



# City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
53202

## Meeting Minutes SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE

**ALDERMAN JOE DAVIS, SR., CHAIR**  
*Al Durka, Eric Gass, Leslie Silletti, and Charles Vang*  
*Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 286-2232, Fax: 286-3456,*  
*clee@milwaukee.gov*  
*Legislative Liaison: Amy Hefter, 286-2290,*  
*ahefte@milwaukee.gov*

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Monday, September 15, 2014

1:30 PM

Room 301-A, Third Floor, City Hall

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Meeting convened at 1:40 p.m.

**Present** 4 - Davis, Durka, Vang, Gass

**Excused** 1 - Silletti

**1. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes from May 12, 2014.**

*Mr. Durka moved approval, seconded by Mr. Vang, of the minutes of May 12, 2014. There were no objections.*

**2. Presentation on Zadar, Croatia Relative to Establishing a Friendly Exchange or a Sister City Relationship.**

*Individuals appearing:*

*Ald. Michael Murphy, 10th Aldermanic District & Common Council President  
Sanja Laković, Consulate General of the Republic of Croatia Consul Counsellor  
Paul Lucas, Federation of Croatian Societies, Inc. of Milwaukee  
John Braovac, Federation of Croatian Societies, Inc. of Milwaukee  
Don Braovac, Federation of Croatian Societies, Inc. of Milwaukee*

*President Murphy gave introductory remarks. There is strong interest, structure, history, involvement, and support from the Croatian community in the City for a sister city relationship between Zadar, Croatia and Milwaukee. The Croatia Eagle Soccer Club and Sacred Heart Church are two examples of local Croatian groups that have been involved in the City for many years. His father joined the soccer club in the 1960s, and he has attended events at the church within the last 25 years. He is hopeful for economic and cultural benefits resulting from a sister city relationship between the two cities.*

*Consul Counsellor Laković gave supporting comments. Her consulate office supports the initiative and will continue to assist with communication between both cities. A non-governmental nonprofit organization (NGO) from Zadar will be determined shortly. She is looking forward to the possibilities of trade and other activities that can result from a sister city relationship.*

*Mr. Lucas gave an overview and PowerPoint presentation regarding the proposal for a sister city relationship with Zadar, Croatia. The overview consisted of the origins of the initiative, background of his federation, recent efforts, the federation's commitment, the federation's financial status, recent communication, local support,*

and areas of mutual benefit. Also presented was information regarding Zadar's geography, natural features, population demographics, transportation infrastructure, history, government structure, and educational system.

Originating efforts came from Dr. Jelena Polic, Croatian Consul General from Chicago. She sought the federation to assist with establishing a sister city relationship. Several local officials have been approached, such as Mayor Tom Barrett, Council President Murphy, Ald. Davis, and the state lieutenant governor. Zadar and Milwaukee were chosen due to the cities' close proximity to water and community support.

The federation is a 501(c) umbrella organization for all local Croatian groups in the City and has unanimous support from its groups to spearhead the sister city initiative. The federation has initiated and is focused on establishing partners and interest from the business, governmental, and educational communities. The federation is in good financial shape and is committed to being involved in delegation trips, supplying its facilities, hosting activities, and providing financial support. The desire is to first have a delegation from Milwaukee visit Zadar followed by a Zadar delegation visit to Milwaukee, preferably in July 2015. A NGO in Zadar will be identified soon for the relationship.

Zadar is Croatia's fifth largest city. Its geography includes coastlines, islands, nature parks, and water. There is continued population growth. Women and an older population comprise a majority. The City was liberated in 1995 and is a modern economic, political and cultural center for the region. Its government is a democracy and has a similar city council to Milwaukee's. Education is similar to the United States with elementary, high school, and higher education opportunities and exchanges.

Areas of mutual benefit for both cities would include culture, trade, and commerce. Economic and educational exchange possibilities include fresh water research and technology, food and beverage manufacturing, mining, tourism, fishing, and agriculture.

Details of Mr. Lucas's overview and presentation can be found within Common Council File Number 131540 under the title "Zadar PowerPoint Presentation 9-15-14".

Ald. Davis gave comments. A sister city relationship will be more advantageous to both cities as opposed to a friendly exchange relationship, especially regarding mutual economic exchanges. An application should be submitted within 30 to 60 days. The City's Health Department and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Fresh Water Institute can provide data and information on health issues and fresh water respectively.

Mr. Gass said that he was interested in more information regarding social services, health care, and the labor force in Zadar.

Mr. Gass moved to extend a sister city relationship application, between Zadar, Croatia and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for submittal to the Federation of Croatian Societies, Inc. of Milwaukee as the local nonprofit organization. Mr. Durtka seconded. There were no objections. Ms. Silletti excused.

