



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Final

Sister City Planning Committee

Wednesday, February 20, 2019

4:30 PM

City Hall Conference Room 207A

Call To Order

Also present were Dawn Imberi and Mayor Mason

PRESENT: 7 - Michele Caskey, Alice Peterson, Keiko Skow, Francisco Martinez, Linda O'Connell, Al Guetzlaff and Tom Kennedy

ABSENT: 1 - Abey Kuruvilla

Secretary's Report

Approval of Minutes for the January 16, 2019 Meeting.

A motion was made to Approve the Minutes

Treasurer's Report

Account balances read as follows:

Account number 11202-53480 - \$8,000

Account number 20624-34500-10001 - \$1722.16

We asked Mayor Mason for an explanation regarding the \$2000 decrease in the balance of the 11202 account. He was unsure why the balance changed but promised to look into the matter.

Chairman's report

Inquiry regarding Bluefields – Rev. Guetzlaff distributed a copy of a letter from the Sister City Association in Moscow, Idaho. David Barber, president of the association, requested information from us about the status of our partnership with our Nicaraguan sister city, as Moscow's partnership has been negatively impacted by the recent socio-political unrest in Nicaragua. Rev. Guetzlaff replied with a short history of our relationship with Bluefields, and concluded his email response with the news that our status with Bluefields has been inactive for several years.

Correspondence – From Sister Cities International came a letter from Kate Bentley. Kate is a former diplomat with the U. S. Department of State, and currently volunteers with the Sister Cities organization in Nashville, Tennessee. The message she wanted to convey in her letter was that the work of every sister city association helps explain who we are as Americans and how we promote economic development. Council members suggested that Ms. Bentley's letter could serve as a worthwhile argument when making presentations.

Internship Inquiry - Anyssa Koussa, a secondary school student in Montélimar, seeks

a business internship in Racine to complete her school requirements and has requested our help in finding a position. Thus far, we know that she has a promise of housing with the family of Joan Roehre and several potential job offers from City Hall. We will continue to monitor the progress.

New Business

New format for minutes – Beginning with the February minutes, items that previously appeared in the committee reports will now be found in the old and new business sections of the monthly report.

Sister City publicity brochure – The long-awaited update to our brochure was unveiled at this meeting and was met with the approval of all council members. The two thousand copies, complete with an insert by Mayor Mason, are fresh from the printer and ready for distribution.

Student visit to Oiso – Three Racine students have been chosen to participate in an exchange/homestay in Oiso starting on July 3, 2019. Keiko Skow suggested that the Oiso sub-committee schedule meetings with the students and their families to help prepare for the two-week program.

Student visit to Montélimar – Franc Martinez will chaperone a group of five Racine high school students to France during spring break 2019. The students will find out in the next few weeks who their host family in Montélimar will be, and can start the process of getting acquainted electronically.

Civic leadership visit to Aalborg – Mayor Mason is working on options to visit Montélimar and Aalborg this summer. The visit to France comes as a result of an invitation to attend the Republican Banquet, to which the mayors of all of Montélimar's sister cities are invited. Mayor Mason would like to couple the French trip with a stop in Denmark to get a first-hand view of the Smart City/Sustainability efforts that Aalborg has put into practice. The timing is problematic, as the Banquet in Montélimar is scheduled in July, when Aalborg informs us their city is very inactive and not conducive to tours or discussions.

Adjournment

The February meeting adjourned at 5:29 p. m. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at 4:30 p. m.