

Sister City Relationships Advisory Commission

DATE: Wednesday, May 18, 2016
TIME: 4:00 PM
PLACE: City Hall – Conference Room A, 50 W. 13th St., Dubuque

Minutes

Present: Commissioners Sheila Castaneda, Jeff Jochum, Dick Landis, Phyllis Lee, Rachel McDermott, Louise Thurn, Dik Van Iten; Council Member Kevin Lynch

1. **Oath of Office** was administered to incoming Commissioner Rachel McDermott.
2. **Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2016.** Motion by Van Iten to approved the minutes as submitted. Seconded by Thurn. Motion carried 8-0.
3. **Financial Report** – Firnstahl reported an approximate balance of \$2332.72 due to an outstanding expense for framing of a Handan gift. There may be some small expense related to Commissioner Landis' trip to China in June as "aid" and interpreter for Mayor Buol to cover any expenses that the Bloomberg grant does not.
4. **Iowa Sister States – Strpse, Kosovo, Follow Up:** Representatives from Kosovo were unable to find time to visit Dubuque while in Iowa for the opening of the Kosovo Consulate in Des Moines. Consensus of the Commission was to keep communications on-going, monitor the Sister States relationship through the consulate and regional/local stabilization in Kosovo. It was suggested to explore a possible ICMA Fellowship exchange. Firnstahl will check with Assistant City Manager Cindy Steinhauser. Chairperson Jochum will communicate with Kim Heidemann with Iowa Sister States.
5. **Sister City Commission Restructuring Follow Up:** Firnstahl submitted notes from a meeting with Cindy Steinhauser and Commissioners Felderman and Van Iten outlining the next steps toward the transition to include submitting a memo to the City Manager for eventual submission to the City Council and/or a work session. Steinhauser and Firnstahl will draft the memo for commission approval.
6. **Dornbirn, Austria: Update** – None at this time.
7. **Handan, China: Update:**
 - a. Photo Exhibit: The Commission discussed possible venues/ideas for additional exhibits and permanent display of the photos including hospitals and schools. The purchase of some type of display equipment was discussed as well as creating digital reproductions to help preserve the original photos.
 - b. Framing of Artifacts: Firnstahl reported that the silk scrolls that were presented to the City by Handan were being framed for possible display in City Hall or a City facility.
 - c. Landis reported on Mayor Buol's trip to Beijing, China, June 5-9, for the 2nd China-US Climate-Smart/Low-Carbon Cities Summit. Landis will act as aid and interpreter for Mayor Buol. Landis submitted follow-up correspondence with Li Zhi Quiang of the Handan Foreign Office regarding NICC President Dr. Wee's proposal concerning educational exchanges. There is hope that representatives of Handan might be able to meet with Mayor Buol and Mr. Landis while in Beijing.
8. **Pyatigorsk, Russia: Update**

- a. Status of Request by Pyatigorsk for Dubuque Artwork: Jochum will continue to check with contacts for continuing communication
 - b. Follow up on correspondence from Andrea Becker and Sasha (Postponed from 1/20/16). Landis reported that communication has “gone dark” and will look for ways of connecting.
9. **Pen Pal Student Exchanges** – Thurn reported that the program is currently dormant.
10. Francophone/Francophile Cities Network Update: Firnstahl reported that he is in the final stages of submitting the City’s profile form and asked if any commissioners learn of any groups involved with French heritage, to please inform him for the profile.
11. **Library Display Status:** The current Library display ends May 31 but could be go through June if needed.
12. **Items from Commission:** None
13. **Items from Staff**
- a. Sister Cities International Day Proclamation: Firnstahl reported on a draft of a proclamation being presented at the July 5 City Council meeting recognizing July 15 as Sister Cities International Day. Please contact Firnstahl if you are able to attend and help accept the proclamation
14. **Next Meeting:** 4:00 p.m., July 20, 2016, Conference Room A, City Hall (Confirmed)
15. **Adjournment:** Upon motion the Commission adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Submitted by Kevin S. Firnstahl, City Clerk