Sister City Relationships Advisory Commission

DATE: Wednesday, September 24, 2014
TIME: 3:00 PM
PLACE: Five Flags Center (Majestic Room), 405 Main Street

Minutes

Sister City Goal Setting

Present: Chairperson Landis; Commissioners Castaneda, Connors, Felderman, Jochum, Landis, Lee, Lynch, McNamara, Phillips, Thurm, Van Iten, Ward, and Zygmont

Also present: Assistant City Manager Steinhauser

Mission Statement

The purpose of this commission shall be to:

A. Facilitate and maintain economic and cultural exchanges with the City’s officially recognized international Sister Cities

B. Explore potential relationships with international cities where a formal Sister City relationship may be mutually beneficial

C. Engage in partnerships with the City’s business community and educational institutions that will enhance Sister City relationships

• Look at idea of exploring more Sister Cities – Should we still do?
• Existing Russia Sister City is challenging: Is YP opportunity?
• China Sister City – Stable, possibly evolving?
• Dornbirn, Austria

Successes

• Education Exchange – 5th Grade: Dornbirn, 7th Grade: China
  1. Coordinate with Government
  2. Coordinate with local schools (2)
• Dornbirn and 2 China
  1. Potential for other connections to educate (Dornbirn)
  2. Dornbirn – Reaffirm Mayor relationship
  3. Highest ranking visits
  4. Gift exchange
• ICMA – Exchange: welcome dinners, general hosting
• Photo exhibits (2) – Roshek and rotating
• Pyatigorsk Park signage
• Library exhibits on Sister City
  1. Display artifacts
  2. Coordinate with art at Library exhibit and Federal Building
• Productive meeting
• Young Russian visit
  1. Chamber partnered
• Diverse and filled Commission
• Partners engaged in Sister City visits – i.e. GDDC, John Deere NICC, private businesses
• China: Civil Engineer visit
• Website updated
• Photo Gallery

Challenges

• Communication
  1. To Media
  2. To City Council
  3. To General Public
  4. Board to Board
  5. Board to Staff
• Building additional partnerships – funding, planning
• Limited budget
• Webpage: update and maintain
• Social Media: facebook, twitter
• Translators
• Local resource availability depending on Delegation visit
• Taping into local Colleges and Universities
• Outcomes
  1. What are our goals with each Delegate visit
  2. How do we communicate that
• Scheduling of unplanned/unbudgeted trips
• Volunteers on tight budget
• Ability to (or) explore additional Sister City Relationships
• Go to Commission by default for ANY international visit request
• What is City Council directive to Sister City Commission

Challenges (continued)

• Understanding what each entity does
• Lack of understanding after exchange of what happened and local (benefit)
• Follow-up (local) after event

Outcomes

• 3 goals for next 12-24 months
• Work plan for photo exhibit
• Election of Officers direction
• China request for visit
Ideas

- Pen Pal Program (expand- Louise)
- Explore Sister City International resources
- Work with other Iowa cities and State to coordinate trips
to and from Sister Cities [2]
- Display Proclamations and other gifts from Sister Cities
- (pursue grant money) [2]
- Develop evaluation tool to respond to other Sister City requests[2]
- Develop “menu” of items for an itinerary to suggest [10]
- Coordinate with PERSIA
- [add to] website
- Develop a communication strategy: for Council, media,
general public, businesses [7]
- Outcomes that link to others mission, need, values, relationship chart
- Title change
- Survey other Sister City programs [3]
- What are their outcomes, benefits
  1. Mission
  2. How do they add Sister Cities
  3. Relationship to Community

Ideas (continued)

- PERSIA: each exchange includes this [13]
  1. Political (Peace)
  2. Economical
  3. Religion
  4. Social
  5. Insti/Intellect
  6. Arts
- Cross-communication engagement: attend each others meetings)
  1. Arts Committee
  2. City Council only
- Get presentations from City Staff on projects that are relevant to Sister City Commission and share with our Sister City
- Create historic documents to better record Sister City Relationships
- Invites to Sister City Committees to attend City events (Sust. Conf.)

Photo Exhibit

Actions/Ideas:
- 0-6 months
  1. Identify other Iowa cities to send exhibit for display in Spring
  2. Display and shipping instructions: include report for Cities to fill in on how many people saw exhibit
3. On website

- 12+ months
  1. Incorporate into local outreach plan: galleries, Roshek Building, schools
  2. Report success back to State and City Council

**Election of Officers**

- Next agenda
  1. Look at when terms expire
  2. Election 1-2 months following reappointment

**China Visit**

- Open invite to Mayor and other Delegates
- Is there something happening in Handan or Dubuque – opportunity to build on
- Explore with State, GDDC, Colleges/Universities
- Budget request for July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

Prepared by Permit Clerk Pam McCarron, Permit Clerk for City Clerk Kevin S. Firnstahl