



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE

ALD. KHALIF J. RAINEY, CHAIR

Al Durtka, Sanjib Bhattacharyya, Oscar Tovar, and Bruce Spann

*Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 286-2232, Fax: 286-3456,
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Monday, November 23, 2020

10:00 AM

Virtual Meeting

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1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.

2. Roll call.

Present 5 - Durtka, Tovar, Rainey, Spann, Bhattacharyya

3. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from July 20, 2020.

The meeting minutes from July 20, 2020 were approved without objection.

4. Review and approval of renewal applications to extend sister city relationships.

A. Zadar, Croatia (exp. 5/12/20)

Appearing:

Nevenka Bralic, Federation of Croatian Societies, Inc.

Ms. Bralic commented on the renewal application and 2019/2020 annual report for the sister city relationship with Zadar, Croatia. The relationship has been centered on culture and water research and education. There is a main focus to build a water research project between middle schools from both cities. Students would learn scientific principals on measuring tap water quality and draw pictures of water futures. She has been unable to engage Golda Meier school as the Milwaukee preferred option for the exchange. Assistance is needed to engage Golda Meier.

Member Spann said that he would help connect Ms. Bralic to a Golda Meier school teacher.

Member Bhattacharyya said that the Milwaukee Health Department would be open to provide input and support, with a public health perspective, to the water research project.

Member Durtka commented. Many sister city relationships are based on water, but Milwaukee seems to lack coordination based on water. Leadership at the top, perhaps the Water Council, is needed to support all water projects. The water research project for the sister city relationship with Zadar needs broader expansion.

Member Spann concurred that better coordination is needed on water for Milwaukee.

Member Durtka moved approval, seconded by member Spann, of the renewal application to extend and of the 2019/2020 annual report for the sister city relationship with Zadar, Croatia. There was no objection.

Mr. Lee said that the renewal to extend the relationship would next require a resolution, sponsored by Ald. Rainey, to be approved by the Community and Economic Development Committee and the Common Council.

B. Bomet County, Kenya (exp. 11/23/20)

*Appearing:
David Mugun*

Mr. Mugun commented on the renewal application for Bomet County, Kenya. Activities of the relationship thus far include students visiting Bomet and the drilling of a water well in Bomet. The water well has yet to be utilized due to having high levels of chloride. No resources and sponsor has been acquired yet to purify the water.

Member Spann commented. Sister Cities International has an African subcommittee and there is opportunity for Mr. Mugun and his group to connect with the subcommittee on the water well. Water Boys, CharityWater.org, and other nonprofit organizations exist to sponsor and help provide resources for water projects in Kenya and Africa.

Mr. Lee said that a local nonprofit sponsoring organization is required for a sister city relationship, the applicant nonprofit organization sponsoring the renewal application is Gotabгаа International Organization Inc., and the organization it is not registered in Wisconsin.

Mr. Mugun said that Gotabгаа International Organization Inc. is a national organization for Kenyans, is registered in Georgia, has a chapter in Wisconsin, and is not registered in Wisconsin.

Members said that a nonprofit organization registered in Wisconsin should be obtained.

Christine Thompson-Mosore, Mosorec International Foundation Inc., appeared and said that her organization can be an interim local sponsor for the sister city relationship with Bomet County, Kenya.

Mr. Mugun said he was not in objection.

Member Spann moved approval, seconded by member Durtka, of the renewal

application to extend the sister city relationship with Bomet County, Kenya with the amendment and contingency that Mosorec International Foundation Inc. be an interim local nonprofit sponsor until another local nonprofit organization registered in Wisconsin is acquired. There was no objection.

Mr. Lee said that the renewal to extend the relationship would next require a resolution, sponsored by Ald. Rainey, to be approved by the Community and Economic Development Committee and the Common Council.

5. Review and approval of sister city relationship annual reports.

A. Zadar, Croatia (due 12/25/19)

The 2019/2020 annual report for the sister city relationship with Zadar, Croatia was considered and approved under item 4, A.

B. Daegu Metropolitan City, South Korea (due 5/6/20)

*Appearing:
Elizabeth Hittman, Environmental Collaboration Office*

Ms. Hittman commented on the 2020 annual report for the sister city relationship with Daegu Metropolitan City, South Korea. The relationship is locally sponsored by the Water Council. The Water Council does global work to build alliances and network on water technology. Milwaukee has had an ongoing relationship with Daegu centered on fresh water research and technologies, business, and industry. Activities have included travel from both sides to each other's water summits or expos in past years to exchange ideas. The pandemic has stopped activities and travel for 2020. The political flux in Daegu has also caused inactivity for the year.

