



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 Bruce Spann
Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 286-2232, Fax: 286-3456,
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Thursday, March 28, 2019

10:00 AM

Room 301-B, Third Floor, City Hall

1. Call to order.

Meeting called to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. Roll call.

*Present 3 - Stamper, Durtka, Spann
Excused 2 - Barta, Tovar*

3. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from January 10, 2019.

Member Durtka moved approval, seconded by member Spann, of the meeting minutes from January 10, 2019. There was no objection.

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

a. Irpin, Ukraine (due 2/1/19)

Individuals appearing:

*Joseph Spolowicz, St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church
Boris Nayflisch, Griffon Brands*

Mr. Spolowicz and Nayflisch gave an overview of the report and updates. Delegations from Irpin have traveled to Milwaukee a few times last year that included various Irpin officials and mayors. During those trips the delegations had visited many City sectors including educational institutions, healthcare, public works, fire, police, and library systems. Other activities have included a successful cultural event celebrating Ukrainian Independence Day last summer in Milwaukee at Alverno College with about 100 attendees, the donation of Ukrainian books to Milwaukee's Central Library, hosting of a Ukrainian student, hosting of Kiev journalists during last year's elections, participation in the sister city booth at last year's Holiday Folk Fair, Mr. Nayflisch's participation and presentation of a Milwaukee city flag to the City of Irpin as part of a city day celebration event in Irpin, and ongoing attendance of Sister Cities Committee meetings. There will be a delegation trip to Irpin this June or July. Irpin's city day event for this year will be June 21st.

Member Durtka said that there should be the same level of effort to send written

materials about Milwaukee to Irpin like how Ukrainian books were given to Milwaukee's libraries.

Mr. Spolowicz replied that they will look into the possibility of sending information about Milwaukee to Irpin.

Member Durtka moved approval of the 2019 annual report on the sister city relationship with Irpin, Ukraine. There was no objection.

b. Zadar Croatia (due 12/25/18)

Individual appearing:

Nevenka Bralic-Lutzow, Federation of Croatian Societies Inc. of Milwaukee

Ms. Bralic-Lutzow gave an overview of the report and updates. She is the new main contact for the federation. The relationship is still in the engagement process with interests in water, education, and cultural exchanges. Main activities have been local student musicians traveling to Zadar and Croatia to perform there over the years. Zadar is interested to send a future delegation to Milwaukee. The federation would like to include a sister cities booth at a couple of their upcoming events if possible, such as a Croatian fest celebration on July 20th in Franklin. She is a graduate of the School of Freshwater Sciences, has a chemist background, has experience testing water, studied the lead issue in Milwaukee, and is interested in a freshwater technology exchange between the two cities.

Ald. Stamper said that staff should be contacted on whether or not the sister city booths can be done.

Member Durtka said that the report was insufficient and lacked further information about activities, especially regarding freshwater exchange, between the two cities.

Member Durtka questioned a standard format for local organizations to submit their annual reports.

Mr. Lee commented. The committee had developed a standard annual report form with submittal requirements that is being used now for completion of annual reports. Organizations have submitted that form and their required additional information, either as a narrative or PowerPoint presentation, to the committee. There is no standard format for the additional information, and the organizations have the option to submit narratives, PowerPoint presentations, or a combination of both.

Ms. Bralic-Lutzow said that she can revisit with the federation to redo the annual report with further details.

Member Spann moved to hold the 2018 annual report for the sister city relationship with Zadar, Croatia. There was no objection.

c. Bomet County, Kenya (due 8/29/18)

Individual appearing:

Dr. Alice Kones

Dr. Kones gave a PowerPoint overview and updates. There are no local nonprofit sponsoring organizations on either side of the relationship currently. Efforts are being

made to acquire or formalize sponsorships, especially a local youth organization group. With the acquisition of the youth organization, the relationship will continue and focus on education, student exchange, mentorship programming, technology, and entrepreneurship. She recently took two students as part of an exchange program to Bomet and Kenya. There was a STEM scholarship program that helped sponsor and mentor students in Bomet. The biggest activity of the relationship thus far has been the water well project in Bomet. The well has been drilled but needs additional funds and resources to purify the chlorine contaminated water and to finish the well. The well has been capped off. The Rotary Club of Illinois helped with drilling the well but was not able to do the water purification and the rest of the project. Information on the remaining costs for the well can be shared to the committee. Bomet has much crops and produce available for Milwaukee to import.

Members and participants inquired about the relationship structure in Bomet, the location of the well, and crop produce opportunities in Bomet.

Dr. Kones replied. She recently has only worked directly with two leaders in Bomet and will work with them to establish organizations in Bomet to facilitate activities going forward. The well is on the school grounds in Bomet. Crops and produce opportunities from Bomet would include avocados, passion fruits, beans, green bananas, potatoes, cabbages, and spinach. All produce are organic without any pesticides.

Ald. Stamper said he will inquire about making connections to the crop and produce opportunities that Bomet has to offer.

