

MINUTES
Sister City Relationships Advisory Commission
Wednesday, April 6, 2011
4:00 p.m., Conference Room A, City Hall

Chairperson Dick Landis called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Castaneda, Connors, Coty, Jochum, Landis, McIntee, McNamara, Phillips, Thurn, Ward; Council Members Connors and Lynch; Assistant City Clerk Firnstahl

Excused: Commissioner Filimonenko

Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2011

ICMA Chinese Fellows Visit Update

Chairperson Landis and Firnstahl reviewed the most recent itinerary for the ICMA Chinese Fellows visit April 18-May 2. Landis provided biographical information and phonetic pronunciations for the names of the Fellows. Ten Commissioners are attending the April 18 reception from 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. at the City Council Chambers; and four Commissioners are attending the dinner following. Details will be forwarded as they are learned from Assistant City Manager Cindy Steinhauser.

Dornbirn, Austria, Delegation Visit April 29-May 1

Dornbirn Public Relations Manager Ralf Hammerle has written to indicate the five-person delegation will arrive at 1:30 p.m. on April 29 and depart at 2:00 p.m. on May 1. The delegation has expressed interest in a light itinerary to include a visit to Mt. Calvary cemetery and some local archives. Landis suggested a visit to the Franciscan archives and the Center for Dubuque History and will check on availability for April 30. A visit to Park Farm Winery was also suggested for the evening of April 29. Commissioner McNamara will check on arrangements. Firnstahl will draft an official declaration to present to the delegation to begin the Sister City relationship with Dornbirn. Two copies will be drafted for signature by Mayor Buol and sent to Dornbirn for signature by Mayor Rummele. Mayor Buol is available the afternoon and evening of April 30 for a presentation. Firnstahl will draft an itinerary. Mr. Hammerle has submitted a "friend" request via his personal Facebook page if a commissioner is willing to make that connection. Commissioner Coty made suggestions for media and publicity suggesting a press release or articles involving the Telegraph-Herald for publication ahead of the delegation's visit. He will pursue this idea.

Communication Plan to Establish and Maintain Connections

Discussion was given to beginning this process and the creation of subcommittees devoted to reactivating communication and the cultivation of existing and potential Sister Cities. The Commission agreed to consider this item further following the April events.

Review of Current & Potential Sister City Relationships

Chairperson Landis provided some background information about Handan, China, and Pyatigorsk, Russia, and agreed to send an informal communication to his contact in Handan. Commissioner Jochum will send an informal communication to his contact in Pyatigorsk, Russia. Landis mentioned the possibility of Commission outreach with a Russian exchange student at Wahlert High School who is planning a fund raiser to benefit additional exchange students. Firnstahl will check on the appropriateness of Commission involvement. Commissioner Coty asked that the Commission receive copies of the correspondence.

Discussion of Trois-Rivieres, Quebec, is postponed to a future meeting.

Web Page Development Update

Firnstahl informed the Commission that meeting agendas and minutes are already available through the City's web site and that the web site contains a great amount of information about City departments, initiatives, and activities. Consideration will be given to adding information about Commission Members, Commission events, and current Sister Cities and hyperlinks as the Commission's activities develop.

Items from the Commission

Voetberg Memorial: Landis stated that he has been contacted by Nick and Linda Lucy about a possible memorial to honor former Council Member and Sister City advocate Dirk Voetberg. Mr. Lucy suggested the Millwork District as one possible location. The Commission agreed to some involvement with receipt of more information and development.

Commissioner Thurn suggested selecting a city in Algeria as a future consideration for a Sister City relationship citing the connecting with Dubuque's Timothy Davis, who named Elkader, Iowa in 1846 after Abd el-Kader, a young Algerian hero who led his people in a resistance to French colonialism.

Commissioner Phillips informed the Commission that Friendship Force will host and exchange with the City of Roster-on-Don, Russia, in August 2012.

Chairperson Landis suggested possible partnerships with other small Iowa cities that share Sister City relationships proximal to Dubuque.

Next Meeting: May 2, 2011, Conference Room A, City Hall

Adjournment: 5:12 p.m.

Submitted by Kevin S. Firnstahl, Assistant City Clerk