

AGENDA

SISTER CITIES COMMISSION

Special Meeting

Oscar Yrun Community Center, Conference Room

3020 E. Tacoma Street, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

December 19th, 2016

5:30 p.m.



CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING November 14, 2016

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS - Hank Huisking

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Victoria Yarbrough

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

OLD BUSINESS

1. Treasurer's report and discussion - Randi Buros
2. Buena Sister Cities Club Updates - Matthew Lentz
3. Discussion on establishing a 501(c)(3) organization - Randi Buros
4. Discussion & voting on strategic plan to submit to City Council - Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert
5. Discussion on plans for hosting the all-commission meet & greet in January - Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert

NEW BUSINESS

1. Buena Club Presentation on Germany student exchange trip - Matthew Lentz
2. After-action report on Christmas around the World event - Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REQUESTS OF COMMISSIONERS

ADJOURNMENT

CITY OF SIERRA VISTA
SISTER CITIES COMMISSION
December 19, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert called the meeting of the Sister Cities Commission to order at 5:37 p.m.

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert John McBee
 Matthew Lentz Randi Buros

STAFF PRESENT: Victoria Yarbrough

COUNCIL LIASION PRESENT: Hank Huisking

OTHERS PRESENT: Buena Sister Cities Club Exchange Students

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

Matthew made a motion to move the Buena Club Presentation forward, ahead of old business. John seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

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

VOTE: UNANIMOUS
The motion carried.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING–November 14, 2016

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

VOTE: UNANIMOUS
The motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Susanne thanked all of the commissioners and Hank for a wonderful year. She appreciated the motivation Hank provided the commission and is sad to see her leave as it was a pleasure to work with her. Hank stated that she would still like to help with hosting State Conference and obtaining the 501(c) 3. She believes the commission is ambitious and should continue to pursue

its goals. John and Susanne said that Gwen expressed interest in being the next council liaison. Hank said the mayor asks for council members to put in their top 3 and the rest depends on schedules and other things. Susanne presented Hank with a plaque from the commission and a poinsettia to say thank you for her services. Randi pointed out the city seal for Sierra Vista and coat of arms for Mexico and Germany on the plaque. Hank said she had fun with this commission and has a folder full of Sister Cities information to pass on. Paris will keep it for the next liaison.

REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS – Hank Huisking

Hank recommended sending a letter to our sister cities with our upcoming events and activities. She had an example from the mayor of Rocky Point to use as a template. Susanne said the commission could send it home with the kids to Germany. Hank recommended sending it to Cananea chamber of commerce through a liaison as well. Paris took the letter and will create a draft. Hank recommended that commissioners read the Council Executive Report monthly to keep up with what is going on in City Council. She gave a summary of the most recent copy as an example of the type of information it offers. Hank thanked everyone for their hard work and passion. She is excited for how far the commission has come and where it's going. Susanne asked about City Council decisions on the commissions. Hank said the meeting didn't turn out the way anyone would have liked. There was no reorganizing to make commissions more efficient or to relate commission work to strategic planning. When it comes to commission structure she reported that everything will stay the same for the moment, until the council is clearer about their priorities.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Victoria Yarbrough

Victoria announced that Lee Elaban is retiring January 3rd. She reported that the Buena Club kids' presentation for City Council is scheduled for January 26th at 5:00 p.m. toward the beginning of the agenda. Susanne will send emails to the parents. Matthew will be out of town, but doesn't mind.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Buena Club Presentation on Germany student exchange trip – Matthew Lentz

The students who participated in the Germany student exchange trip gave a presentation on what they did and learned in Germany. Commissioners gave recommendations for preparing the presentation for City Council. Susanne reported that, due to issues that the club had with Delta airlines, the students were refunded \$650 of their plane ticket costs, thanks to Matthew. Jordan offered to pay the commission back some of that refund for their help. The commission thanked Jordan for his integrity, but declined any repayment.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Treasurer's report and discussion – Randi Buros

Randi distributed a report and discussed the breakdown of debits and credits therein. A total of \$9,204.04 in the account belongs to the city for the commission so it is frozen until further notice and will be discussed further in the 501 (c) 3 discussions.

2. Buena Sister Cities Club Updates – Matthew Lentz

Matthew reported that one student was not at the meeting to do the presentation. The club voted that he/she could not host a student this year because of a breach of behavioral contract. Matthew said that other than that, things are going well. The club had a Christmas party last Saturday and attendance was good, but none of the invitees from Mexico came. Susanne said that there will be one more meeting before the students from Germany come here from February 14th- March 4th. She started to draft a schedule for when they are here and said that they are planning to spend the 17th and 18th of February in Phoenix. Susanne looked into a day trip to the Grand Canyon that Saturday. The students can be picked up at the hotel by 2 tour vans around 7:00 a.m. and taken through Sedona to the Grand Canyon and back to Phoenix that evening about 8:00 p.m. for \$138 per person. The student's parents agreed to contribute 50 Euros each for the opportunity. The commission's part would come to \$1,550. That price includes the vans, drivers, guides and insurance for 16 kids plus 2 teachers unless kids from here want to go, but they can pay out of pocket for themselves. Susanne said that she doesn't think her and Matthew need to go. The price does not include food or tips. The company is called Across Arizona Tours. Susanne will continue planning the activity with the commissioners' okay. Hank said that it's wonderful that Susanne has done all that leg-work and that the Grand Canyon is always a highlight. Randi said we can afford it. She will also send out tentative schedules to commissioners by email through Paris for the next meeting and said that others can send any plans or ideas to Paris as well.

