



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,
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Legislative Liaison: Amy Hefter, 286-2290,
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Thursday, March 24, 2011

10:00 AM

Room 303, City Hall

Meeting convened at 10:05 A.M.

*Members present:
Durka, Silletti, Gass, Vang and Davis*

1. Report on Sister Cities Program.

*Individual present:
Ron Leonhardt - City Clerk*

Mr. Leonhardt said that the City updated its ordinances and procedures to be more in sync with the Sister Cities International organization and since that time several relationships with cities have been terminated.

Chair said that Germany has expressed an interest in the city of Milwaukee, but it seems that there has been no effort in moving the initiative forward. He said that Germany may be a good fit for the Sister Cities program, they are interested in supporting an economic development initiative under the sister cities program. Also, Sister Cities International's new president, Jim Dumas, is working directly with us as it deals with a memorandum of understanding with South Africa local governments.

Ms. Silletti requested a summary of current sister cities relationship and their compliance, to be presented in future meetings.

2. Discussion of the request from Esperanza Unida to establishing a sister city relationship with Istanbul, Turkey.

*Individual present:
Robert Miranda, Executive Director of Esperanza Unida*

Mr. Miranda has been working for a few years with Istanbul, Turkey, regarding a sister city relationship with Manisa as well as with the Turkish community here in Milwaukee, Colorado and Chicago.

At this time the mayor of Istanbul is perusing a relationship with Chicago and they feel this is too close of a venue between Milwaukee and Chicago. The city of Istanbul is in support if the sister cities relationship is pursued with another city.

The Chair said that there was a formal request from Esperanza Unida to establish this relationship and to make sure that committee members were briefed on the

status of that letter.

Mr. Miranda talked about a letter directed to the consul general which was accepted however, the people in Istanbul felt that the relationship with Chicago will be more beneficial in that they saw an opportunity to bring a more cultural, educational, political and economic venue given the size of the two cities.

3. Discussion relating to the status of the current sister cities relationship with Manisa, Turkey.

Individual present:

Robert Miranda, Executive Director Esperanza Unida

Mr. Miranda has developed relationship with different venues in Turkey and at this time he is waiting on responses from Bolu Turkey where he sees a potential sister cities relationship. Mr. Miranda would like to pursue a new application to reflect Bolu.

Chair stated that the proper procedure will be to terminate the current relationship and accept a new application for Bolu. He said the new application needs to include a non profit organization to grow.

Motion by Mr. Durtka to move forward on the termination on the sister cities relationship with Manisa, Turkey. There were no objections.

4. Discussion on Africa Urban Poverty Alleviation Program grant.

Individual present:

Amy Hefter - Legislative Research Analyst

Chair briefed the members on the Africa Urban Poverty Alleviation program grant that is held through Sister Cities International that was approved for African cities with special criteria. Steven Mahan, Director of the Community Grant Block Administration who coordinates this activity, said the grant was \$115,000 through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Ms. Hefter produced the first three quarterly report of the progress of this program.

Eric Gass said that the Medical College of WI, in its International Health program, has three relationships with South Africa. Mr. Gass suggested there may be an opportunity to explore what the medical college is doing in South Africa and unite forces with the sister cities program..

5. New business for future discussions.

- Status on different Sister Cities relationship and their progress*
- Notification when international visitors visit our city and their efforts*

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 A.M.

Joanna Polanco

Staff Assistant