

# Sister City Relationships Advisory Commission

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**DATE:** Wednesday, January 21, 2015

**TIME:** 4:00 PM

**PLACE:** City Hall – Conference Room A, 50 W. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Dubuque

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## Minutes

Present: Vice Chair Kevin Lynch; Commissioners Joyce Connors (4:07 p.m.), Bob Felderman, Jeffrey Jochum, Phyllis Lee, Pat McNamara, Louise Thurn (4:07 p.m.), Richard Van Iten, Annalee Ward

Excused: Sheila Castaneda, Dick Landis, Betty Phillips, Bryan Zygmont

1. Approval of Minutes from the November 12, 2014 meeting: Motion by Lee. Seconded by Felderman. Motion carried 7-0.
2. Follow Up on any Goal Setting information: Firnstahl will distribute compiled notes for discussion at the March 18 meeting.
3. Dornbirn, Austria: Firnstahl shared the greeting card received from Dornbirn. Discussion was given to a delegation visit to Dornbirn and the goal of such a visit. Lynch suggested reviewing the city's calendar of events for the next year for invitations to Sister City representatives with the Growing Sustainable Communities as a priority.
4. Handan, China: Update: Ward updated the commission on a recent by visitors from Handan to the University of Dubuque to sign a ceremonial cooperative agreement. Connors and Lynch both suggested that Dr. Wee of NICC to encourage more interaction between UD and NICC.
  - a. Photo Exhibit and Humanities Iowa Grant: Thurn stated that the exhibit is currently in McGregor and will move on to Garnavillo and then the Decorah Library. We received good comments from the Elkader exhibit. The exhibit will travel to the southern counties along the Mississippi in the spring.

Discussion was given to exploring the pros and cons of operating a Sister City program as a non-profit. Commissioners Felderman, Thurn, and Van Iten will gather some information and bring it back to the commission.

5. Pyatigorsk, Russia: Jochum reported that he recently met with Muscatine's Russian representative but that communication with the Sister City has been difficult.
6. Pen Pal Artifact Exchanges – Thurn reported that the Chinese/American students are working at writing more accurate letters story mapping. Thurn interviewed the American students to gain background for matching with the Chinese students. The Austrian exchange has stalled momentarily for lack of an Austrian teacher to partner with the American teacher. Thurn emphasized that e-mail exchanges between students are monitored by the teachers.
7. Library Archive and Display – Update postponed
8. Items from Commission: Connors reported on the receipt of an e-mail from a minister inquiring about immigrant children. Ward reported on being interviewed by a boy scout working to receive and Eagle Scout badge. Felderman suggested using Mediacom's Newsmakers program as an opportunity to share the Pen Pal Artifacts Exchange program.

9. Items from Staff

- a. Membership renewal: Firnstahl reminded members whose terms are nearing expiration to submit their application for reappointment. Connors encouraged members to come to the City Council meeting to speak in support of their reappointment.
- b. Security training: Firnstahl reported that security training for public meetings is available through the Police Department. He will inquire about scheduling a training session for a future meeting.
- c. Sister Cities International: Firnstahl provided information from SCI about changes to their Affiliation Policy stating that a U.S. city doesn't require a cooperative agreement if the foreign city already has existing U.S. partner and if two U.S. cities share the same foreign city, the first city is considered as the *Charter Sister City*.

10. Next Meeting: March 18 at 4 p.m., Conference Room A, City Hall.

11. Adjournment: Motion by Lee to adjourn at 5:02 p.m. Seconded by Ward. Motion carried 9-0.

Prepared and submitted by Kevin S. Firnstahl, City Clerk