



NOTTAWASEPPI HURON BAND OF THE POTAWATOMI

A FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

**For Immediate Release:
March 5, 2019**

Contact: Jim Wise
FireKeepers Casino Hotel
269.660.5721

THE NOTTAWASEPPI HURON BAND OF THE POTAWATOMI AND FIREKEEPERS CASINO HOTEL ACHIEVE FOURTH STRAIGHT YEAR OF RECORD CONTRIBUTIONS WITH \$24.2 MILLION TO THE STATE OF MICHIGAN AND THE LOCAL REVENUE SHARING BOARD

*Record Contributions Of Over \$18.4 Million to the State of Michigan and Over \$5.7 Million for the
Local Revenue Sharing Board With Total Lifetime Contributions Which Exceed \$192.7 Million.*

(Battle Creek, Mich.) March 5, 2019 — The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP), owners of FireKeepers Casino Hotel in Battle Creek, Mich., today joined casino leadership and announced payments related to its 2018 business performance, establishing its fourth consecutive new annual record, with combined payments of over \$24.2 million to the State of Michigan and the FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board (FLRSB).

The payment to the State of Michigan totals more than \$18.4 million, an increase of 2.03% over the 2018 payment, while the payment to the FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board (FLRSB) of over \$5.7 million is 1.63% higher than one year ago. This brings the total monies NHBP has contributed to the State of Michigan to over \$143.7 million and \$48.9 million to the FLRSB and creates a combined contribution which totals \$192,717,102 since FireKeepers Casino Hotel opened in Aug. 2009.

Two checks were presented from NHBP today; the first for \$18,494,687 presented to Wenona Singel, Tribal Liaison and Deputy Legal Counsel for Governor Gretchen Whitmer. The second check for \$5,748,672 was presented to FLRSB Chairman Derek King, who is also a member of the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners.

The funds distributed are part of a negotiated agreement between NHBP and the state for 2018 operations at NHBP's FireKeepers Casino Hotel.

“The leadership and tribal members of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi are proud to continue a pattern of impactful contributions to the State of Michigan and our Local community through the growth of our leading regional gaming destination at FireKeepers Casino Hotel,” announced Jamie Stuck, Tribal Council Chairperson of the NHBP. “Four years of consistently outstanding performance is a substantial accomplishment in the hospitality industry and reflects the unified focus on delivering the best guest service. The blending of a great team, focused on guest service, with an outstanding facility attracts guests from across Michigan plus large sections of Indiana, Ohio and Illinois.”

FireKeepers employs 1750 team members, one of the region's leading employers. The focus on increasing jobs and providing an outstanding package of salary and benefits is illustrated by a 2018 increase in labor costs of 8.16% in 2018 vs. 2017, and cumulative paid labor costs since opening now exceeding \$563 million. This investment includes total wages, health insurance, 401(k), and incentives.

"The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi are the best owners in the hospitality industry, providing resources to maintain an outstanding resort, the support to confidently plan for the future and the solid foundation to invest in our team members," stated Kathy George, Chief Executive Officer at FireKeepers Casino Hotel. "I am so proud of our team members, who are also critically responsible for our financial performance, as they create winning experiences for our guests every day."

The tribe and the casino also focus on reinvesting in local communities, plus hundreds of charitable endeavors throughout Michigan and neighboring states through donations and sponsorships. The most significant investment is The Fire Hub restaurant in downtown Battle Creek, which opened in 2017 and combines an exciting restaurant and bakery concept with an adjacent dignified Kendall Street Food Pantry, operating as an agency of the Food Bank of South Central Michigan. Just one of many examples of the connected success of both the restaurant and food bank is a check presentation from restaurant proceeds of \$14,164 presented to Peter Vogel, Executive Director of The Food Bank of South Central Michigan.

FireKeepers expands its brand and sponsors major events such as the FireKeepers Casino 400, a Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race, set for June 9 at Michigan International Speedway and the FireKeepers Casino Hotel Golf Championship, a Symetra Tour, Road to the LPGA tournament, to be held August 16-18 at Battle Creek Country Club.

A 2016 Compact Amendment between NHBP and the State of Michigan provides for a payment of up to \$500,000 per year of state revenue sharing payments to the Michigan Native American Heritage Fund. Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi Chairperson Jamie Stuck and Vice Chairperson Dorie Rios are appointed members to the Heritage Fund Board. In 2018, this fund provided financial assistance and/or reimbursement to seven local governments and educational institutions to defray the costs of projects that promote positive relationships and accurate information on the history and role of Michigan's Indian tribes and Native Americans in the state. Grant recipients included a Battle Creek project to replace the previous city seal on a historic stained glass window inside City Hall.

The NHBP has made a concentrated effort to focus FireKeepers Casino Hotel on supporting local businesses and suppliers and extend contributions to the local economy beyond the FLRSB and the distribution to the state. The Tribe's commitment to local spending has resulted in awarding contracts in excess of \$38.6 million within the state of Michigan in 2018.

- Greater Calhoun County Region \$6.8 million (Calhoun, Jackson, Branch)
- West Michigan \$8.8 million (Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Grand Traverse, Kalamazoo, Kent, Muskegon, Ottawa, Van Buren)
- Lansing Area \$5.2 million (Ingham, Eaton, Clinton)
- Metro Detroit \$2.7 million (Wayne)
- Other \$15.1 million (Chippewa, Genesee, Gratiot, Ionia, Livingston, Macomb, Manistee, Marquette, Mecosta, Midland, Monroe, Newaygo, Oakland, Saginaw, St. Clair, Shiawassee, Washtenaw, Wexford)

The check presented to the FLRSB is the ninth distribution since the first distribution in Feb. 2010, when the NHBP presented a check to the FLRSB for nearly \$2 million. 2019 marks the sixth consecutive year where annual payments have exceeded \$5 million. The \$48,962,723 distributed to date have benefited a diverse array of groups, including:

- Harper Creek Community Schools
- Calhoun County Road Commission
- Emmett Township
- Calhoun County
- Calhoun Intermediate School District
- Kellogg Community College
- Willard Library
- Athens Township
- Marshall Township
- City of Marshall
- City of Battle Creek
- Athens Area Schools
- Village of Athens
- Battle Creek Public Schools
- Marshall Public Schools
- Lakeview School District
- Pennfield Schools

###

There are nearly 1,400 Tribal Members. NHBP's primary Indian Health and Bureau of Indians Affairs Service Area covers members in Allegan, Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Kent and Ottawa counties. The Tribe's administrative office is located at the Pine Creek Indian Reservation in Athens Township, with a satellite office in Grand Rapids, Mich. to better serve Members. For more information visit: www.nhbpi.com.

FireKeepers Casino Hotel, located just off Interstate 94 at Exit 104 in Battle Creek, MI, has been named Best Casino by audiences in Western Michigan and Northern Indiana, plus earned nine first-place awards in the Casino Player Magazine Best of Gaming 2015 Native Midwest category, including Best Overall Gaming Resort. FireKeepers was also selected as one of the Best Casinos to Work For by Casino Player Magazine. Our signature restaurant, Nibi, is a multiple recipient of the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence. The property features 2,900 slot machines, 70 table games, a live poker room and bingo room. FireKeepers offers a AAA-rated Four Diamond resort-style hotel with 243 rooms, a functional multi-purpose event center, six distinctive dining destinations, and multiple lounges. FireKeepers is the title sponsor of the FireKeepers Casino 400, a Sprint Cup Series race at Michigan International Speedway, and host of the FireKeepers Casino Hotel Championship a Symetra Tour-Road to the LPGA golf event. For more information visit www.FireKeepersCasinoHotel.com.