### **3. Update from Peace Action Wisconsin Regarding the Sister City Relationship with Carora, Venezuela.**

Individual appearing:

*Barry Keefe, Peace Education Project of Peace Action Wisconsin and Milwaukee-Carora Sister Cities Committee*

*Mr. Keefe gave an update on the activities of his organization and the sister city relationship between Carora, Venezuela and Milwaukee. Main activities of this relationship have primarily been sending delegations from Milwaukee to Carora. Moving forward, the desire is to advance the relationship further by connecting both cities in terms of business and other avenues.*

*Mr. Keefe proceeded to give an overview and PowerPoint presentation regarding a delegation trip to Carora in February 2015. The trip will be for ten days from February 3 to 13, 2015 with a cost of \$2500 that includes airfare, lodging, meals, and transportation. Goals and the itinerary for the trip are centered on establishing social, economic, and cultural connections, exchanges, and relationships. Various sites and groups will be visited, including the mayor of Carora, local communes, various beverage businesses, guitarists, and historical sites. Thirteen to sixteen delegates holding positions of high influence related to law, social work, education, and businesses are desired for the trip. He has been involved with mass recruiting and personal recruiting, especially towards students and professors locally and elsewhere.*

*Details of Mr. Lucas's overview and presentation can be found within Common Council File Number 131540 under the title "Milwaukee-Carora Sister Cities Committee February 2015 Delegation Presentation".*

*Mr. Keefe invited committee members to the trip and asked for assistance in acquiring delegates of importance, media coverage support, and ideas for economic projects.*

*Ald. Davis commented. Interested companies should be engaged. Perhaps the Wisconsin Economic Corporation and the Department of Agriculture may be interested. The delegation should be cautious due to current diplomatic relations between the United States and Carora. Ambassadors have been sent back to Carora.*

*Mr. Gass said that he can forward the delegation trip information to deans and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Perhaps professors with grant dollars can join the trip and help offset costs.*

*Mr. Dutka questioned Peace Education Project of Peace Action Wisconsin and its ability to maintain the sister city relationship? He added that he did not have a good sense of the local hierarchy and the level of involvement from the organization in managing the relationship.*

*Mr. Keefe responded. He is an assistant organizer for the upcoming delegation trip and has been involved for the last year. There is a lead organizer who is out of the country. Danny Pneumann is the president of the organization, and he is directly involved. There are about 30 to 40 members of the Milwaukee-Carora Sister Cities Committee who have been or are involved in the sister city relationship. Many of the participants have been staff, current members, and former members.*

*Ald. Davis made requests to Mr. Keefe. A listing of members, positions, and percentage of Venezuelan participants in the Milwaukee-Carora Sister Cities Committee should be provided to City Clerk staff. Information regarding the delegation trip should be forwarded to City Clerk staff to distribute to committee members. The matter can be brought back to a future meeting if committee members still had any concerns.*

#### 4. Review of the City Ordinance Relative to Friendly Exchange and Sister City Relationship Criteria.

*Individual appearing:  
Amy Hefter, Legislative Reference Bureau*

*Ald. Davis said that the proposed ordinance, found in CCFN 140083, serves to adopt the same criteria of a sister city relationship for a friendly exchange relationship. The change is a response to clarify the differences between a sister city relationship and a friendly exchange relationship. A friendly exchange relationship will require approval from the committee and the Common Council.*

*Ms. Hefter said that from checking with Sister Cities International of its policies and procedures relating to a friendly exchange, she found that a friendly exchange relationship follows the sister city relationship application and process. The only difference is that a friendly exchange relationship would not require a signed agreement. Members can suggest any changes to the proposed ordinance before them, including whether or not friendly exchange relationships should be limited in number and expiration.*

*Mr. Durtka said that friendship exchange relationships should have some accountability and be limited to prevent infringement on sister city relationships.*

*Ald. Davis said that the number of sister city or friendly exchange relationships for the City should not be amended as the number of such relationships is well below the current limit of ten. The matter can be amended later if any issues arise.*

*Mr. Dutka moved to amend the proposed ordinance to limit a friendly exchange relationship to five years. Mr. Vang seconded. There were no objections. Ms. Silletti excused.*

*Mr. Durtka moved to approve the proposed ordinance, as amended. Mr. Gass seconded. There were no objections. Ms. Silletti excused.*

*Ald. Davis said that the proposed ordinance will go to the Common Council process for review and passage.*

#### 5. New Business for Future Discussions.

*Mr. Durtka announced that the next annual meeting for Sister Cities International will be held in July 2015 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He added that the friendly exchange relationship regarding Ningbo, China and its recent developments should be discussed by the committee in the future.*

*Ald. Davis said that the Mayor's office and consulate offices in Chicago should be contacted regarding Ningbo, China.*

*Ald. Davis invited members to a delegation trip to Indonesia from October 8 to 12, 2014 as part of the proposed sister city relationship with Medan, Indonesia.*

#### 6. Set Next Meeting Date and Time.

*Ald. Davis said the next meeting is to be determined and will be based upon receiving a sister city relationship application regarding Zadar, Croatia.*

**Meeting adjourned at 2:53 p.m.  
Chris Lee, Staff Assistant**