



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, October 4, 2021

1:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Special

This will be a virtual meeting conducted via GoToMeeting. Should you wish to join this meeting from your phone, tablet, or computer you may go to <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/219381685>. You can also dial in using your phone United States: +1 (408) 650-3123 and Access Code: 219-381-685.

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m.

2. Roll call.

Present 4 - Durtka, Tovar, Rainey, Spann

Excused 1 - Bhattacharyya

3. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes.

The meeting minutes from September 22, 2021 were approved without objection.

4. Discussion, review, and recommendations for the Mayor's 2022 proposed budget related to sister cities program and activities.

Appearing:

Christine Thompson Mosore, Mosorec International Foundation Inc.

Boris Nayflish

Makda Fessahaye, Dept. of Employee Relations Director

Members said that changes to the sister cities program include having a full-time staff coordinator position in the long-term, having part-time staff or an international affairs graduate intern from a local university to coordinate sister city activities and programming for the initial short-term, alternatively consider a non-governmental organization to be a possible program administrator, having an intern or staff person

evaluate and propose overall structure changes to the program, establishing an account for hospitality and gift giving purposes in dealing with foreign delegates/officials, and offering a City budget amendment in the amount of up to \$20,000 for staff/intern, programming, marketing, and initiatives.

Members said that the committee has discussed making changes for many years, City budget is extremely tight, doing a full budget for sister city purposes would not be possible at this time, perhaps an advisory group with other peer cities in the state can be formed, not many cities are active in terms of sister city coordination or activities, further capacity beyond the committee and clerk staff was certainly needed, and VISIT Milwaukee should be at the table as a partner.

Ms. Thompson Mosore commented. More collaboration between the City and local sponsors were needed. The lack of activities would be due to limited resources. Any initial resources and assistance from the City, such as with part-time staff or an intern and marketing funds, would go a long way even if the contribution was small. Marketing and promotion was needed. City leaders and officials needed to be more outspoken in support and promotion of the sister city relationships. Sister city related travel and funding would be a long term matter to find a solution for. Her organization members used their own resources and connections to hospitalize visiting delegates. Inquiry should be made to multiple local universities on the internship collaboration.

Members said that successful sister city relationships, such as the State sister city with Chiba (Japan), were built on a strong core of volunteers who provided for themselves and their travel at their own expense; the City needed to better welcome/treat visiting delegates and bring resources abroad; the City (at no to little costs) needed to connect and acquire resources from local assets better; a local university could possibly take the City's sister city program as a major project of theirs; possible universities to collaborate on an internship would include Marquette University, UW-Wisconsin, Concordia University; and a rough draft of a job description for staffing was already done.

Member Durtka said that his International Institute of Wisconsin organization had an 18-month long internship with Marquette University at about 15,000 a year.

Ms. Fessahaye said that the City has started recently a federal work study internship with UW-Milwaukee, further information about the work study program would be forwarded to the committee to consider as an option, each department head would be responsible to supervise their interns, and a temporary appointment process would allow to provide additional pay to an employee for added responsibilities.

Mr. Nayflish added that the City should provide funds to help City officials travel abroad.

Chair Rainey added that there should also be exploration to raise or acquire funds outside of the City budget.

Member Durtka moved approval to pursue a City budget amendment in the amount up to \$20,000 to improve sister city activities and goals as discussed by the committee, to pursue an internship or federal work study opportunity with UW-Milwaukee or a local university, and to engage VISIT Milwaukee as a partner. There was no objection.

Chair Rainey said that he would develop the budget amendment with the City's Legislative Reference Bureau and would share the amendment with the committee.

5. Announcements.

There were no announcements.

6. Agenda items for the next meeting.

Agenda items to include further discussion on doing an internship or federal work study program, discussion with VISIT Milwaukee, discussion with Port Milwaukee, discussion with Milwaukee County (sister cities display at the airport), Dept. of Public Works (sister cities public space at McArthur Square), and amending the City ordinance (adding additional members to the committee and other aspects).

7. Set next meeting date and time.

To be determined.

8. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

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