



# 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 Charles Vang**  
**Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 286-2232, Fax: 286-3456,**  
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**Legislative Liaison, La-Wanda Fletcher, 286-8661,**  
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Thursday, May 19, 2016

10:00 AM

Zeidler Municipal Bldg, Room 102  
(Fishbowl)

841 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, WI 53202

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#### 1. Call to Order.

*Meeting called to order at 10:07 a.m.*

*Present (5) - Vang, Tovar, Barta, Durtka, Stamper*

*Individual also present:*

*LaWanda Fletcher, Legislative Reference Bureau*

#### 2. Introduction of Members.

*Members gave brief introductions.*

#### 3. Review and Approval of the Meeting Minutes from July 14, 2015.

*Mr. Durtka moved approval, seconded by Mr. Vang, of the meeting minutes from July 14, 2016. There was no objection.*

#### 5. Review of the 2015 Annual Report regarding the Sister City Relationship with Zadar, Croatia.

*Individual appearing:*

*Paul Lucas, Federation of Croatian Societies Inc. of Milwaukee*

*Mr. Lucas said that the federation is a part of an umbrella for nine different local Croatian groups that include a radio club, soccer club, two catholic churches, women's group, and youth tamburitza orchestra.*

*Mr. Lucas gave an overview on the 2015 report regarding the sister city relationship with Zadar, Croatia. The relationship became official last year. Since then, the goal has been to establish a foundation for the relationship to grow meaningfully and for the long term. The focus has been on three areas: economic exchange, educational exchange, and cultural exchange.*

*Economically, there are business opportunities in the area of water and fish farming in Zadar for local business companies in Milwaukee. Cultivating tuna is the main fish farm in Zadar. Zadar is next to the Mediterranean Sea, and water is critical to its*

economy. There have been initial and positive meetings with Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC), the Water Council, and University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee (UWM) to develop economic relationships. He's expressed interest with the State of Wisconsin for doing a trade mission again to Eastern Europe, and Croatia is willing to sponsor events for a trade mission.

For education, Zadar is interested in best practices on the issue of fresh water. Zadar has at least 45 islands that require fresh water from the main city. The University of Zadar is very interested in partnering the UWM for scholarly exchange.

Cultural activities have occurred through the Milwaukee Croatian Tamburitians. The local youth orchestra recently had an annual concert featuring Croatian music, and they will do a series of concerts when they travel to Zadar and Croatia in 2019 as part of a nationwide Croatian event.

There are formalized plans for a delegation of federation members to visit Zadar and its government and mayor. The previous Common Council President, Ald. Michael Murphy, traveled to Croatia and had met with Zadar officials last year. The mayor of Zadar could not visit Milwaukee this summer due to internal criminal investigation that had only been recently dropped. The mayor will be able come to Milwaukee by the end of the year or next year to meet the committee, civic leaders, government officials, and the federation. Once the mayor's travel to Milwaukee is confirmed, the committee and City will be informed.

Members inquired about economic trades in Zadar, local Croatian population in Milwaukee, population in Zadar, a state sister city relationship between Wisconsin and Croatia, origins of the sister city relationship with Zadar, and Croatian background of Mr. Lucas.

Mr. Lucas replied. He is third generation Croatian. His wife is first generation Croatian. Major produce or manufacturing trades in Zadar include fish farming and alcohol production. About 15,000 people in southeastern Wisconsin would identify themselves as Croatian. There is a very active local Croatian community in the City. There are two local Croatian churches. There is a local 40-acre Croatian Park in Franklin with picnic grounds and facilities for the Croatian Eagle Soccer Club. The soccer club is growing, and its adult team plays professionally in the Midwest. There is the desire to possibly build a cultural center or an open area pavilion in the park for events. There is not a state sister city relationship. Hopefully, the sister city relationship will initiate a state relationship. The Croatian government is supportive of the relationship, and the Croatian consulate in Chicago was very involved in fostering the relationship. English is spoken as a second language in Zadar. Zadar was chosen as the sister city due to it mirroring Milwaukee the closest on its offerings, which includes the close proximity to water, beverage production, food processing, and tourism. Zadar is one of the largest cities on the coast in Croatia, and its population is a little smaller than Milwaukee County. Zadar has great weather, an airport, an air force base, and clean water.

Ald. Stamper said that he liked the economic and educational opportunities, especially around water. The City should be informed of when the Zadar delegation will visit Milwaukee.

Mr. Tovar moved approval of the 2015 annual report on the sister city relationship with Zadar, Croatia. There was no objection.

