

# Sister City Relationships Advisory Commission Goal Setting Session

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**DATE:** Monday, August 24, 2015

**TIME:** 4:00 PM

**PLACE:** Five Flags Center – Majestic Room, 405 Main St. Dubuque, Iowa

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## Minutes

Present: Commissioners Robert Felderman, Jeffrey Jochum, Rick Landis, Phyllis Lee, Patrick McNamara, Louise Thurn, Richard Van Iten, Annalee Ward; Council representatives Joyce Connors and Kevin Lynch

Excused: Commissioners Sheila Castenada, Betty Phillips, Bryan Zygmont

Staff Present: Assistant City Manager Cindy Steinhauser, City Clerk Kevin Firnstahl

### 1) By the end of the session we will:

- Decision on future structure of commission
- Mission statement – final to Council for approval 9/8.

### 2) 2014-15 Achievements

#### Achievement #1 - Delegation Visits

#### **Accomplishments / Outcomes**

- Over the 1 ½ year there has been a delegation visit from/to Dornbirn , There have been two delegation visits from China comprised of 8-10 people respectively and one delegation visit to China
- Each trip is a 2-3 day visit that includes tours and is focused on PERSIA model (Political, Economic, Religious, Social, Intellectual and Arts)
- Over 200+ Dubuque representatives interacted with visitors as part of each delegation visitation
- MOU [proclamation re-signing] with Dornbirn was completed
- Library Exhibit for both Dornbirn & Handan visits
- Handan China has a specific Economic & Educational interest and GDDC has partnered

#### **How does this fulfill our mission?**

- It is the foundation to all of our work

#### **Should this continue?**

- Yes

#### **Next Steps:**

- Need to figure out a long-term solution on how to pay for it
- Need to seek Clarification on Sister City role when we coordinate the visit or when another organization is the lead for the visit

- Who should/could we cooperate with?
- What is our role/their expectation?
- How are updates shared with the Commission?
- When to pull in Convention and Visitors Bureau? Conversation with CVB?

**Lead Commissioner(s):**

Whole commission is interested in this discussion and the leads for the each of the cities are as follows:

China – D. Landis

Russia – Jeff

Dornbirn – Bob, Louise, Dik Van Iten

**Achievement #2 – Photo Exhibit (Handan, China)**

**Accomplishments / Outcomes**

- 15 cities / locations in Iowa (including libraries, colleges)
- Humanities Iowa grant helped fund the project
- A photo inventory of the exhibit was completed
- Project created goodwill, awareness and enjoyment
- We have a couple of testimonials/positive feedback on the exhibit
- Successful coordination of project including grant writing and execution
- Presentation request(s) are still coming in
- Created awareness of Dubuque and our cultural exchange

**How does this fulfill our mission?**

- It addresses the first two lines of the working mission statement: “. . . *The goal of the Sister City Commission is to facilitate and encourage the participation of a cross-section of citizens to experience and explore other cultures . . .*”

**Should this project continue?**

- Yes

**Next Steps:**

- Contact Dubuque Main Street to exhibit at 2015 Fall into Art
- Develop survey instrument to seek solicitation for future display opportunities
- Develop survey using Survey Monkey to get feedback from locations that displayed exhibit to try and get attendance figures and other data
- Build a network from existing locations who participated to use for future opportunities

**Lead Commissioner(s):**

- Dick Landis; Assisted by Bob Felderman, Louise Thurn, Dik Van Iten

**Achievement #3 E/Pen-Pal Exchange**

**Accomplishments / Outcomes**

- Two exchanges are currently active
- Dornbirn – This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a letter writing exchange with Dornbirn, Austria

- China – This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a letter writing exchange with Handan China
- Number of Students involved:
  - Dornbirn exchange: 30 from Dornbirn and 28 from Dubuque, 5<sup>th</sup> grade students average age is 9-10 years old
  - China exchange: 50 from Handan, 50 from Dubuque, 7<sup>th</sup> grade students and average age is 12 years old
- Two public schools in Dubuque
- Three-four letters are sent each year as part of these exchanges
- Teachers have incorporated program into lesson plans across curriculum
- Informal Faculty sharing among Dubuque Teachers
- Impact is that 50 students, the teachers and the families in each country now know where Dubuque is and vice versa
- Dornbirn City Manager [former] visited Dubuque's school during delegation trip
- Telegraph Herald article
- Teachers resource exchange

#### **How does this fulfill our mission?**

- Facilitated cultural exchange
- Partnership with education
- Promoted personal friendship
- Grow student knowledge
- Specifically addresses the last line of the working mission statement “ . . . *inspire lifelong friendships that support prosperity and peace through person-to-person dialogue and to provide opportunities for city officials and citizens to CONNECT GLOBALLY while THRIVING LOCALLY.*”

#### **Should this project continue?**

Yes

#### **Next Steps:**

- Considering doing a press release in German, Chinese, English, Russian and sending to our partners
- Commissioner write an article on successes and impact
- Begin a conversation with Dubuque Community Schools and Holy Family Schools on program and ways to expand
- Funding for postage – budget request

#### **Lead Commissioner(s):**

Louise Thurn, Jeff Jochum, Dick Landis

### **3) What does our future look like? What is the structure of Sister City Commission**

- What joint partnerships exist?
- How are they funded?
  - Government, grants, sponsors, in-kind
  - Special Events that bring in revenue

- What is their mission, goals, activities?
- Role with other partners
- Staffing vs. volunteer
- How do they engage citizens
- How long has it existed?
- How was it established?
  - Ordinance, other
- What there a transition?
- How was it managed?
- Office space/location
- Role with Sister Cities International
- Legal issues
- Board make up

**Initial assessment – November 2015**

Bob Felderman, Dik Van Iten, Kevin Firnstahl

**In 5 years our Commission is known for:**

- Delegation visits
- Growing friendships and knowledge of/with other cultures
- Introducing Dubuque citizens to the world
- Sense of international citizenship
- Business
- Fostering global awareness
- Cultural festival
- Financially viable

**In 5 years our partners are:**

- Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Dubuque Development Corp.
- Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Service organizations
- Universities/colleges
- K-12 Schools
- Non-profit [organizations]
- Private enterprise

**Ordinance [amendment] and presentation to 9/21 City Council**

- Dick Landis to present with other commissioners in attendance
- Include [in presentation]
  - Commissioners' photo
  - Accomplishments
  - Conversation of future

## **Working Mission Statement**

The goal of the Sister City Commission is to facilitate and encourage the participation of a cross-section of citizens to experience and explore other cultures enabling the support of a wide range of activities including; tourism, international trade, economic development and support exchanges in the fields of culture, education, health care, environment, technology and social services as they affect us all in an increasingly global environment and to act as a coordinating body, community agency or counsel among those organizations, groups and individuals desiring to inspire lifelong friendships that support prosperity and peace through person-to-person dialogue and to provide opportunities for city officials and citizens to CONNECT GLOBALLY while THRIVING LOCALLY.

### **Suggested by Bob Felderman**

Promote peace with mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation with cultural, education and economic endeavors

### **Purpose (revised) for Ordinance amendment**

The purpose of the commission is to facilitate and maintain educational, economic and cultural exchanges with the city's officially recognized international sister cities; to explore potential relationships with cities where a sister city relationship may be mutually beneficial; and to engage partnerships with the business community, cultural entities, and education institutions that will enhance sister city relationships.

Reminder of Next Meeting: September 16, 2015

Adjournment: 5:40 p.m.

Submitted by Kevin S. Firnstahl, CMC, City Clerk