Member Spann said that he can forward information about organizations that can assist with the water well project and water purification, such as YouFuel and Stone House Water Technologies.

Member Spann moved approval of the 2018 annual report for the sister city relationship with Bomet County, Kenya. There was no objection.

d. uMhlathuze, South Africa (due 6/21/18)

Mr. Lee gave an update. The current relationship lacks a local nonprofit sponsor, 2018 annual report, and local main contact. The previous main contact, Joe Davis, did recently make contact that the South African consulate office would like to maintain this relationship or establish a new relationship with a different South African city. The relationship will be expiring May 13, 2019.

5. Presentation from the Milwaukee Global Health Consortium.

Individuals appearing:

Sarah Ehlinger Affotey, Milwaukee Global Health Consortium (MGHC)

Dr. Sanjib Bhattacharyya, Health Department Special Deputy Commissioner

Ms. Ehlinger Affotey said that many sister cities have the same goals as those of the consortium; the consortium can be an asset, resource, and partner to assist sister cities in improving global health; she is the executive director of the consortium; the consortium was formerly known as the Center of International Health; the consortium has been around since 1986; and the consortium is trying to brand Milwaukee as a global hub for public health.

Ms. Ehlinger Affotey and Dr. Bhattacharyya gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the consortium membership, leadership, representation, mission, vision, goals, importance, relevant programs to sister cities, history of trainings, and Health Department global health activities as follows:

The consortium is a unique nonprofit comprised of academia, government, health care, and nonprofit members. The leadership structure is comprised of a board of directors and a program advisory committee. The members of the consortium represent over 1 million people in populations surrounding southeastern Wisconsin base of each member institution, about 21 hospitals with services, over 92,000 employees, and over 46,000 students. The mission is to foster collaborations which address complex health issues relevant to Milwaukee and the global community. The vision is for the Milwaukee area to work together to find global health solutions and serving as a model for other communities. Goals include convening as a leading organization, leveraging funding, changing communities with evidence-based lessons, and transforming Milwaukee to be healthy and safe. The consortium has been important to bridge the global community to exchange shared health information, understand similar and different health crises, and to assist one another.

The consortium has had a history of trainings with past sister cities and other communities inclusive of the following aspects: emergency medical services in Poland from 1991-1995; agriculture, water, sanitation, UNICEF in Malawi/Zimbabwe; partnership with UMOS in Central America; primary care in the Republic of Georgia, pharmacy in Zambia since 2006; international food relief program through USAID; Tanzania nursing education project; international delegates; hosting of student scholars, and training or exchanges at the Milwaukee Health Department.

Through involvement with the consortium the Milwaukee Health Department has engaged in the following global health activities: learning opportunities for international students and visitors, participation in global health conversations around disease detection and laboratory surveillance planning, support disease surveillance and diagnostic testing, and global public health workforce development.

Member Durtka commented. Many sister city relationships with a health component lack progress in that area. Perhaps prior to establishing a sister city relationship based on health, there should be a requirement that an existing health partnership be established first.

Ms. Benevolentia Wandana appeared and commented. Her opinion is that an established health partnership would be the next level of a sister city relationship. There was talk of bringing an Indonesian health professional to Milwaukee to develop a program of training. There is interest to connect other Indonesian cities, aside from Medan, to the consortium.

Members inquired further about the Tanzanian nursing project, a listing of initiatives, and consortium meetings.

Ms. Ehlinger Affotey replied. The Tanzanian nurse training project was a two year project that just completed with a final report. A listing of consortium activities is listed in the consortium's annual report. There are set leadership meetings and frequent initiative meetings based on current projects.

6. Discussion on sister city related events, activities or updates.

a. Meet and greet

Mr. Lee and Chair Stamper said that staff will continue to coordinate a new meet and greet date that best garners attendance from everyone. Previous proposed dates did not garner adequate attendance.

b. Sister Cities International annual conference

Member Durtka said that the next annual conference will be in Houston, Texas from July 17 to 19, 2019 with a theme of "Cities Mean Business". Components of the conference will include a youth leadership summit and a look at the Port of Houston, which is one of the busiest seaports in the United States.

c. Other

There were no other updates.

7. Discussion on new job position or capacity.

Ald. Stamper said that he is hopeful to put in for next year's City budget a new position for the sister city program. Specifically, as the committee had discussed, the position would be for one year to initially envision sister city programming. Also, the position would have to determine funding for the position beyond its first year and the proper transition to work for and/or establish a nonprofit organization for the program.

8. Announcements.

Member Durtka announced that he was the recipient of the Order of the Rising Sun award this past February at a local ceremonial event for his involvement in promoting sister-state relations between Chiba, Japan and Wisconsin for the past 40 years. He is hopeful that a sister city relationship could happen between Japan and Milwaukee.

9. Agenda items for the next meeting.

To be determined.

Ald. Stamper said a possible agenda item could be a discussion with Port Milwaukee on import/export exchange opportunities.

10. Set next meeting date and time.

To be determined for May or June.

11. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

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