#### **4. Discussion relating to establishing a Friendly Exchange or Sister City Relationship with Tarime, Tanzania.**

*Individuals appearing:*

*Christine Thompson-Mosorec, Mosorec International Foundation*

*Jason Fields, former Wisconsin State Representative and Assembly Member*

*Ms. Thompson-Mosorec gave opening remarks. The proposal is for a sister city relationship with Tarime, Tanzania. Her nonprofit organization called Mosorec International Foundation will be the local sponsor for Milwaukee and in Tarime where there are both physical offices in both cities. The foundation's mission is to empower Tanzanians and bring awareness to the United States. She is from Tarime and understands the culture there. She recently helped built a school in Tarime.*

*Mr. Fields gave opening remarks. He will assist the foundation. There is interest in fostering economic, educational, and cultural relationships between the cities. There are export opportunities in Tarime, such as coffee, machinery, textiles, cotton, fur, and sweaters. There is high interest in a water relationship, and the foundation is meeting with the Water Council. The foundation will partner with UWM and Pathways in Education on education. There is interest to have two local charter schools that will expose challenged students of color to different cultures outside of the United States. There was a previous sister city relationship between the City and Morogoro, Tanzania. The main differences with this proposal being successful is that the foundation will be physically present in both cities, there are some connections established or planned, and there is a dedicated point person in Ms. Thompson-Mosorec.*

*Ms. Thompson-Mosorec gave a presentation on the City of Tarime and the proposed sister city relationship.*

*Wisconsin and Tanzania have similar boundary shapes. Tarime is located in the Mara Great Lakes region with an important connection to water in Lake Victoria. Tarime's population is at about 600,000 people and is similar to Milwaukee. There are three main tribes: Kuria, Luo, and Jita. Kuria is the dominant tribe. Tarime is economically similar to Milwaukee with a dependence on agriculture, livestock, and cattle. There are cash and food crops such as coffee and corn. Tanzania's national language is Swahili. There are 220 tribal languages. English is a third language. The municipal government is the Tarime District. The government has a multiparty voting system. There are two villages with two mayors.*

*The education system is based on the British system and is 7 years primary, 4 years high school, 2 years advance level, and 3 years college. The education system is a linear system, and advancement requires the passing of all exams. St. Augustine is a major private university in the Mara Region, which is four hours away from Tarime. A major public university is the University of Dar es Salaam. Public education is not really free due to extra expenses that students have to pay. There is not much access to education in Tarime.*

*Business exchange opportunities in Tarime include gold mining and tourism. Serengeti National Park is two hours away from Tarime. Tarime is located near the Tanzanian northern border where people can travel into the countries of Kenya and Uganda.*

*There is communication with various businesses, educational institutions, and nonprofits locally such as UWM and the Water Council. The foundation is in communication with the mayor and leaders in Tarime, but a formal sister city relationship needs to be established before any further progress and activities can be done. There is support from the Tarime government and embassies in New York and*

*Washington D.C.*

*Mr. Fields said that many people have been contacted and are on board, but the relationship needs to be official first. There has been communication with the Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor to establish a sister state relationship. Tarime is one of many African cities with potential and an emerging market to invest in. Water exchange with the Water Council and perhaps Badger Meter can take place. There is interest with the World Bank for assistance.*

*Members inquired about investment in Tarime, international hub cities, perception of Milwaukee in Tarime, and local Tarime community in Milwaukee.*

*Mr. Fields replied. Cultural awareness and relationships need to occur first. Mutual exchanges, business and investment will come later. Milwaukee needs to become more of a global player and international hub, similar to other cities like Chicago, Detroit, and St. Louis, in order to compete globally. These hub cities have more international interactions and diversity. The culture outside the United States is more patient, is relationship-based, and has an international outlook. The western culture is more centered on quick business. Local businesses and African American businesses should be involved and can partner with the Tarime government to do business in sectors like cement, engines, corn, ethanol, and water. Knowledge and high intellectual capital from foreign cities need to be imported to Milwaukee as too much talent is leaving the city.*

*Mr. Durka concurred and added comments. Milwaukee is more of an ethnic community rather than an international one. There is a lack of coordination among the state level despite efforts in trade missions. The City seems more passive on the creation of new sister city relationship as opposed to other cities who seem more engaged. Some cities have departments and programs that are funded for sister city or international purposes and others are funded by outside agencies to oversee or run their programs. Chicago has 27 sister cities. There is little public awareness of the City's sister city relationships and activities. Other resources, businesses, and institutions need to be looked at, such as Badger Meter, in addition to the regular ones like the Water Council.*

