

Sister City Relationships Advisory Commission

DATE: Wednesday, January 20, 2016
TIME: 4:00 PM
PLACE: City Hall – Conference Room A, 50 W. 13th St., Dubuque

MINUTES

Present: Commissioners Sheila Casteneda, Bob Felderman, Jeff Jochum, Phyllis Lee, Patrick McNamara, Louise Thurn, Dik Van Iten, Annalee Ward, Bryan Zygmunt (arrive at 4:30 p.m.); Council Representatives Kevin Lynch and Joyce Connors.

Excused: Chairperson Dick Landis, Commissioner Betty Phillips

1. Approval of Minutes from the November 18, 2015: Motion by Lee to approve. Seconded by Thurn. Motion carried 10-0.
2. Financial Report – Firnstahl reported a balance of \$4709.14 which includes the anticipated expense of \$765 for Sister City International dues.
3. Iowa Sister States – Continued discussion from 11/18/15 about a possible relationship with Strpse, Kosovo, as offered by Iowa Sister States: Discussion included learning the expectations of Strpse and those of Iowa Sister States, the military element, identifying economic options, humanitarian issues, and any commonalities between our cities. The commission concurred that more information is needed and agreed to form a subcommittee of Commissioners Felderman, Jochum and Thurn. Commissioners are to submit questions to the subcommittee that can be compiled and sent to Kim Heideman of Iowa Sister States for response. Firnstahl reported on the invitation from Ms. Heideman on January 29 celebrating the opening of a Kosovo Consulate in Des Moines.
4. Sister City Commission Structure / Models Discussion (continued from 11/18/15): Firnstahl recapped common denominators from the information gathered from various cities and Sister Cities International stating the great majority of Sister City Committees are non-profit in nature with a designated board, volunteer membership pool, and use a multi-committee-type structure. Most committees maintain some connection to their local governments for official functions, a minor funding source and use of facilities. Some committees utilize membership fees. Commissioner Van Iten discussed the transition that the City of Cary, NC, made and suggested a volunteer assessment, level of participation and degree of talent be part of the discussion. Motion by Felderman to continue the move to a commission as a non-profit with keeping the connection to the City. Seconded by Jochum. Motion carried 11-0.
5. Dornbirn, Austria Update: Firnstahl reported on receiving a holiday card from Mayor Andrea Kaufmann and having sent a card from Mayor Buol.
6. Handan, China, Update:
 - a. Update: Firnstahl reported on having sent a holiday card from Mayor Buol. Thurn suggested sending a card for the Chinese New Year (February 8).
 - b. Future of Photo Exhibit / Storage: Discussion was given to making the photos or a copy of the photos available for school curriculums, framing a selection for display in City facilities possibly along with other artifacts from delegation visits. Firnstahl will explore

some type of storage container for the originals now kept at the Historic Federal Building.

7. Pyatigorsk, Russia, Update: Firnstahl reported on sending a Russian holiday card provided by Commissioner Jochum from Mayor Buol. No further information has been received regarding Pyatigorsk's request for artwork for their Sister Cities' park. Firnstahl reported on receiving a web page connection and pictures from Pyatigorsk's Big Plan Theater and will check on if the information and link can be placed on the City's Sister City web page. Follow up on correspondence from Andrea Becker and Sasha will be held for discussion when Chairperson Landis is present.
8. Pen Pal Student Exchanges – Commissioner Thurn reported that communication is quiet at the moment as she continues to identify exchange teachers and overcome issues with school curriculums relating to the program.
9. Library Display Status: Firnstahl reported that the current display will need to be removed at the end of January.
10. Items from Commission: Commissioner Zygmunt announced that he will not be re-applying to the Commission.
11. Items from Staff
 - a. Receipt of Resignation of Commissioner Phillips
 - b. Term Expiration Reminder for Commissioner Thurn.
 - c. Reminder of Election of Officers at next meeting.
12. Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in Conference Room A, City Hall.
13. Adjournment: Motion by Felderman to adjourn at 5:06 p.m. Seconded by Thurn. Motion carried 10-0 with Jochum having left the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Submitted by Kevin S. Firnstahl, City Clerk