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

Victoria said she did a little more research into the commission's bank account and forming a 501 (c) 3. The finance manager misunderstood the situation of the commission. He thought the commission was already an established 501 (c) 3 when he told Victoria that it was allowable for the commission to have a bank account. He confirmed that money raised by the commission belongs to the city. As it stands now, the commission cannot have its bank account. The 2 options are to become a 501 (c) 3 organization before using any of the money in the account or to close the account and donate the money to the city to hold in a Sister Cities donation fund until the commission decides to use it or decides to go forward with forming a tax-exempt organization. The commission would first need to become a non-profit corporation and then it could open a bank account and take donations. At that point donations would not be tax-exempt, until the 501 (c) 3 is established and the commission becomes an approved tax-exempt organization. If a donator wanted that tax benefit they could still make

the donation to the City in the commission's name until the IRS approves the tax-exempt status. For now, the commission can close the account, donate the money to the city and it can be stored in a Sister Cities donation account. Victoria noted that she controls the sister cities donation account and that money donated can only be used for the purpose for which it was donated. The commission can keep a donation account under the city and still use the money for all of the things it normally would, but the commission cannot rightfully fundraise. If the commission would like to continue fundraising, like at Oktoberfest, another organization would have to operate a booth and donate the money to the city in the commission's name. Victoria also mentioned that she can put in for funding this year. Randi warned that if the commission chooses to establish a 501 (c) 3 it would have to be completely separate from the city and commission business, meaning, it would need to have its own separate meetings and a separate board. Randi said he recommends someone with legal expertise helping the commission with the forms and he believes that the cost for the lawyer to help set up the 501 (c) 3 will be \$1,500 to \$1,800. John asked if any of the commissions had ever established a 501 (c) 3 and Victoria said no. Randi thinks that to have a safety net for fundraising, a non-profit would be prudent. He likes the idea of the commission funding itself and not being a burden on the city. He said the incorporation part would be fairly quick and easy. Randi put a call in to Nathan's firm and hasn't heard back yet. Hank said to keep up communication. Randi will knock on the firm's door on Thursday. The commission will keep 501(c) 3 discussions on the agenda. Matthew made a motion to move \$4,000 from the bank account to a donation account under the city so that it can be used for the exchange trip in February. John seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried. Randi will obtain a cashier's check and bring it to Victoria.

4. Discussion & voting on strategic plan to submit to City Council – Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert

Victoria read the submission she created: 1. Complete steps for the Sister Cities Commission to create an independent, non-profit organization in order to add additional fundraising opportunities for the commission. 2. Work closely with the city of Cananea to promote connections between local businesses and their counterparts in each city. 3. Consider developing and implementing an adult exchange program with Sierra Vista Sister Cities. John, Susanne and Hank discussed adult exchange trips, their development and implementation as well as city promotion through exchange trips and city promotion outside of exchange trips. Victoria recommended keeping the wording open so that there are many options. Hank said that the commission can expand on the ideas if and when they are asked about them by City Council. Matthew motioned to accept the 3 ideas as the commission's strategic plan submission. Randi seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

**5. Discussion on plans for hosting the all-commission meet & greet in January –
Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert**

Susanne tried to set something up at the Landmark but it won't work because there is too much going on anyway. She recommended to Gwen that they make the meet and greet a New Year's Reception to thank all the commissioners for their work and invite the city staff. Gwen said she would take it under her wing. The tentative date is January 24th. The Mona Bishop room has been reserved.

NEW BUSINESS

2. After-action report on Christmas around the World event – Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert

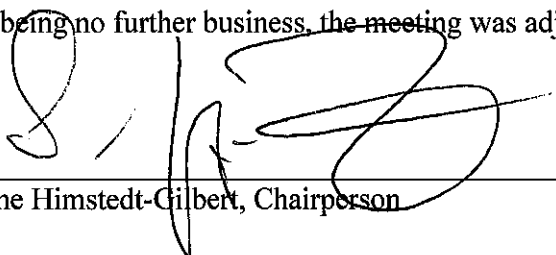
Susanne thanked John, and said she would like to thank Loudres and Irma even though they are not present. She said the event went great and hopes that the Sister Cities Commission will continue to support the Arts and Humanities Commission so that it can be bigger and better next year. The commission made alcohol-free gluehwein. Overall it was a good event and everyone had fun. Susanne noticed that it was not very visible from the street and will suggest a sign and more lights next year. It was a good 1st time event. John said there were some parking issues, but Susanne said they were noted by the commission. Susanne believes we should support this event next year as it was a step in the right direction.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REQUESTS OF COMMISSIONERS

Susanne would like to add the Young Author's Showcase to the next agenda as well as the America exchange trip. January 16th is MLK day. The next meeting will be January 23rd instead of the holiday.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.



Susanne Himstedt-Gilbert, Chairperson