



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE

ALDERMAN JOE DAVIS, SR., 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: Amy Hefter, 286-2290,
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Tuesday, March 24, 2015

1:30 PM

Room 301-A, Third Floor, City Hall

Meeting convened at 1:38 p.m.

Present - Barta, Vang, Davis
Excused - Tovar, Durtka

Individual also present:

Amy Hefter, Legislative Reference Bureau

1. **Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes from November 3, 2014.**

Mr. Vang moved approval of the meeting minutes from November 3, 2014. There were no objections. Excused - Durtka, Tovar

2. [141721](#)

Communication relating to establishing a Friendly Exchange or Sister City Relationship with Bomet County, Kenya.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Representatives from Kenyans in Milwaukee appearing:

Alice Kones
David Mugun
Sammy Jackoyo
Stephen Kamuiru
Maureen Waoh
Gina Wanyee

The representatives from Kenyans in Milwaukee gave introductory remarks. Their group will be the committee under the nonprofit Pan-African Community Association (PACA) here in Milwaukee spearheading a sister city relationship with Bomet County. The group is small, has existed for two years, and is expanding. The group consists of Kenyan professionals and business people living in Milwaukee.

Committee members inquired as to the government structure in Kenya and Bomet County, the request for either a friendly exchange relationship or a sister city relationship, the benefits and exchanges from having a sister city relationship between Bomet County and Milwaukee, the health infrastructure in Bomet County, and funding in Bomet County for economic joint ventures.

Mr. Kamuiru and Ms. Kones responded. Bomet County and the other counties in

Kenya are the smallest governmental unit equating to municipal governments in the United States. Kenya previously had a government structure similar to the United States, but the new Kenyan government structure eliminated all municipal governments. All Kenyan municipalities are represented and governed by county governments. There are no more mayors, just governors. There are 47 total local county governments in Kenya. The exception is the City of Nairobi, which is governed by its own county government due to its large size.

The desire is to obtain a sister city relationship between Bomet County and Milwaukee.

The relationship can benefit both Bomet County and Milwaukee in many ways. Bomet County can benefit in terms of learning and emulating many aspects of Milwaukee: local government system, police training, sanitation, security training, health infrastructure, and water infrastructure. Also, Bomet County can become a market for Milwaukee produced goods, such as machinery. Milwaukee can benefit from importing agricultural produce and fruits from Bomet County. There can be a mutual benefit of educational exchange programs and doctor exchanges. There is currently a relationship with the Global Water Council with a water project in Bomet County. With a sister city relationship in place, both sides can start to learn more from each other and the opportunities that are available.

The health infrastructure in Bomet County is very young. Bomet County can learn from Milwaukee to improve its health infrastructure to deal with major issues and illnesses, such as the recent ebola virus. Milwaukee can learn about Bomet County's tropical setting and help improve the county's health infrastructure, which will also indirectly benefit Milwaukee citizens coming back home.

It is uncertain if the government of Bomet County has budgeted any money aside for joint ventures between businesses from both Bomet County and Milwaukee; however, discussions are taking place. There is a group that will travel to Bomet County soon to visit the government there and explore opportunities. Interest must be shown before the government does anything.

Ald. Davis said that it is important for the Kenyans in Milwaukee and PACA to be the gateway to help create joint ventures between businesses from both sides and assist in economic commerce from both sides. He is supportive of cultural ties and interested in long term economic growth for both sides. There should be local efforts to help Milwaukee businesses have access to areas in Bomet County to learn more about the county's market and economic opportunities. The City's Milwaukee 7, Health Department, and Global Water Council can export technologies and intellectual capital to Bomet County relative to economics, health, and water. Both sides can learn from each other. One example to engage the business community in the City is to perhaps have a business forum in the City with contracts available for infrastructure improvements in Bomet County.

Mr. Vang moved to extend a formal sister city application to PACA, as the local nonprofit organization, and the Kenyans in Milwaukee, as the local committee, to complete and submit back to the Sister Cities Committee. There were no objections. Excused - Durtka, Tovar

Ald. Davis said that a committee meeting will be scheduled again to review the application, once received. If the application is approved by the committee, it will then require approval from the Community and Economic Development Committee and Common Council. Subsequently, a sister city agreement signing ceremony where both the Mayor of Milwaukee and Governor of Bomet County signs an

agreement will have to occur before the relationship becomes official. Clerk staff will send out an application.

3. Update on the Sister City Relationship with Zadar, Croatia.

Ald. Murphy gave an update on behalf of Consul General Jelena Grcic Polic, who could not appear due to an illness. The City's Common Council approved the legislation for a sister city relationship between Zadar and Milwaukee last year on November 25, 2014 with him as the sponsor. The City of Zadar also approved for a sister city relationship recently on March 3, 2015.

Ald. Davis inquired as to the preference of Ald. Murphy concerning the signing ceremony.

Ald. Murphy replied that the preference and desire of the City of Zadar is to give authority for the consul general to sign a sister city agreement on behalf of the Mayor of Zadar.

On behalf of the consul general and City of Zadar, Ald. Murphy submitted to the committee a brochure, a sister city draft agreement in both English and Croatian, and a Power of Attorney giving the consul general authority to sign an agreement. These documents can be found within Common Council File Number 140088.

Ald. Davis said that the committee normally coordinates the ceremony and should be kept informed.

Ald. Murphy said that Power of Attorney should suffice federal standards. His office will work with the schedules of the consul general and the committee to organize an official signing date.

4. Review and Approval of the Sister Cities Committee 2014 Annual Report.

Ald. Davis said that there should be an evaluation process in place to measure benchmarks and the activeness of sister city relationships. Additionally, having a committee rather than an individual locally behind a sister city relationship is important; otherwise, a relationship can become inactive if that individual is no longer there.

Ms. Barta moved approval of the 2014 Sister Cities Committee annual report. There were no objections. Excused - Durtka, Tovar

5. New Business for Future Discussion.

No new business.

Ald. Davis announced the celebration of South African Freedom Day on May 1, 2015 at the Milwaukee Yacht Club. There will be a business forum with the Business Council, South African Consulate representatives, and keynote speaker Consul of Economic Affairs present.

6. Set Next Meeting Date and Time.

Next meeting date and time not set.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:16 p.m.
Chris Lee, Staff Assistant**