



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE

ALD. RUSSELL W. STAMPER, II, CHAIR
Al Durtka, Tiffany Barta, Oscar Tovar and Charles Vang
Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 286-2232, Fax: 286-3456,
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Legislative Liaison, La-Wanda Fletcher, 286-8661,
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Thursday, April 27, 2017

10:00 AM

Room 301-A, Third Floor, City Hall

Meeting convened at 10:01 a.m.

Present 3 - Stamper, Barta, Tovar

Excused 2 - Durtka, Vang

Individual also present:

Lawanda Fletcher, Legislative Reference Bureau

1. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from March 2, 2017.

Member Barta moved approval, seconded by member Tovar, of the meeting minutes from March 2, 2017. There were no objections from those members present.

2. Discussion on sister city programming, structure, capacity and personnel.

a. Program and personnel capacity from sister city program in Chicago, IL.

Discussion on this item was withheld due the absence of member Durtka who was tasked with getting participation and information from the coordinator of the Chicago program.

b. Program and personnel capacity from sister city program in La Crosse, WI.

Discussion on this item was withheld due the absence of member Durtka who was tasked with getting participation and information from the coordinator of the La Crosse program.

c. Study of sister city programs from various municipalities.

Ald. Stamper gave initial remarks. Members are to review a survey done on 14 cities with sister city programs across the country, discuss commonalities and differences, and suggest aspects of the other municipal programs to add to the City's program. 11 of 14 cities surveyed responded, and 8 of the 11 have sister city programs. All 8 programs have 501-3c organizations, separate from government, as its structure when compared to Milwaukee, which has the committee as its entity structure. Most of the cities have either full-time or part-time paid positions with duties towards promotion and operation of their programs. Common activities when compared to the other municipal programs include economic development, cultural awareness, education, networking, festivals, cultural exchange, and community connection.

City Clerk James Owczarski joined the committee.

Member Barta commented. One aspect to add to the City's program is to have the local sponsors of the City's sister city relationships to form their own committee to support each other as a group. The task to support local relationships may be too heavy of a burden for an additional position that the committee plans to form. Other ideas to improve the City's program include: engaging the community, acquiring business sponsors to help provide funding and resources, provide incentives and packages for businesses, and engage young professionals.

City Clerk Owczarski commented. The City seems to not have the same high level commitment and institutional support behind sister city relationships when compared to foreign governments. The foreign governments behind the City's sister city or friendly relationships has shown incredible governmental support through large delegations and consulate involvement. Examples include the sister city relationships with Zadar, Medan, and Galway as well as the friendly relationship with Ningbo, China. Since its inception, the sister city committee and program efforts have been through the personal efforts of the prior committee chairman, Ald. Joe Davis. Ald. Davis has been an honorary consul in South Africa and was highly involved in building the African sister city relationships with Morogoro and uMhlathuze. The local relationships have had exchanges but cannot get more robust. There are resource gaps to fill. The committee should inquire with and send letters to the State, Sister Cities International (SCI), and the International Institute of Wisconsin about resources to acquire to revitalize the City program. There is a provision in the City ordinance that prohibits use of funding for the program. He will work with staff do draft a couple of different letters for committee review to send to the State, International Institute of Wisconsin, SCI, and DER.

Member Tovar said that the City has been fiscally careful with its budget.

Ald. Stamper questioned if promotion and support are being done in the City similar to the efforts of the other 8 cities surveyed relative to culture awareness, history, small business opportunity, international marketplace, civic, education, and economic development.

Member Barta replied that the committee needs to continue to discuss the City's promotion and support efforts, which would not be solved today. There are many moving parts. Efforts are not being done cohesively. A central person is needed to do an assessment, identify gaps, identify resources, and see impact. Other municipalities and foreign governments should be asked by the committee about how they promote, achieve their goals, and link resources.

Ald. Stamper said that an assessment of the City's sister city promotion and support efforts will be a topic of future discussion.

d. Additional position job description and duties.

Ald. Stamper questioned creating a position and/or adding sister city duties to the new event coordinator position in the City Clerk's Office at the city clerk's discretion.

City Clerk Owczarski replied that duties pertaining to sister city events in City Hall can be added to an event coordinator in his office whose main task is to manage the incredible number of events for the Common Council, such Girl's Day, Black History Month, neighborhood economic summits, and speeches. Funds were transferred to this position from vacant positions. Doing events for economic development is a

different specialization that may not be appropriate for the event coordinator. The City needs to find the resource for economic development activities. Creating a part-time position requires changing the City ordinance to allow expense of funds.

