beaver – ALS 120 runs – 30-50 transports
 - Neebish- 0 ambulances and clinics
 - Lack of county health support- mainland
 - 0 meals on wheels
 - Amb. EMTs/BLS 1.5 hr wait helicopter
 - 0 EMTs- citizen nurses
 - Improve EMS/working relations=medical facility
 - EMS- eldercare/housing visits- lack of eldercare
 - Elders don't want to go to island; Aging in Place not an option for some members (Mac./Mad./B.I.)
 - County taxes not available- B.I.
 - Mainland dispatch- B.I/ Mac/Mad./M. Bass
 - Madeline- meals on wheels
- Challenges
 - Middle Bass- no clinic, 2,000 summer residents, 35 boat
 - Madeline, Drummond, and Neebish- BLS – independent medical/EMS
 - Distance: 1:45 travel time for medical

- Wash.- 14-16 apart. Senior housing, zero staffing, financially based
- BI- 6 unit senior
- Harens island and Neebish: no clinics/no doctors
- Recruit people=elder/medical/experienced
- Need to establish elder care standards for Islands
 - Neebish and Harsens only have basic life support ambulance
- Wash.- county presence to island
- Who is allowed to call life flight?
 - M. Bass and EMS certification all- S. Bass
- State requirements of air ambulance- Michigan
- Telemedicine not available on most islands
- Stable funding for ambulance
- Legal assistance/issues
- Lack of in-home services- volunteer hospice (BI, Neebish and Middle Bass.)
 - Manage elderly in home (telemedicine)
- Poor internet service to support EMS/Home Health
- To stay on island as elder we need:
 - Increased technology
 - Home meals
 - Adapted transportation
 - Disability affordable housing
 - Personal care assistance
 - Manage finances
 - Support for vol. caregivers
- Designated staffing/organization challenges- turnover
- Medical center- Dr's- (Mac) 3 year stay- rasting out!
- Mac- parts of straits hospital- increase size
- Partner with mainland hospital- larger umbrella/staff/insurance support/increased competency
- County taxes and lack of return/benefit
- Middle Bass- 2000 summer- 0 med. Care
- Nurses and medics to do house visits - design of houses
- Success
 - Air ambulance
 - EMS services
 - Clinics- M. Bass
 - Madeline- partnering with Red Cliff off-island to staff clinic
 - B.I.- ALS/Air Ambulance + millage support
 - Wash.- EMS county
 - 12 coverage EMTs/FMR
 - 911- clinic-med. control, doctor, nurse practitioner
 - Hosp. (mainland) runs clinic- staff lives on island
 - \$135,000/year
 - Medical control- determines where to transport
 - County does billing
 - B.I.- x-ray (none on W.I)
 - Manatoulin- non-urgent patient transit with decommissioned ambulance
 - Boat runs for EMS

- Diff between BLS/ALS
 - Plan to community- decrease scaremongering
- Can collaborate with other islands
- EMT's provide in house care
 - Clinic staff- home visits
- Manitoulin has para-medicine
 - Run clinics, home checks
- Manitoulin - has telehealth, 1800 Nurse
 - Palliative care volunteers
 - Developed relationship with medical school and have interns

Tourism

- Topics
 - Room tax-Pelee: do you have a room tax? what does MI do with that tax? How does it get back to community?
 - Importance of Chamber of Commerce- B.I. and Drummond
 - "brands" island
 - Business membership partners with town, mainland, region
 - Hospitality #1
 - Chambers must work together
 - Also with mainland communities
 - Importance of social media
- Questions
 - How to bring people to remote islands? (Beav. And Drummond)
 - Late night high speed ferry day tripper apps taxi transportation
 - Marketing to transient boaters- Les Cheneaux and BI
 - What model do islands use to promote tourism
 - Ie: tourism board? Community marketing?
 - How is it funded? 2% Michigan tax?
 - How do we include diverse groups?
 - How to develop Family friendly programs to encourage tourism?
 - How do others maintain accurate data bases and collection?
- Challenges
 - Meeting visitor expectations-all
 - Consistent communication with businesses (Madeline)
 - Especially during "off season"
 - Collecting data with multiple entities- number of visitors (Beaver)
 - Unpredictable tourist traffic
 - Marketing to diverse cultures: food, venues available
 - Hotel/conference space
 - Shoulder/main season time frames
 - Universal calendar
 - Lack of staffing: adequate? Housing
 - Lack of marketing
 - Restaurant food variety
 - Golf carts?
 - Plenty Sunday and Friday
 - None to rent on Saturday

