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ing public awareness. It also reports to the historical commission.

The Fall Harvest Celebration held last weekend helped show city officials what the new committee is capable of accomplishing.

"Everyone was just thrilled — everyone," Councilwoman JoAnne McShane said of the event, which drew about 1,000 people over the weekend.

McShane also said having the mansion committee report to the historical commission doesn't make sense.

"It just adds another layer of bureaucracy we really don't need," she said. "There needs to be more communication between the two groups."

Another concern McShane mentioned was who should be the caretaker of the mansion's archives. The historical commission has been handling that

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Dick Carvell
—Museum committee chairman

task, but not all records are written down.

"We need to make sure to have someone who can take care of the history of the mansion," McShane said. "We need one or two more people who really care about the history."

McShane also said council should find out what the two committees' desires and capabilities are before making any policy decisions.

Dick Carvell, chairman of the Warner Mansion museum committee, said members are taking steps toward officially documenting more records.

"A lot of the daily operations aren't written down on paper," Carvell said, adding that donations and gifts to the museum are recorded. "If somebody wanted to know what procedures we followed for weddings and school visits, that's kind of been in our heads."

Another issue discussed by council was the mansion's growing popularity. There was some talk of possibly raising rental fees and restricting photography. Users now only pay \$150 for two hours.

Carvell said on one recent weekend, five different groups vied for photography space. With limited parking and busy traffic on Grand River, he sees that as a potential for accidents.

"Our popularity is beginning to create problems," Carvell said. Councilman Arnold Campbell suggested offering reduced fees for residents.

Leahoff said the city was seeking resumes for a contractor to act as a liaison between the city and the committees.

"I think that's a step in the right direction," McShane said.

Attorney from page A1

McLain, a former Detroit Tiger pitcher, Smigiel and Egan were convicted of stealing \$2.5 million from the \$12 million fund in 1996.

All three were named in a U.S. District Court civil lawsuit along with First of America and Michigan National Bank. The banks were accused of breaching their fiduciary roles by allowing the trio to remove the money.

In the September settlement, First America Bank — now National City Bank of Michigan and Illinois — will pay \$3.36 million and Michigan National Bank \$125,000 for their role as trustees of the fund.

"The bank doesn't think it did anything wrong to harm the plan," said David Vigna, attorney for Farmington Hills-based Michigan National Bank. "However, it was in the best interest of all parties to settle the matter."

An attorney representing National City Bank declined comment.

McLain also had \$42,000 of his Major League Baseball pension garnished. He's also been

ordered to pay restitution. A company previously owned by Egan paid \$3,600.

With those recoveries, the pension is able, or is very close to being able, to pay all of the pensions earned by all former Peet Packing Company employees, Steckloff said.

"Our members were worried sick about whether they would ever see their full pensions," said Richard Birdsey, union president and pension fund trustee. "Hopefully, they can now look forward to enjoying their retirement."

McLain and Smigiel had \$3.06 million transferred to Comerica and administered under Vanguard Investments Inc.

At least \$2.6 million was funneled into another account under the name Alliance Credit, Steckloff said.

From there, that money went into a secret account and was used to buy radio stations down South, a commercial production company and a Lansing-based media group.

Shortly after buying the company, Steckloff said owners

talked to union representatives about the need to cut pension benefits.

"They'd literally be at the bargaining table saying they couldn't afford (to pay pension benefits)," Steckloff said, "and they'd already stolen the money."

Company owners raiding employee pension funds is not unusual, Steckloff said. Recovering the money is, though.

People in pension plans should be vigilant in monitoring them. Under federal law, they have rights to information on how pensions are administered, Steckloff said.

During the five-year ordeal, Steckloff admitted he had some doubts union members would see their pensions replenished. The University of Michigan law graduate said the case "ranks right up there" in terms of career achievements.

"I told people this is why I went to law school," he said. "It's a very satisfying feeling."

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