

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

4:30 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room

Members Present:

Irene Davis, Chair
Karen Parsells
John Mitchell
Kathy Frink
Tom Link
Steve Russo
Pamela Russell-Slack
Lily Hart
Dawn Thomas-Smith
Antje Hornbeck
Will Schoefmann

Staff Present:

Helen Mattson, Staff Liaison

Members Not Present:

Frank Richter

1) Call to order

Chair Link called the meeting to order at 4:31 PM and roll call was conducted.

2) Minutes of the Previous Meeting – December 13, 2016

Mr. Schoefmann made a motion to adopt the minutes of December 13, 2016. Ms. Parsells seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3) Election of Officers: Chair/Vice Chair

Chair Link's first order was the election of a Committee Chair and a Vice Chair. He explained since he was living outside of Keene he was not eligible to continue as Chair. Chair Link said he and Co-Chair Davis had the opportunity to meet with Mayor Lane to ask his thoughts on the elections, how to fill vacancies on the PCC and the possibility of having a member of the City Council serve on the Committee. Chair Link said Mayor Lane recommended the Vice Chair position had two people share the position. He said the Mayor felt that would be helpful in bringing more people with experience to the Committee and also to help those with less

experience on how the City wanted their meetings to be conducted. Chair Link said this was the recommendation of the Mayor and that the decision was ultimately up to the Committee.

Chair Link asked the Committee if there was a nomination for Chair. Mr. Mitchell nominated Ms. Davis as Chair of the PCC and the nomination was seconded by Mr. Russo. Mr. Mitchell said Ms. Davis would do an excellent job, added a lot to the process and was very helpful with the KHS Exchange. Chair Link added that without Ms. Davis's help the Committee would not be all that was today and thanked Ms. Davis. Chair Link asked the Committee if there were any other nominations for Chair. By unanimous decision, the PCC nominated Ms. Davis as Chair.

The Committee proceeded with the election of Vice Chair. A discussion ensued amongst the Committee of having the Vice Chair position shared between two members. Mr. Schoefmann made a motion the PCC have two Vice Chair positions. Ms. Hart seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Ms. Davis then nominated Ms. Russell-Slack and Mr. Mitchell as the Vice Chairs and the nomination was seconded by Ms. Parsells. By unanimous decision, the PCC nominated Ms. Russell-Slack and Mr. Mitchell as Vice Chairs.

The PCC moved to the election of the Treasurer position. Chair Link said Ms. Frink expressed an interest in staying on as Treasurer. He then asked the Committee if there were any nominations. Ms. Parsells nominated Ms. Frink for Treasurer and the nomination was seconded by Ms. Hornbeck. By unanimous decision, the PCC nominated Ms. Frink as Treasurer.

Chair Link concluded by stating in the conversation with the Mayor there was an interest in people joining the PCC. He asked the Mayor to meet with these people individually to stress the importance of being involved with the Committee. Chair Link said he also suggested having the potential members attend some meetings to make sure they were a good fit. He noted members of the City Council had expressed a strong interest to join the PCC.

Chair Link said he was happy to have served as Chair and wanted to stay involved with the Committee. He said the Mayor asked if he would serve as a liaison between the Committee and the Mayor's Office. Chair Link said he was happy to do so and also happy to continue helping the Committee.

Ms. Davis thanked Chair Link for his leadership and everything he had done for the Committee. The members of the PCC also thanked Chair Link for all of his hard work. Chair Link turned the meeting over to the new Chair for the PCC, Chair Davis.

Chair Davis noted the importance of Mr. Link's involvement in the whole budget process and his strong relationship with the Mayor and the City Council. She asked the Committee to discuss appointing Mr. Link as the Special Liaison to the Mayor's Office. Ms. Davis said she also wanted Mr. Link to spearhead special projects such as getting the Einbecker beer to New Hampshire.

