**Ex-Chicago mayor to speak at Marquette conference**

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by Chris Whitney - Journal Staff Writer

Marquette – Former Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley will be in Marquette this summer to give keynotes as part of a conference focused on regional environmental preservation.

The speech by Daley, the longest-serving mayor in Chicago's history, will highlight the annual conferences of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence International News. The non-profit coalition that works to advance protection and restoration efforts related to the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes.

Daley was mayor until 2011 and founded the GLSCLC, serving as chairman of the board for one year and sitting on the board of directors for eight. The board is composed of sitting mayors.

"It is extremely significant," GLSCLC Executive Director David Wieland said of Daley’s plan to attend. "Mayor Daley was the founder of the organization and it was his idea to bring cities together... to have a strong voice."

"He had the idea, we got us off the ground."

The 2013 conference is the 10th annual GLSCLC gathering. The event – which has been held in previous years in such locations as Chicago, Grand Rapids, Toronto, Milwaukee, and Niagara Falls – is the organization’s big event each year and draws hundreds of people.

The conference is divided into a diverse business portion that will involve meetings of the initiative’s board of directors and a day of meetings focusing largely on economic development within the framework of sustainability.

More than 100 municipalities in eight states and two Canadian provinces are represented in GLSCLC, and organizers estimate that mayors and city officials from 10 to 40 are typically present at the annual conference.

Wieland said Daley was “widely respected around the world” and the former mayor often refers to the GLSCLC when speaking on intergovernmental cooperation.

The entire conference is open to the public, though registration – $375 for GLSCLC members and $425 – is required. Wieland said organizers have discussed the possibility of making Daley’s speech a separate event, if local interest is high enough.

Daley, who served as mayor of Chicago for 12 years, currently serves as the executive chairman of TIF Partners, an investment and advisory firm in global business.

The conference is set for June 19-21 and Daley’s speech is scheduled for June 20.

The Superior Watershed Partnership is hosting the GLSCLC conference, partnering with the city of Marquette, the Marquette Downtown Development Authority, the city’s Arts and Culture Center and the Marquette County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

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