*Ms. Thompson-Mosorec remarked. There is a community of Tarime professionals working and living in the City such as doctors and instructors. They are aware and supportive of this initiative. There was a gathering of that community last year, and another one will be held this July. The Tarime people are very welcoming and friendly. The last major conflict in Tarime was the war with Uganda during the 1970s. Tarime has initial perceptions of shootings and indifference regarding Milwaukee and the United States, in general. These perceptions can be lessened by providing support to Tarime.*

*Mr. Vang remarked. Milwaukee should be more global. The previous relationship with Morogoro seemed to have inconsistent goals and purposes that were not mutual. Although considered low, education outside of the United States seem to be broader based on his international travel experience.*

*Ms. Barta said that the presentation was impressive, there is potential for growth for both cities, and the City needs more public awareness on the benefits of its sister city relationships.*

*Mr. Vang left the committee at 10:55 a.m.*

*Mr. Tovar said that he was impressed with the presentation, has met privately with*

*Ms. Thompson-Mosorec, and is hopeful that the City can become an international hub.*

*Mr. Durtka concurred and said that there needs to be more public investment from the community for sister city relationships, which takes time.*

*Ald. Stamper commented. Sister city relationships are about developing capacity, relationships, sharing of resources, and educational involvement. There should be public awareness of what the committee is doing in building international and mutually benefiting relationships with other cities from other countries. Concerning the proposal the nonprofit aspect is set, there is due diligence that has been made with connections, and the committee should move this initiative forward so the foundation can move forward with its connections. The action that the committee should take is to extend an application for a sister city relationship to the foundation. If an application is extended, the committee will have to reconvene to review the application perhaps for next month.*

*Mr. Lee said that today's meeting is to review the letter of intent from the foundation followed by extending an application. The committee should reconvene to review a completed application. If the application is approved, then the matter goes through the approval process of the City's Community and Economic Development Committee and Common Council.*

*Ms. Thompson-Mosorec said that she had already submitted an application to clerk staff, but the application is premature.*

*Ms. Barta moved approval, seconded by Mr. Durtka, to extend a sister city relationship application to the Mosorec International Foundation to establish a sister city relationship with Tarime, Tanzania. There was no objection. Mr. Vang excused.*

## **6. Review of the 2015 Sister Cities Committee Annual Report.**

*Mr. Lee gave a brief overview. The annual report is required by city ordinance. The report summarizes the activities and accomplishments of the committee in 2015 as well as the status of sister city and friendly exchange relationships. Two major accomplishments in 2015 included the official establishment of two sister city relationships, Zadar, Croatia and Bomet County, Kenya, with the City of Milwaukee through the signing of sister city agreements. There are currently six active sister city relationships. Ms. Barta and Mr. Tovar joined the committee in early 2015 as new members. Attached to the reports as exhibits are detailed 2015 meeting minutes and annual reports received from the local sponsors of relationships.*

*Ald. Stamper inquired about requests for sister city relationships.*

*Mr. Tovar replied that the Mayor's office and the Clerk's office gets contacted sometimes with requests. The recent German delegation was from Darmstadt, Hesse in Germany. The State of Wisconsin informed his office regarding the delegation visit. The delegation visit resulted in an agreement to eventually establish a friendly exchange relationship and a sister city relationship between the cities. The Hesse Wisconsin Society will be the City's nonprofit organization locally behind this proposed relationship, and he will meet with the organization soon.*

*Mr. Tovar moved approval, seconded by Mr. Durtka, of the 2015 Sister Cities Committee annual report. There was no objection. Mr. Vang excused.*

**7. Old Business.**

*There was no old business.*

**8. New Business.**

*Mr. Durtka commented. With the departure of Ald. Joe Davis, there needs to be a new point person for the City on addressing notices, dues, listings, and other items that need to be taken care of from Sister Cities International. There will be a Sister Cities International 60th Anniversary Annual Conference from July 13 to 16, 2016 in Washington D.C. Elections, some by-law changes, and board of director nominations will take place. The City may vote electronically for the elections. It would be great if others can attend the conference in addition to himself. Ald. Davis previously attended an annual conference.*

*Mr. Lee said that Management and Accounting Officer Terry MacDonald of his office paid dues previously and Ald. Davis was the previous point person.*

**9. Items for the Next Meeting.**

*Ald. Stamper said that the next meeting items may include:*

*-Review of the application for a sister city relationship between the City of Tarime, Tanzania and the City of Milwaukee*

*-Possibly a discussion on the Sister Cities Committee relative to its goals, purpose, and ideas for improvement. Members are to share written opinions on improving structure, coordination, relationships, public awareness, weaknesses, international interaction, and growth.*

**10. Set Next Meeting Date and Time.**

*Ald. Stamper will work with clerk staff to set the next meeting date and time for June 2016.*

**11. Adjournment.**

*Meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.  
Chris Lee, Staff Assistant*