Ms. Fletcher said that an available option is to add staffing capacity through someone from the City's ongoing management trainee program, which she had gone through.

Member Barta said that multiple people can be added as capacity, including bringing in an Earn and Learn student.

Ald. Stamper inquired about interns.

City Clerk Owczarski responded. His office typically gets interns from Marquette University, especially with its Legislative Reference Bureau and Public Relations divisions. Interns usually intern for a semester. His office can ask for an intern from the university if desired. For exchange of credit, an intern will do meaningful work and have a good experience. Creating a position would require him as department head to seek classification of that position with the Department of Employee Relations (DER) and have conversation with the committee about qualifications and skills. He can send a letter to DER.

Members and participants reviewed and discussed a summary of job duties for an additional position that was provided by staff.

Mr. Lee said that the duties and responsibilities described in the summary were compiled based on previous meeting discussions.

Ald. Stamper commented. The new position in the summary is to add part-time duties to the alluded events coordinator. The main job description is to serve as the program coordinator for the City of Milwaukee's Sister Cities Program promoting and providing professional assistance to the Sister Cities Committee and sister city communities at the local level. The roles and responsibilities of the position as listed in the summary are all good.

City Clerk Owczarski commented. The new position should be someone with a strong passion to make sister city relationships vibrant, connect resources, and leverage strong local agencies that may provide natural linkages to relationships. Local agencies include ethnic organizations such as the ones behind Irish Fest and the Polish Center. There are a number of ways to recruit a person for the new position such as through traditional advertising and recruitment or perhaps from the management trainee list.

Member Barta concurred that a role of the new position includes looking at and maximizing current existing infrastructures, relationships, and resources.

Ald. Stamper commented. He would like to pursue a part-time position similar to how other cities have for their sister city programs. The City and committee needs to do something more than just asking sponsors how the relationships are doing.

Ald. Stamper inquired about use and capitalization of the EB5 program?

City Clerk Owczarski replied. There are EB5 dollars in Milwaukee for those developers who know how to use it as a tool. Examples include the Mariot Hotel, building on 27th and State Street, and proposed Northridge development from Chinese investors. He is unsure how much the City markets the EB5 program, and the Department of City Development commissioner should be contacted for more

information.

e. *Review of Sister Cities Committee ordinance.*

Ald. Stamper said that there was already discussion on amending the City ordinance to allow for fund expenditures and a part-time position.

f. *Recommendations.*

Members and participants reviewed and discussed a summary of committee recommendations, provided by staff, regarding committee and programming goals.

Ald. Stamper concurred with changing the City's mindset and philosophy to be an international one focused on making Milwaukee an international hub city like other major cities, such as Chicago; increasing offerings, services, and dealings with many cultures as opposed to a select few; connecting and uniting ethnic groups, and emphasize that relationships are joint partnerships as opposed to being one-sided.

City Clerk Owczarski said the person who is hired for the new position should look at best practices, adopt the committee's vision, and determine the City's approach to do programming.

Ald. Stamper concurred with increasing public awareness through enhancing the promotion, marketing, and publicizing of the City's sister cities program and relationships to acquire public understanding and awareness of the values and benefits of the program and relationships; holding cultural events and festivities to acquire cultural awareness, which will lead to business opportunities; and bidding to host a future SCI annual conference with involvement from VISIT Milwaukee.

Member Barta commented that the goals under increasing public awareness may be too much for the new position and that there needs to be the linkage of leveraging existing infrastructures to enhance them and fill gaps.

City Clerk Owczarski said that hosting a conference typically requires one to bid years in advance, such as 5 or 6 years in advance.

Member Tovar said that VISIT Milwaukee would work towards hosting a conference by contacting the organizer; inviting and giving a tour of Milwaukee to the organizer; perhaps attending a conference, setting up a booth, and showcasing the City; submitting a bid; and going through the bid process.

Ald. Stamper concurred with the goal to acquire capacity through funds via the City budget, creation of a new position rather than a department, and acquisition of local and national grants from SCI and other sources. The salary for the new position, which averages about \$50,000 from the other cities studied, needs to be determined. The committee had discussed about sending out letters to seek resources.

Ald. Stamper concurred with the recommendation to utilize resources and assets by leveraging local assets, primarily water; capitalizing on local corporate headquarters, businesses, and partners; and involving youths and young professionals. The City's strength is water, and there should be thought of using water and the Water Council to benefit economically with sister cities.

Ald. Stamper added that the committee be assigned tasks rather than form subcommittees and inquired about involving youths and young professionals, which does not appear to be done by the other cities that were surveyed. There may be

internship opportunities with international businesses.

