

Sister City Relationships Advisory Commission

DATE: Monday, February 10, 2014
TIME: 4:00 PM
PLACE: City Hall – Conference Room A, 50 W. 13th Street

Minutes

Present: Sheila Castaneda, Jeff Jochum, Dick Lanids, Phyllis Lee, Kevin Lynch, Betty Phillips (4:05 p.m.), Nancy Rhomberg, Louise Thurn

Excused: Joyce Connors, Bob Felderman, Pat McNamara, Annalee Ward

1. Approval of Minutes from the December 11, 2013 meeting: Motion by Lee. Seconded by Castaneda. Motion carried 7-0.
2. Oaths of Office for Sheila Castaneda and Dick Landis were administered by City Clerk Kevin Firstahl.
3. Iowa Sister States – Teleconference with Kim Heidemann, Executive Director: Ms Heidemann joined the meeting 4:10 p.m. via telephone and provided an update on the success of the Iowa Sister States anniversary celebration with Hebei Province, China, that took place in October 2013. Ms. Heidemann reviewed her tenure with ISS and agency reorganization stating that ISS currently manages relationships in nine countries. She encouraged continued and consistent communication between local constituencies and ISS through additional outreach and suggested a directory of commissioners and city contacts. ISS will provide assistance where possible and is open to educational, cultural, and economic development activities. Commissioner Thurn reported on working on a Handan pen pal program with packages being sent to 40 Chinese students. Ms. Heidemann left the meeting at 4:43 p.m.
4. Handan, China: Lanids reported that the 20 mounted photos will again be displayed at the Roshek Building. He is working on grant information for mounting the remainder of the photos for a possible touring exhibit and asked for volunteers to help with the grant. Thurn reported on the pen pal activities during the phone conference with Kim Heidemann.
5. Dornbirn, Austria: Discussion was given to preliminary plans and ideas hosting the delegation visit to Dubuque May 16-19. Firstahl stated that budget is limited. The commission reviewed the requests submitted from Dornirn and discussion was given to seeking sponsorships. Landis and Jochum will make contact with Loras College, the Chamber of Commerce, and Dubuque River Rides. Phillips volunteered to draft an itinerary for the visit to include other tour ideas.
6. Pyatigorsk, Russia: Firstahl distributed the recent correspondence received from Ludmila Pokhilco. Jochum will draft a response to follow the completion of the Winter Olympics. Jochum and Firstahl reported that they had followed up with Mike Wulfekuhle at Senior High School regarding contact information in Pyatigorks for his World History class.
7. Student Exchanges Pen Pal/E-Pal Update: Addressed under Iowa Sister States item.
8. Correspondence re: Cameroon, West Africa, Follow Up: Landis reported that he will have to reschedule his meeting with Mr. Innocent Chia.

9. Trois Rivières – University of Dubuque Inquiry: Firnstahl reported that a list of contact information was sent to Charles Barland at the University of Dubuque for use during UD's upcoming choir trip to Trois Rivières. Landis will follow up with Mr. Barland.
10. Library Archive and Display – Follow Up: Landis reported that a Sister City display of Dornbirn, Austria, artifacts will replace the current display in late February to be in place for the delegation's visit.
11. Items from Commission: Landis reported on Human Rights Director Kelly Larson traveling to China and Information Services Manager Chris Kohlmann traveling to New Zealand as part of the ICMA Fellowship Exchange Program.
12. Items from Staff: Membership: Firnstahl reported on the resignation of Larissa Filimonenko and asked commissioners to think of a replacement. He reminded the commission that election of officers is due.
13. Next Meeting – Firnstahl will explore dates in late March at the request of the commission.
14. Adjournment: There being no further business, the commission adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Prepared and submitted by Kevin S. Firnstahl, City Clerk