

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday December 8, 2015

4:30 PM City Hall, Second Floor Conference Room

Members Present

Staff Present

Chair Tom Link
Karen Parsells
Antje Hornbeck
Kathy Frink, Treasurer
John Mitchell
Steve Russo
Pam Russell

Members Not Present

Others Present

Irene Davis, Vice Chair
Dawn Thomas-Smith
John Maclean

1. Call to Order

Chair Link called the meeting to order at 4:32 PM and introduced the new Board Member Pam Russell.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting: November 10, 2015

Ms. Parsells made a motion to approve the minutes with the following corrections as per Ms. Thomas-Smith via email. Mr. Russo seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3. Board Business

a) Sharing Community News – media connections –

Ms. Hornbeck stated that there are no updates at this time. Chair Link asked what needs to be done. Ms. Hornbeck noted that she had sent the status of the subcommittee to Chair Link for his review and action items are currently needed from him. She continued asking if another meeting should occur to go over the items that need to be addressed. Chair Link agreed. Ms. Hornbeck asked Chair Link what day he is available. Chair Link stated that he, Ms. Hornbeck and Ms. Thomas-Smith will discuss this via email. Ms. Hornbeck invited all Members to join the group if desired. Chair Link updated Ms.

Russell on the meeting with the Keene Sentinel and educating the community on the partner city, Einbeck.

Ms. Parsells made a motion to approve the Sharing Community News Item as informational. Ms. Frink seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

b) Fund Raising Event –Promotional Ideas

Ms. Mattson stated that the new fiscal year begins in July but budget prep begins in January and the Committee can expect the \$5,000 on July 1st of 2016. Ms. Russell suggested presenting something to the City Council because there are five new members. She continued, asking if there are any City Council Members on the Committee. Chair Link stated that there has not been a Council Member for some time. Ms. Russell was concerned with this. Chair Link noted that Jay Kahn will be able to fill this role.

Chair Link stated that the Committee needs to look into additional funds and noted that some possibilities were discussed but there needs to be an on-going fundraising event. Chair Link stated that the Committee has been self-sufficient but in the past have been depended on the funds from the Pumpkin Festival. He continued, stating that the average fundraising from this event was a little over \$4,000 a year.

Chair Link stated that he has a contact with Livingston Taylor and thought that it would be a great fundraising opportunity to have him come to the Colonial Theater and sell tickets however he is coming in December so it won't work. Chair Link reminded the Committee of possibly selling holiday music CD's for the following year. Ms. Russell suggested a dinner with a sponsor and provides beer and music around the Oktoberfest season. She continued, stating that she could get a discount at Wilson Pond at Keene State College. Ms. Hornbeck stated that she can get the space for free because she works there. Ms. Russell stated that she recently went to a fundraising event for the Community Kitchen and the dinner sold out and raised almost \$8,000.

Chair Link noted that Ms. Thomas-Smith mentioned having a group of people or a sub-group to help raise funds. This group would range from 6-8 people and would work with the Committee. Ms. Russell asked if there is a list of people who were previously on the Partner City Committee. Ms. Mattson stated that she will look into this. Ms. Hornbeck suggested those that traveled to Einbeck as well.

Chair Link agreed that a German dinner would be a great fundraising event. Ms. Hornbeck stated that any event the Partner City Committee creates should also include public awareness as well. Chair Link stated that promoting the event with public service announcements and sending out mailings could address public awareness. Mr. Russo stated that if people do not hear enough about the Partner City Committee then they are not going to come to the dinner. He continued, noting that everyone knows about the Community Kitchen in Keene. Chair Link asked how many people can fit at Keene State College. Ms. Russell stated that it can fit as many people as needed because the tent can be extended. She continued, stating that a direct mailing may work as well. Ms. Russell asked if the Committee has a non-profit mailing. Ms. Mattson stated that postage would come out of the budget.

Chair Link stated it would be best to determine how much a band and caterer would cost in addition to the cost per ticket. He continued, noting that if it is prohibitive, people won't come. Ms. Parsells stated that she went to the Schnitzel Festival-it was free and each person pays for their beverage and food. She continued, stating that the event had different craft tables as well. Ms. Parsells noted that there were a lot of people in attendance. Chair Link stated that Einbeck has great beer but the state of New Hampshire does not allow the beer for distribution.

Ms. Russell stated that she will contact Keene State College and check space availability. She continued, stating that it would be best to be outside. Chair Link stated that getting a date would be best and suggested the end of September to the beginning of October. Chair Link noted that the Fall Festival will be around that time however.

Ms. Hornbeck stated that it would be great to find out what the Community Kitchen did to have such a successful event. Ms. Russell stated that they had sponsors and the Committee can reach out to sponsors like Brewtopia or the Pub. Ms. Hornbeck asked about the band at the event and if it will be an umpa band and stated concern about focusing on stereotypical items from Germany. She continued, stating that the Committee should focus on a broader range of German aspects. Ms. Parsells suggested Nelson Town Band. Mr. Russo noted that the Committee seems to be discussing two different options-one is to have people pay to get in and the other is to have people pay for food once inside the venue.

