

ADOPTED

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

4:30 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall

Members Present:

Pam Russell-Slack, Chair
Kathy Frink
Karen Parsells
Antje Hornbeck
Kourt Blomquist
Dan Brown, Alternate
John Mitchell
Frank Richter

Staff Present:

Helen Mattson, Staff Liaison

Members Not Present:

Irene Davis, Vice Chair
Dawn Thomas-Smith
Councilor Gary Lamoureux
Will Schoefmann
Lily Hart, Alternate
Tom Link

1) **Call to Order**

Chair Russell-Slack called the meeting to order at 4:32 PM.

2) **Appointment of Alternates**

Mr. Blomquist made a motion to have alternates participate in the meeting as voting members, which was seconded by Ms. Parsells and carried unanimously.

3) **Minutes of the Previous Meeting – December 19, 2017**

Ms. Frink made a motion to accept the minutes of December 19, 2017, which was seconded by Ms. Parsells and carried unanimously.

4) **Board Business**

a. **Election of Officers**

Ms. Parsells made a motion to nominate Ms. Russell-Slack as Chair and Ms. Davis as Vice Chair, which was seconded by Mr. Blomquist and carried unanimously.

Ms. Parsells made a motion that Ms. Frink continues as Treasurer, which was seconded by Mr. Mitchell and carried unanimously.

b. PCC Operating Guidelines – Subcommittee Report

Chair Russell-Slack noted the subcommittee met to discuss the Committee operating guidelines, which are not yet finalized; three guidelines have been proposed so far. The Committee reviewed the proposed guidelines:

1. A Partner City Committee (PCC) sanctioned event is one where as a formal invitation have been extended to the entity. (i.e. PCC Einbeck Officials).

The Committee agreed this is an efficient and clear statement that addresses questions from the previous meeting.

2. The Mayors offices need to send/receive official invitations, which are then added to the PCC agenda to be voted on.
 - a. All requests will be reviewed by the PCC and all will do a physical proposal. Proposals will be reviewed and then notified if accepted for that physical year.

Chair Russell-Slack noted Mayor Lane just received an official invitation and has accepted, which prompted the addition of point 2.a. She said the purpose of guideline 2 is to clarify that if a group wants to visit they must present a written and oral proposal to the Committee; this way the Committee can make an informed decision as to if it is an official visit. It is an official visit if a member of either the Keene or Einbeck PCC is a part of the visit. Keene is visiting Einbeck in October 2018 and Chair Russel-Slack is unsure when the Einbeck delegation will visit Keene in 2019.

The Committee agreed this guideline should be reworded to say something similar to the following: “All requests will be reviewed by the PCC and all will present a written and oral proposal.” The subcommittee will work further to define a timeline for proposals to be submitted and reviewed.

Mr. Richter asked if there should to be better clarification on the term “physical year.” Mr. Blomquist replied if it were from a financial standpoint it would refer to the fiscal year; a Committee budget and proposal timeline would be based on the physical year. Mr. Richter suggested “Committee year” may be a better than physical year. Mr. Blomquist replied the Committee year is the same as the physical year; in finalizing this guideline it will be based on the timeline for which the Committee wants to review and approve proposals.

Ms. Parsells noted a choral group is coming to visit KSC and clarified that would have to come before to Committee to determine if that is an official visit, because they intend to

have some delegates travel with the group. Mr. Blomquist at Chair Russell-Slack replied yes, the Committee will decide if that is an official visit because it could constitute funding. The Committee usually participates in funding formal visits; if it is determined to not be a formal visit, then the group can make a request for funding, which would require a proposal.

3. All proposals should be submitted at a date to be determined by the PCC or by an appointed subcommittee.

Mr. Richter asked if this would be more appropriate as point 2.b. as opposed to 3. He said if money is proposed now for 2019 or 2020, there is a physical time for proposals within a separate fiscal year. Chair Russell-Slack agreed.

Ms. Hornbeck suggested adding a precedent that when proposals are submitted they will be treated as new even if the Committee has funded a proposal for that group in the past; just because it is something the Committee has done before does not mean they are obligated to do so again.

Mr. Brown said the Mayor of Einbeck may be coming with the choral group; he asked if KSC is a separate entity from the Committee. Chair Russell-Slack replied yes, and therefore the college would have to submit a proposal for funding that visit. Formal visits between the Mayors are always budgeted, but there are also discretionary funds the Committee can be allocated for other activities. Mr. Blomquist said KSC hopes the choral group visit will be treated as an official visit because the Mayor of Einbeck will attend. The entire chorus would not be treated as a formal delegation, only the visitors from the Einbeck PCC. Mr. Brown asked if there should be a KSC representative on this Committee. Ms. Mattson replied that Sandra Howard sat in on this Committee and presented a budget for the chorus activity. Mr. Blomquist said there are many groups doing Partner City related activities and anyone can make a recommendation to the Mayor for additional Committee members.

Ms. Parsells noted she is uncomfortable voting on a proposal when the presenter is in front of the Committee. Mr. Richter asked if the Committee can deliberate proposals privately (e.g. ask the proposers to leave the room). Mr. Blomquist replied no, there are very strict guidelines for a non-public session; Committee meetings are open to the public so they could not ask proposers to leave for deliberation. Mr. Mitchell suggested the deliberation can take place at a subsequent meeting; Mr. Blomquist agreed the guidelines will make it clear that presenters will not receive an immediate response and they will be notified within a certain timeframe. That timeframe can be discussed with the subcommittee timeline discussion.