Member Spann inquired about the Water Council to assist with the other sister city relationships that were striving for clean water.

Ms. Hittman replied. The Water Council is more of a business incubator. They do have a Brew Incubator program that offers mentoring, legal assistance, and water filtration. The School of Freshwater Sciences can offer education, and their contact information can be forwarded.

Member Durtka said that the relationship appears to only be a business arrangement and that he would like to see more concrete involvement and activities between all parties, including the Water Council.

Member Tovar moved approval, seconded by member Spann, of the 2020 annual report for the sister city relationship with Daegu Metropolitan City, South Korea. There was no objection.

C. Tarime District, Tanzania (due 8/13/20)

*Appearing:
Christine Thompson-Mosore, Mosorec International Foundation Inc.*

Ms. Thompson-Mosore gave an overview presentation on the 2020 annual report for the sister city relationship with Tarime District, Tanzania. Activities under the relationship have included providing support and services to the Tarime community, village school,

children, and residents as follows: supplying handwashing stations and soap; providing safe clean drinking water via the installation of the water pump for the water well; working to install poles to provide electricity for the school; hiring and training of youths to do various construction-related work on the school building; supplying gas for women and girls to use for cooking instead of using coal; addressing human trafficking with men taking the Hemad Pledge to fight human trafficking; and increasing access and capacity for the school with more classrooms, chairs, and desks. Travel to Tarime had been cancelled for 2020 due to the pandemic, but there is the plan to take the annual delegation trip to Tarime next December 2021. Her foundation has participated in the Sister Cities International African subcommittee group.

Member Spann moved approval of the 2020 annual report for the sister city relationship with Tarime District, Tanzania. There was no objection.

D. Medan, Indonesia (due 11/3/20)

Appearing:

Maysee Herr, Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Herr said that HWCC was withdrawing as the local sponsor to the sister city relationship due to the departure of key local point persons, lack of capacity for the chamber to support the relationship without those key persons, inability to establish contacts and communication with Medan, lack of activity, and lack of community support.

Members, staff, and Ms. Herr discussed the inability to locate and contact Leni Siker (the remaining local key contact), putting closure on the sister city relationship with Medan, exploring sister city relationships with other Asian connections, the chamber being open to assist other Asia-related sister city relationships, and the idea to pursue a sister city relationship affiliated with the Hmong community.

Member Tovar moved approval, seconded by member Spann, of the 2020 annual report for the sister city relationship with Medan, Indonesia and the withdrawal of the Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce as the local nonprofit sponsoring organization to the relationship. There was no objection.

Mr. Lee said that the committee, at its discretion, can proceed with the termination of the sister city relationship at a future meeting.

6. Update on the status of sister city relationships.

A. Tema, Ghana

Appearing:

Martin Oduro, Ghana-Milwaukee Association, Inc.

Adam Tindall-Schlicht, Port Milwaukee

Mr. Oduro gave an update. They will continue to work towards a sister city agreement signing ceremony. The pandemic, travel ban, and presidential election in Ghana has made the signing ceremony a low priority.

Mr. Tindall-Schlicht inquired about port trade activities with Tema and said that Port Milwaukee would support such activities.

Mr. Oduro said for the Port to remain patient and continue to work with them on port trade activities, especially after the pandemic subsides.

B. Other

There were no other updates.

7. Discussion on sister city related events or activities.

A. Holiday Folk Fair 2020

Member Durtka said that the fair was virtual for the first time, was held from November 20 to 22nd, reached a broader international audience and community, built new relations, engaged more countries than before, had programming directly from other countries, had challenges, was missing the food element, was unable to involve Milwaukee Sister Cities, and will look to involve Milwaukee Sister Cities next year.

B. Meet and greet

Mr. Lee said that the meet and greet has been an interest by the committee and local sponsors to bring the sister city communities together to connect with each other, has not occurred due to the pandemic and recent departure of the City Clerk's event coordinator staff person, and would need participation and coordination from everyone to accomplish it in the future.

C. Other

There was no other discussion.

8. Announcements.

There were no announcements.

9. Agenda items for the next meeting.

To be determined.

10. Set next meeting date and time.

To be determined.

11. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

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

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Times for specific agenda items are estimations. If items cannot be heard at their specified times, they will be heard as soon as practicable thereafter.

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