

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, Thurn, Van Iten, Ward, and Zygmunt

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]
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- 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
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- 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
- Dick Landis report back to Commission – Oct./Nov.2014
- Budget request for July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

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