Mr. Schoefmann made a motion to appoint Mr. Link as the Special Liaison to the Mayor's Office. The motion was seconded by Ms. Parsells, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Parsells asked how many vacancies there were on the Committee. Chair Davis said in bi-laws it said the PCC could have up to 15 members and was changed to 12 members when there were issues with a quorum. She continued there was one vacancy as an alternate member plus a City Council opening. Ms. Mattson reported City Councilor Gary Lamoureux would be standing on the Committee and the first reading would take place on January 19, 2017.

Vice Chair Mitchell asked about the details of an alternate. Chair Davis explained the Chair of a committee may allow an appropriate alternate to attend a meeting in place of a member who is unavailable. She continued for the purpose of a quorum the alternate may be counted as a member and also have full voting rights on that occasion. Chair Davis noted non-members do not have voting rights. Ms. Parsells asked if alternates were contacted for the purpose of not having a quorum. Ms. Mattson replied yes and said alternates were welcomed to attend meetings and participate. She noted an alternate's vote would not be counted at a regular meeting. Ms. Mattson said alternates are not required to attend meetings but are informed of every meeting.

4) Board Business

a) Soccer Exchange-Update

Chair Davis said there was no additional information on the Soccer Exchange. She stated she contacted KHS Athletic Director, Mike Atkins to appoint a coach but has not received any feedback. Chair Davis said the exchange was postponed for a year and KHS would go in 2018 and Einbeck would visit in 2019. Mr. Link asked if this information had been given to Mr. Thormann. Chair Davis replied yes.

Ms. Parsells made a motion to accept the Soccer Exchange report as informational. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

b) Facebook Page Update-Google Photos/Videos of the Einbeck Delegation

Ms. Thomas-Smith said she added some photos of the Monadnock Fall Festival to the Facebook page. She noted that she did not have access to some of the links to post the photos of the KHS Exchange. Mr. Mitchell said he would work on getting Ms. Thomas-Smith access to these photos.

Ms. Thomas-Smith said she had photos from the October visit, the welcome reception at The Pub and the farewell dinner that still needed to be added to the Facebook page. She explained she wanted to make sure all of the captions were correct before posting. Ms. Thomas-Smith asked the Committee to tag themselves on the photos due to a permission policy she followed. She reported she shared a few of The Keene Sentinel articles on the Facebook page and shared

the Einbeck Facebook page. Ms. Thomas-Smith said she will continue monitoring and sharing information on the Facebook page as it related to the PCC.

Chair Davis asked if there was a way to monitor how many people visited Facebook page. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied yes and said as a business page there was an insight option that showed the engagement rate. She noted the engagement rate for the page was low with 12 likes and there was opportunity for growth.

Mr. Link asked Ms. Thomas-Smith to share the name of the Facebook Page. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied the name of the page was Keene Partner City Committee. She said she would also email the link to the Committee. Chair Davis said she would email that link to Mr. Thormann for additional exposure.

Mr. Schoefmann made a motion to accept the Facebook Page update as informational. Mr. Russo seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

c) Delegation Visit Follow-Up
i. Conversational German-

Chair Davis asked the Committee if there were any additional thoughts on how to proceed with the German language lessons. She said the Mayor would appreciate a brush up on German when there was a delegation visit in order to have a friendly conversation. Ms. Thomas-Smith said she liked the idea of learning German in person and asked Ms. Hart if there was a resource online she recommended. Ms. Hart said she would definitely provide that information to the Committee. She continued she was still waiting to hear from the Committee what exactly was needed in terms of learning German. Ms. Hart said she emailed Modern Language Professor Alison Pantesco at KSC to combine their efforts since there was also a delegation with KSC.

Chair Davis thanked Ms. Hart for volunteering and said Ms. Hart would probably be inundated with requests as the KHS Exchange approached.

