

Governor Granholm Visits ACC to Discuss Budget

CONNIE IRLAND
Features Editor

Governor Jennifer Granholm addressed the community from ACC's Granum Theater on November 3rd. She came to the people with the current state budget crisis.

Granholm presented the background that led to the current need for cuts. Then she asked those in attendance to vote on the cuts they would be most comfortable with. This was followed by a question and answer period. The meeting then ended on the note of how the state government was moving toward long-term improvements.

Granholm explained that the fiscal year for the state begins in October and runs through the end of September.

Now one month into the budget for this period the state is \$920 million short. This number has continued to change; according to Dr. Newport the latest figure is closer to \$930 million.

Michigan has experienced a 20% drop in revenue since the year 2000. When she took

office in January 2002 Granholm discovered there was not only a deficit, but the Rainy Day Fund had already been depleted.

Cutbacks were made and the new budget was planned based on the projected income of the state for the coming year.

During the Revenue Estimating Conference in October it was discovered that the income for this fiscal year would be less than was projected in July, advised Granholm.

This lack of funds stems from a lack of revenue collected by the state and reimbursements received from the federal government.

Granholm said Michigan has experienced the loss of about 300,000 jobs primarily in the manufacturing sector.

This is reflected in the amount of income tax and sales tax the state is able to collect.

The revenue from the federal government has also dropped due to current economic trends and the war on terrorism. This has affected all of the states not just Michigan.

Illinois is facing a \$2

billion deficit, and California is facing an \$8 billion deficit in comparison to our \$920 million deficit.

Facing further cuts in the state budget, Granholm came to the people with the proposed cuts in an effort to find what the people would be willing to tolerate.

The funds that can be cut are the General Fund and the School Aide Fund. The governor is required to cut approximately \$200 per student from the School Aide Fund.

The other cuts she has more control over. From these remaining funds, 19 cuts were listed.

Those in attendance voted overwhelmingly to cut \$22 M in state funds for laptop computers at and eliminate \$65 M in scholarships for students at private colleges.

Other cuts receiving a majority vote were cutting new state trooper hires, releasing prisoners 30 days early, and revenue sharing payments to local government.

At this point, Granholm

announced that all 19 cuts totaled only \$911 million of the \$920 to \$950 million needed.

During the question and answer period, Senator Tony Stamas put

Michigan's manufacturing losses into perspective. Michigan has suffered 25% of the manufacturing losses for the entire United States.

The bigger question is how to get manufacturing to

return. This is the question the state is facing.

Michigan is a technology state even though it fails to show up in the surveys, which are being done. Granholm plans to change this and is working toward improving Michigan's image in the business community.

"We are number one in the country in industrial research and development. We produce huge numbers of engineers and yet we are not viewed that way by the outside world," said Granholm.

She went on to say *Site Selection Magazine* ranked Michigan the second most manufacturing friendly state.

Job creation is expected to be a hot topic in the political scene during upcoming months.

Photo by Connie Ireland



Granholm discusses the current budget crisis with the Alpena Community.

Replacement Found, The Search is Over

KATIE PIZZA
News Editor

The search for ACC's new president is now over.

The Board of Trustees has chosen Dr. Olin Joynton from Texas to replace retiring president Dr. Newport.

Joynton was chosen from a group of 98 applicants, the most ever to have applied for this position.

Dr. Joynton has a great deal of experience as a college administrator.

While living in Texas, he served as the Vice President

of Educational Programs at Montgomery College.

Before serving this position, he was both an English and Philosophy instructor. This accounts for his fascination with history's great thinkers, such as Socrates.

There was a lot of preparation surrounding the Board of Trustees' decision to choose Dr. Joynton to replace Dr. Newport.

Each applicant attended a public question and answer period as a way to allow the community to learn applicants' opinions on a variety of subjects.

To better familiarize the board members with each applicant, there was a dinner scheduled for them and their spouses following the public interview.

Overall, the search for Dr. Joynton was considered to be "very successful" by Paul Wegmeyer, a board member who moderated the interviews.

The public interviews received "very positive comments from candidates who had not experienced [this type of interview] before," according to Roger Bauer, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

Downtown in Need of Some TLC

CHRIS GILMORE
Staff Writer

Have you ever noticed that downtown is looking more and more like a ghost town?

The sidewalk shops downtown are sitting empty and looking worn down and in need of some care.

As every day passes and the shops sit empty, people may begin to lose interest in the downtown area of Alpena.

Its nostalgic look and old town feel is forsaken forgotten.

In the 1940s and the 1950s the downtown shopping district of Alpena was thriving with the local industries providing a good economic foundation for

the community.

But with the arrival of malls and low-cost department stores, such as Walmart and KMart, the downtown area took an economic hit that the local shop owners were more than likely not fully prepared for.

Downtown Alpena still has a future though. With the arrival of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve expected to bring in annually 50,000 to 75,000 tourists to the area each year, the downtown area could be set up for a rebound.

With the arrival of the Fletcher Mill being transformed into a thing of pride for the community and new condos coming into the area, the downtown

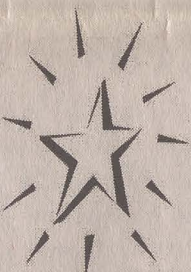
experience is on the verge of exploding.

The Downtown Development Authority is leading the charge into the uncertain future with promotions and events to bring life back into the historic and once lively downtown area.

They plan to hold concerts in the streets and strive to bring new business to the area that will compliment its already diversified array of stores.

Ron Chatfield, owner of In Other Woods, believes that the downtown area has much to offer.

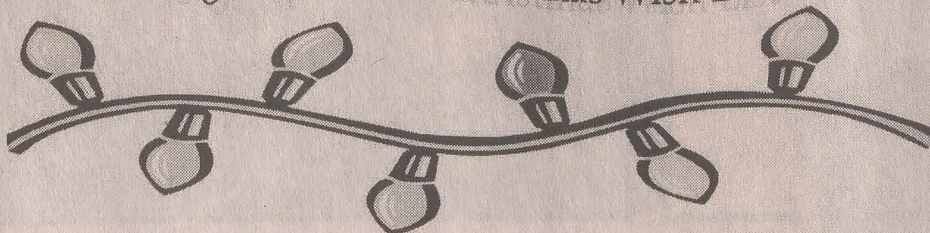
Chatfield said, "downtown Alpena is historic and has a built in character and ambiance that will help draw people into its close-knit community."


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