

CITY OF SIERRA VISTA
SISTER CITIES COMMISSION
April 18, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert called the meeting of the Sister Cities Commission to order at 5:35 p.m.

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert
Randi Buros
John McBee
Lourdes Montoya-Murphy
Irma Valdez
Matthew Lentz
Lauren Giamalis

OTHERS PRESENT:

Linde Mohr
Susan Raymond
Francisco Serrano

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON PRESENT:

Hank Huisking

STAFF PRESENT:

Victoria Yarbrough

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

Lourdes made a motion to accept the agenda. Matthew seconded the motion.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS
The motion carried.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING - March 21, 2016

Irma made a motion to accept the minutes. Matthew seconded the motion.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS
The motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Susanne stated the Cultural Heritage Fair was a success. She said she presented to City Council on April 12th and Joey Giamalis presented to the school board the week before. Both presentations went very well.

REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS - Hank Huisking

Hank reported that Susanne was very thorough in her presentation and elaborated on the beginnings and history of the commission. She also stated that the Mayor will receive his new passport by the end of the month and is planning on joining the commission on a trip to Cananea, Mexico. Hank recommended scheduling a strategic planning session in the near future in order to plan ahead for the next two to five years. She furthermore stated that the commission members should look into the possible involvement of the Sister Cities commission in regards to tourism and economic development of the City of Sierra Vista.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Victoria Yarbrough

Victoria stated that Susanne did a great job with the annual presentation to City Council. She also said she checked on a few available dates for the student presentation to City Council and all members agreed on setting the date for May 12th.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Treasurer's report and discussion - Randi Buros

Randi reported the balance in the account is \$ 5387.00. He mentioned there were some accidental purchases which, however, were refunded back to the account right away.

2. Buena Sister Cities Club Updates - Matthew Lentz

Matthew stated the last fundraiser was quite successful. He also added that the club has one new member who is interested in participating in the fall student exchange.

3. Tombstone High School Updates - Linde Mohr

Linde said she notified all her student about the interview process for the next student exchange and also mentioned that the club has a new president. She also stated that she had a wonderful time at the Cultural Heritage Celebration Fair.

4. Cananea Outreach – Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert

Susanne reminded everyone about the trip to Cananea on April 29th. She said a few of the students would like to come along as well. Hank asked Susanne if it would be possible for her to speak to Humberto and see if Cananea would be interested in visiting Sierra Vista. No set dates have been discussed yet.

5. Discussion on establishing a 501(c)3 organization – Randi Buros

Randi is researching some additional information about establishing a 501(c) 3 and will print out packets for each member for the next regular meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Review and discussion of 2017 AZ Sister Cities conference proposal

Susanne said she believes the timing is not quite right for the conference since the proposed date would fall right into Oktoberfest weekend. She stated that all commission members are heavily involved in fundraising activities during the Oktoberfest weekend and this would, therefore, make it impossible for them to attend the conference. A brief discussion carried on about selecting an alternate date.

2. Discussion on German Student Exchange in October 2016 – Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert

a. Discussion/decision on forming a board in order to select students for the next student exchange

Susanne discussed the idea of forming a board to interview students for the next exchange. It was decided to hold a special meeting for the interview process. Francisco recommended on having the students fill out an application prior to the interview. He presented some of the questions the Buena High School Sister Cities Club members came up with. Lauren stated, she would also like to have the interested students write an essay prior to the interviews. A brief discussion carried on about selecting the most suitable questions for the interview questionnaire.

Lourdes made a motion to hold a special meeting on May 11th, 2016 at 5 p.m. to select students for the next student exchange. Matthew seconded the motion.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS
The motion carried.

b. Discussion/decision on offering an incentive for students presenting to City Council

Susanne stated that Joey Giamalis was the only student presenting to the school board. Since none of the other students showed up for the presentation she asked

the commission members if it could be decided on purchasing a small gift or award for Joey. Some of the members voiced their opinion on the idea and a brief discussion carried on about several different choices of award options for Joey. Lauren requested for Joey to get an award plaque and perhaps a luncheon with the Mayor instead of a monetary gift.

Matthew made a motion to present Joey Giamalis with an award plaque on May 12, 2016, and to organize a luncheon with the Mayor for Joey's efforts with the student exchange presentations. Jon seconded the motion.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS
The motion carried.

c. Discussion on sponsoring a child of a low income family

Susanne asked commission members for their opinion on offering a scholarship for a low income student. Matthew stated the student is very diligent and is regularly involved in the club but simply doesn't have the money to pay for the flight. A brief discussion carried on about possibly offering a grant to be used towards his plane ticket. It was decided to furthermore discuss this item at the next regular meeting.

3. Discussion/decision on commission meeting schedule

Susanne requested to skip regular meetings in May and June. It was discussed to have the next regular meeting on July 18, 2016 and placing a strategic planning item on the Agenda.

Randi made a motion to suspend regular meetings in May and June. Jon seconded the motion.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS
The motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REQUESTS OF COMMISSIONERS

Susanne reported the 27th Arizona State Sister Cities conference will take place on May 20-21, in Fountain Hills. She asked if anyone would be interested in attending and representing the City of Sierra Vista. It was agreed that the \$ 30 admission fee will be paid from the commission fund.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert, Chairperson