Member Barta commented. On capitalization, there should be outreach to businesses to show them the benefits of the sister city program and relationships as well to build relationships. The City is not there yet and is trying to establish a structure to become an international hub. As the program expands the youth should be engaged to see what they need to thrive and how the City can link young professionals to global opportunities.

Ald. Stamper said that future committee task recommendations include: research other sister programming from other local and national municipalities, discuss with VISIT Milwaukee to host a SCI annual conference via member Durtka, assign members to each find a possible sister city, continue to have working sessions on goals and capacity building, and invite local sponsors to report on activities and progress after the committee finalizes its goals. A standard annual report form was formed to produce consistent reporting from the local sponsors due to differing annual reports from local sponsors previously.

Ald. Stamper concurred with creating or amending legislation and the City ordinance as necessary to carry out the committee's goals, such as going after funding and creating a part-time position.

City Clerk Owczarski said that the ordinance can be made flexible and insert "may" in terms of funding.

Ald. Stamper said that in summary the City's sister city program is a one committee structure, should acquire a part-time position and add duties to the event coordinator, and be allowed to be funded with an amendment to the ordinance.

3. Announcements and updates.

a. Interest to establish a relationship with Irpin, Ukraine.

*Individual appearing:
Boris Nayflish, Griffon Brands Inc.*

Mr. Nayflish gave an overview. His parents were born in Ukraine. He became familiar and met with the city administration in Irpin during his business travels to Eastern Europe researching liquor manufacturing, which his business is engaged in. Liquor manufacturing is prominent in Eastern Europe. His Milwaukee-based company manufactures vodka beverage, liquor, and premium food packaging. The Irpin city administration is very young. Its mayor, Volodymyr Karpliuk, is 28 years old and a mixed martial arts champion. Ukraine has been going through rapid changes relative to democracy and establishing itself. The Irpin city administration is interested to develop a relationship with a city like Milwaukee for exchange opportunities. Irpin is multinational with multiple cultures like Milwaukee and wants to improve coexistence there. Irpin wants to modernize its infrastructure relative to police force, education, health care, and water. Irpin is around water. In June a delegation is planning to visit Milwaukee, the mayor, and tour the City.

Member Tovar commented. He has conversed with Mr. Nayflish about the delegation coming to Milwaukee to tour and visit places like schools and hospitals. A friendly relationship should perhaps be established with Irpin.

Ald. Stamper inquired about liquor beverage and Mr. Nayflish's company.

Mr. Nayflish replied. Monks in monasteries made liquor in Eastern Europe. His company liquor brand is Griffon Brand. It is a family recipe; high quality product; and contained in expensive, reusable, and collectible packaging and glassware, which should not be thrown away. The product is easy to store and transport.

Mr. Lee said that both a friendly exchange and sister city relationship require a local nonprofit sponsor.

Mr. Nayflish said that a nonprofit organization has not been found, his company is for-profit, there are no Ukrainian community organizations in Milwaukee, and there is a Ukrainian church in Milwaukee.

Member Tovar said that he will be in touch with Mr. Nayflish about the delegation visit and that organizations such as community agencies, soccer clubs, and faith-based organizations should be sought.

Ald. Stamper said that the assignment is to find local nonprofit to proceed with the process, clerk staff be contacted for assistance, and an invitation be sent to him relative to the upcoming delegation visit.

b. Establishment of sister city relationship with Daegu Metropolitan City, South Korea.

Ald. Stamper said that a resolution was recently signed by Mayor to establish the relationship, the next step is for a signing ceremony, and member Tovar be assigned to establish the signing ceremony date with staff.

Mr. Lee said that although there was discussion about a ceremony commencing in May, the interest is for the ceremony to possibly occur in September.

c. Termination of sister city relationship with Morogoro, Tanzania.

Ald. Stamper said that the resolution to officially terminate the relationship was recently adopted; however, the relationship with Tarime District remains active.

d. Sister Cities International 61st Annual Conference, July 13-15, 2017, Virginia Beach, VA

Member Durtka attending.

Other members not attending.

e. Other.

No discussion.

4. Agenda items for the next meeting.

Ald. Stamper said that the next agenda item is the continued discussion on programming and goals. He will discuss with staff further.

5. Next meeting date and time.

Ald. Stamper said that he will inquire about member Durtka's availability and reach out to member Vang about his commitment to the committee.

6. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 11:04 a.m.

*Chris Lee, Staff Assistant
Council Records Section
City Clerk's Office*