Ms. Parsells recommended having a lesson a few weeks prior to a visit for retention purposes. Ms. Hart agreed with Ms. Parsells recommendation.

ii. BBS School/Cheshire Career Center-Next Exchange

Vice Chair Mitchell reported the Cheshire Career Center was looking forward to the visit by the BBS School. He said the BBS School would be arriving at the end of September of 2017 through the beginning of October. Vice Chair Mitchell said the BBS School would like to bring 15 students and 2 adults. He noted they have had four formal meetings with instructors and discussed old budgets from the past exchanges. Vice Chair Mitchell said they have added new items to the visit and paired down the most successful and most well reported experiences by

way of the activities. He reported they would be visiting New York City, Kittery Maine, Portsmouth, KSC, KHS, the Keene Police Station and the Keene Fire Station.

Vice Chair Mitchell said there were families that had offered to host BBQ dinners. He noted these dinners were very popular and were nice experiences for the students.

Vice Chair Mitchell said the KHS Exchange Program with the BBS School was a good program two years ago and he was amazed at the progress of the current program.

Vice Chair Mitchell said he would be in touch with Ms. Hart prior to the visit to assist with the teaching of conversational German. He noted there were 5 teachers that were actively participating in hosting and was optimistic once there was a formal announcement hosting would fill up quickly. Chair Davis asked the duration of the visit. Vice Chair Mitchell replied it was a two week visit.

Ms. Parsells asked if the students in Germany were surveyed about the trip to New York City. She said she heard some of the students were disappointed when they went to New York City. Mr. Mitchell replied the BBS School wanted to go to New York City and stressed the importance of the trip.

iii. Einbeck Beer

Mr. Link expressed how Mayor Lane was anxious to have the Einbecker Beer brought to Keene. He explained all of the Einbecker Beer that comes to the United States is brought in through an importer. Mr. Link said the importer in the area is a company called B United that was located in Connecticut. He continued B United was not been able to find a distributor in New Hampshire they were willing to work with and he had been trying to find another distributor. Mr. Link noted that has not worked very well. He continued he spoke with a distributor that worked primarily with craft beers in Portsmouth and they felt there was not enough volume in order to make it a good investment. Mr. Link said he brought up all of the ideas and reasons to try and change their mind.

Mr. Link said his next step would be to go B United in Connecticut and find out what distributor they would be willing to work with in New Hampshire. He also wanted to find out if B United worked as a distributor as well as an importer. He noted those were the various conversations pending discussion.

Mr. Link said in May he hoped to travel with the Chorale Group to Einbeck. He continued he would meet with Mr. Thormann to hopefully get an opportunity to speak with Leadership at

Einbecker. Mr. Link said there was a new leader at Einbecker and their job was to work with the United States in order to get more imports to the United States. He continued no one in New Hampshire was able to sell Einbecker Beer until it was approved by the state and based on his understanding the process was long and expensive. Mr. Link said the missing link was getting the importer to work with a distributor in New Hampshire and he would continue that search.

Mr. Russo noted Clarke Distributor's in Keene was in the process of being sold and that Mr. Link should see if the new owner could be an option as a distributor.

Ms. Thomas-Smith made a motion to accept the Delegation Visit Follow-up report as informational. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schoefmann, which carried unanimously.

5) Communications-Letter from Daniel Brown

Chair Davis said Daniel Brown sent a letter to the Mayor with the recommendation of a German Christmas Market in replace of the Pumpkin Festival. She said in discussions with the Mayor she did not feel this was an event the PCC could organize. Chair Davis said the Mayor agreed but wanted the Committee to provide some feedback on the recommendation from Mr. Brown.

She explained to the Committee that a German Christmas Market was a street market and crafters made handmade items for Christmas. Chair Davis said this was a great idea and would like and organization committee to consider this event. Ms. Frink said if the PCC organized they would not be able to ask for their crafter sales. A discussion ensued on how the event would be set-up as a craft fair.

Ms. Hornbeck said a Christmas Market was not just about the crafts it was also an attraction to where there was food, specialty drinks and traditional singing and dancing. Mr. Russo recommended discussing the event with the Keene Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Schoefmann suggested holding the event at the time of the Tree Lighting Ceremony. The PCC agreed the event was a great idea but not an event the PCC could organize.

