

Recreation Department History

A recreation task force, composed of Mackinac Island residents, met for the first time on August 5, 1994. It was formed to identify the recreational needs of the Mackinac Island community. This group, with input solicited from the community at large through public hearings and written surveys, recommended that a full-time recreation professional be hired and that the city go about the task of creating a recreation department.

A recreation ordinance was adopted by the City on January 17, 1996. With the acceptance of this ordinance, the City established a recreation department, which is overseen by a five (5) member recreation board, that are appointed by the Mayor. The Board of Recreation hired a full time Recreation Director.

Prior to the formation of a recreation department, any recreational facilities and program developments were carried out by Mackinac Island Recreational Development, Inc (MIRD). MIRD, an all volunteer group, was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1979. With the cooperation of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, the City of Mackinac Island, and Mackinac Island Public School, MIRD designed and implemented long range recreation plans and year round recreation programs. MIRD was a driving force behind the planning and building of Great Turtle Park.

The recreation department works closely with the Mackinac Island State Park, MIRD, and the public school to utilize resources, both in personnel and facilities, in developing programs and activities for all residents on the island.