Chair Link noted that having an event is a lot of work and the Committee needs to decide if it will be financially beneficial. He continued, stating that the first step is to see what dates are available. Mr. Russo stated that the beer price needs to be discussed as well and have cost control. Ms. Parsells suggested using Heberton Hall. Chair Link stated concern because there are a lot more limitations and obstacles and the Committee would have to go through the city. Chair Link noted that The Pub Restaurant could help cater and they have a liquor license as well.

Chair Link stated that there are expenses with the exchange. Mr. Mitchell stated that there should be some kind of statement created to let people know where the funds go and how they impact people. Ms. Parsells stated that both companies and individuals want to know that the money stays in Keene and that airfare is not included. She continued, stating that Hannaford had this concern when asking to donate items. Mr. Russo noted that individuals at the Police Department and others around the community are not aware of this Committee. Ms. Russell was surprised and stated that is important to educate the community about the Committee. Chair Link stated that information on the Committee has been in the newspaper but this outreach must continue.

Mr. Mitchell stated that it will be easier to get a group or company to advertise if they have the information about funding first. He continued, stating that the Committee needs to let people know the money is for students. Ms. Russell stated that it would be interesting to know what the town officials who went to Einbeck have learned as well. Ms. Parsells agreed that it would have been nice to hear about the town official exchanges in the paper as well. Chair Link noted that these items should be shared with City Council as well. Ms. Russell stated that it is important to know keep updated as Einbeck news too. Chair Link noted that relationship and community building is a very important aspect of this Committee.

c) School Exchange – Keene/Einbeck – John

Mr. Mitchell stated that he has received some reports from the Einbeck students and he also passed in the books to the Committee treasurer along with a returned check. He continued, stating that Keene students traveling to Einbeck will now be staying for two weeks instead of one around the 15th of April. Chair Link stated that teachers visiting from Einbeck also suggested that it would be most beneficial for Keene students to stay for two weeks as well as Jim Logan.

Mr. Mitchell noted that this leads back to sharing Community News as well and the power to move people with these experiences. He continued, stating that for many years, a two-three week exchange has always been suggested. Chair Link restated from a previous meeting that a student from Keene had mentioned during the Einbeck Exchange that it was one of the most incredible experiences in his life. He continued, noting that at the Exchange dinner a young lady came to the table crying because she was so moved by the whole experience.

Mr. Mitchell stated that there will be 8 students and 2 adults traveling to Einbeck. Ms. Parsells asked which adults will be going. Mr. Mitchell replied that Andy Burns and Jane Graves have been chosen. He continued, stating that both have backup teachers in case they cannot attend. Mr. Mitchell noted that there is a backup student as well. Mr. Mitchell noted that the tickets will be interchangeable.

Mr. Russo made a motion the School Exchange Item as informational. Ms. Parsells seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

d) Facebook page – social media –Dawn

No update at this time.

e) Signs for Public awareness of Einbeck/Keene partnership

Chair Link stated that he sent an email to Kürt Blomquist from the Public Works Department. He continued, stating that Mr. Blomquist had specific ideas in mind with sign placement and once this is determined, he will report back to the Committee.

f) The Mendhelssohn School/Keene

Ms. Hornbeck stated that parent's paying airfare is presenting obstacles for the exchange at the moment and the Waldorf School is already very expensive. She continued stating that the decision deadline is December 15, 2015. Ms. Hornbeck stated that if the exchange happens, it will occur around the same time of Mr. Mitchell's exchange so activities can be bundled. Chair Link mentioned that it may be possible to get cheaper airfare if it is a large group flying at the same time. Ms. Hornbeck asked if there is a significant difference in price and stated that they are looking at around \$1,000 in April.

Ms. Hornbeck stated that she will have a definite answer at the next meeting. She noted that there needs to be at least 4-5 students that go over to Einbeck. Mr. Mitchell asked how many kids are

associated with music and at what level. Ms. Hornbeck stated that the level of music was not the focus for inviting students; it was more about creating connections. Mr. Mitchell suggested connecting to the Keene Middle School. Ms. Horneck stated that she did not have a connection and asked if Mr. Mitchell could provide one. Mr. Mitchell gave Ms. Hornbeck his number to continue this conversation.

4. New Membership:

Chair Link noted that both Jay Kahn and John Maclean are not official yet. He stated that these members may be added after January 1st.

5. Communications:

6. Reports:

a.) Treasurer Report – Kathy Frink

Ms. Frink stated that the balance is currently \$14,556.07 with no changes from last meeting. Ms. Parsells asked about the check from Mr. Mitchell. Ms. Frink stated that the check from Mr. Mitchell is not part of this number.

Mr. Mitchell made a motion to accept the Treasury Report. Mr. Russo seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

7. New Business:

8. Next Meeting: Next meeting date: January 12, 2015

9. More Time:

10. Adjournment

Chair Link adjourned the meeting at 5:21 PM

Respectfully submitted by:

Lana Bluege, Minute-taker

December 8, 2015