Ms. Mattson said she would make a recommendation to the Mayor to suggest having the idea of the Christmas Market be discussed with the Chamber of Commerce.

6) Reports

a) Treasurer's Report

Ms. Frink reported Sandra Howard made a \$70 donation and that Ms. Mattson was reimbursed for the raffle gifts. She reported between both accounts there was a balance of \$19,694.99.

Ms. Frink reported she received a \$400 invoice from the Cheshire Career Center. She continued she had still not received invoices from The Pub or the Fireworks Restaurant. Ms. Frink noted both had also not returned their W9's. Vice Chair Slack-Russell said she received a text message from the manager of Fireworks and that the check was available for pick-up. She noted she would contact the manager for a follow-up on the W9.

Ms. Mattson reported she had not received anything from The Pub and estimated the invoice would be approximately \$1,250. Chair Davis asked if the PCC approved enough funds. Ms. Mattson replied yes.

Vice Chair Mitchell noted the Cheshire Career Center was asked to hold the meal at the last minute and the arrangement was at a price of \$600. He said it was the generosity of the Cheshire Career Center to only charge \$400 for the meal. Vice Chair Mitchell noted Mr. Rogers took good care of the Committee. Ms. Mattson said a thank you note was sent to the Cheshire Career Center.

Vice Chair Mitchell made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report as informational. The motion was seconded by Ms. Parsells, which carried unanimously.

7) New Business

Charles Daloz - Agricultural access/land use idea exchange w/Einbeck

Chair Davis introduced Mr. Daloz to the PCC and explained he was in attendance to discuss the idea of an Agricultural Exchange with Einbeck. Mr. Daloz stated he was on the Agriculture Commission but was not in attendance officially. He continued it seemed Einbeck was a City that seemed to be similar to the City of Keene. Mr. Daloz said Einbeck may have some ideas that may be useful for Keene to consider in terms of importing food and if there were ways to improve the City's record of getting more local food. He noted he wanted to learn if Einbeck had Farmer's Markets. Vice Chair Russell-Slack asked Mr. Daloz if he had discussed an Einbeck Exchange with the Agriculture Commission. Mr. Daloz said there had not been enough people to make a quorum and had been awhile since their last meeting. Vice Chair Russell-Slack said she thought it would be a good idea to discuss a plan with the Agriculture Commission to make the request official.

Mr. Daloz said he also wanted to get a better understanding of the biomass in Germany, their solar situation and The City of Einbeck's ordinances. He continued he did not know the answers to these questions but wanted to come before the PCC to help point him in the right direction to find the answers. Ms. Hornebeck asked if it would be helpful for Mr. Daloz to speak with the PCC's counterpart in Germany and have a translator available to skype. Mr. Daloz replied yes. Chair Davis said skype would be a direct conversation in order to get his answers and there was no cost.

Chair Davis said she spoke with Mr. Thormann and he said once the questions are defined he can find right the right contact for Mr. Daloz. She continued suggesting Mr. Daloz come back to the Committee with the Agriculture Commission's backing so the request would become official. Vice Chair Russell-Slack said the Committee was interested once the Mr. Daloz got support to make that request official. Mr. Russo added that the exchange was a great idea and that an exchange of that nature exemplified the good use of the PCC. Chair Davis thanked Mr. Daloz for approaching the Committee.

Chair Davis proposed new business for the next meeting's agenda. She said Mr. Thormann expressed their desire to explore a dialogue or skype with the local American Red Cross chapter. Ms. Hornebeck said she was happy to assist with that facilitation. Chair Davis asked the Committee to reach out to any liaisons they may have with the American Red Cross in order to explore that dialogue.

8) **Next Meeting:** February 14, 2017

9) **Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Davis adjourned the meeting at 5:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jennifer Clark, Minute-taker
January 12, 2017