- Private competition for website names vs. chamber
- Getting business working together – Les Cheneaux
- Seasonal businesses (Beaver)
 - Part time owners- leave at end of season
- No financial help for festivals
- No funding (bed tax) (Beaver)
- Transportation problems
 - Scooter/motorbike rentals
- Chamber problems- focus on partnership between twps. and chambers
- Success
 - Music Festival
 - B.I- July = 3000 people
 - Pelee
 - Washington
 - Lavender festival
 - DDBBQ competition
 - Word council of chamber forum
 - Island app
 - Facebook marketing
 - Businesses buy 2/mo
 - Group 10x main
 - \$329/annual package fee
 - Winery- Pelee
 - Weekday sales - restaurants- Pelee
 - Lake Erie Shores and Islands Regional Marketing – Put-in-Bay
 - Bed tax funded
 - Fast Ferry Early and Very Late (PIB)
 - Chamber of Commerce (PIB and Madeline)
 - Liquor License same so all businesses close at same time (PIB)
 - ChamberMaster.com (Madeline)
 - State department at tourism conferences
 - Word of mouth-diverse tourism
 - Universal calendar
 - Food trucks

Appendix D – Collaboration Brainstorming (raw flip chart notes)

**2017 Islands Summit
September 25-26, 2017
Beaver Island, Michigan**

Opportunities for Inter-Island Collaboration

Is collaboration needed? (“why”)

- Fear of island survival
- We are all unique but we are all islanders - community/sense of family, common problems and solutions
- Networking is paramount
- Poor awareness about island communities
- Despite being fiercely independent people, islanders shouldn't remain in isolation; being exposed to new ideas and gaining opportunities to learn from one another does not take away from our independence
- More power in numbers
- A diversity of perspectives
- Many islands have enormous human capital (a wealth of life experiences) but are lacking in sheer numbers of people

Would benefits accrue? (“what”)

- Accurate data (incl. comparisons between islands and with the mainland) and better understanding of trends- demographics, tourism
- Exposure to new ideas & best practices from other GLs islands, from Maine, and elsewhere
- Greater exposure to resources, technical experts, funders, and decision-makers at the federal, state and regional levels
- United front-
 - Pooling, leveraging resources
 - Advocacy opportunities - collective voice, political amplification- regional, state, federal influence
 - Grant funding (consolidated voice/legislative muscle)
 - Capacity to solve
 - Synergy/don't reinvent wheel contacts/network
 - Help establish funding mechanisms specific to Great Lakes islands
- Mentoring opportunities
 - We don't have to 're-invent' the wheel
 - Learn from other island successes/failures/challenges
 - Learn about financial opportunities, ethics in tourism
 - Find like-minded people who can help us grow
 - Help identify potential issues before they occur and address them before they happen
- Promoting solutions through a unified voice
 - Backing from broader group would give us more credibility when we bring ideas back to our island

Potential mechanisms for collaboration (“how” and “who”)

- Create formal organization
 - Who are members? Roles?

- Establish an island spokesperson committee
- Assisted by partners like Office of the Great Lakes and Northland College
- Expertise seminars every 6 months
 - Information sharing (i.e. composting, how to use alternative energy) via webinars
- Annual Islands Summit or similar gatherings
- Great lakes islands news reports
 - Turn context into radio programs
 - With subject matter experts
- Mission statement
- Must get island community support
- Searchable database of islanders, organizations
- Island exchange visits (housing, hosting, free visits)
- Facebook page (information sharing) or google doc
- Business/organization directory
 - Economic development angle
- Available grants islands have gotten
- Establish coalition website
- Online library
- Island Asset Summary
- Create an island institute for great lakes islands
- Engage other islands not present and other partners who could help