- c. **Mixed Group Exchange**
 - i. **Determine date for Einbeck visit to Keene**

The Keene delegation is visiting Einbeck October 12-20, 2018 and the Einbeck delegation is set to visit Keene in 2019. Ms. Frink noted they have proposed October 3-

11, 2019. Chair Russell-Slack said it is premature to finalize those dates for 2019 and suggested moving that discussion to the February agenda for Board Business.

The Committee agreed on the following for the February meeting agenda:

- Move agenda item 9.a. (under more time) to Board Business, which should be combined with the current agenda items 4.a-c.

ii. **Define group and set up contact list for Mixed Group Exchange (Refer to Dan's suggestions)**

This list of contacts refers to the mixed group exchange for October 2018. The Mayor has accepted an invitation for October 12-20, 2018. Councilor Lamoureux will attend; Councilor Hansel will also attend as a Council member and as a business representative for Filtrene. Mayor Lane would like to extend an invitation to a representative from Savings Bank of Walpole because they have supported the Committee; he is unsure if they will accept. In addition to the list of Mr. Brown's suggestions listed in the meeting packet, the Mayor is also considering business representatives from Hanna Grimes, Prime Roast, C&S, Bensonwood, and Hamblet Electric. Chair Russell-Slack, Ms. Davis, and Mr. Blomquist will represent the Committee on this visit. Mr. Schoefmann is interested but unsure he can attend; Chair Russell-Slack said when the decisions are made the Committee will need a firm commitment from all attendees.

Ms. Parsells asked if these contacts will receive letters from the Mayor. Chair Russell-Slack replied yes, a letter and subsequent phone call. Ms. Parsells also noted the Committee is interested in agricultural knowledge exchange with Einbeck, which Chair Russell-Slack agreed would be excellent. Charles Daloz of the Agricultural Commission said he would like to learn more about agriculture in Einbeck to make a decision on who would be the best representative from the Agricultural Commission to attend. He said this comes at an early stage of agricultural revitalization in Keene and there is a long way to go to ensure they can learn from Einbeck. Mr. Blomquist said it is less about what Keene can learn from Einbeck agriculture right now and more about developing contacts to consult moving forward. This is not a topic the Committee has explored before and this would also be a new exchange for Einbeck; their main business is KWS. Mr. Daloz will do more research and report back to the PCC in February. This will be on the February agenda.

Ms. Parsells said she thinks C&S should be contacted first because of what they have contributed to Committee fundraising in the past.

5) **Communications**

a. **New donation to PCC received - \$100.00**

Ms. Mattson said the Mayor will be sending a thank you letter to Peter and Elizabeth Hansel from Filtrene for this donation. Councilor Hansel was invited to visit Einbeck before this donation was received. The Committee can accept this donation without it

going to the FOP Committee because City code provides the Committee authorization to accept donations.

Mr. Blomquist made a motion to accept the donation from Peter and Elizabeth Hansel, which was seconded by Mr. Brown and carried unanimously.

6) Reports

a. Treasurer Report

Ms. Frink reported there is \$18,521.58 in the original account, which includes a \$100 donation from Savings Bank of Walpole and a \$50 donation from Martha Landry. There is \$4,943.83 in the appropriated account. Total in the account is \$23,465.41. This total does not include the Filtrene donation.

Ms. Parsells made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report, which was seconded by Ms. Hornbeck and carried unanimously.

7) New Business

a. Discuss setting an annual PCC Budget for funding support

Mr. Blomquist said the Committee has two sources of funds: \$17,000 unrestricted funds and \$5,000 restricted funds from the City from property taxes. The restricted funds are appropriated by Council every July 1 and the Committee must follow rules for use of those funds. Ms. Mattson noted the Committee must write a letter to Council requesting those funds again, which she can draft for the Chair to sign. Chair Russell-Slack asked that this year's visit be included in that letter as well. Mr. Blomquist said the Committee has three years to use those funds and will likely spend it all. He asked what the Committee would like to designate as categories for expenses; the Committee discussed the following categories:

- Visits
 - Expenditures for official visits – average cost
 - Expenditures for outside groups – like schools (high school and KSC) or soccer teams; this ties into the proposal process through which the Committee will determine appropriate expenditures
 - Information is missing to determine if the chorus visit will be an official visit; we need to know who is coming.

It can be stated within the budget guidelines that the Committee can reallocate funds as it deems necessary as long as the Committee's intent is met. Mr. Brown asked if something should also be included about fundraising. Mr. Blomquist said there will be an expense and revenue budget; the revenue budget includes how much the Committee wants to fundraise each year, which dictates a whole other list of activities. The Committee is not a non-profit so there is no cap on fundraising.

Mr. Blomquist continued the Committee will need to decide what part of the budget is designated for the official visit annually or biannually. Then the Committee will

determine how much funding to designate for other visits, like the school and soccer activities. There are other activities to then consider like the KSC chorus visit. The Committee may want to designate funds for other activities they are not yet aware of that could come in during the year. Mr. Brown noted there are historical budget logs to have an average idea of future expenses; Chair Russell-Slack replied yes, but what was spent in the past is likely not the same as it would cost now. Mr. Brown replied there are at least building blocks for planning. Mr. Blomquist said a challenge is deciding how the Committee wants to address new funding requests.

Chair Russell-Slack suggested a Budget Subcommittee to work on this. Ms. Frink, Mr. Mitchell, and Mr. Brown agreed to be on this subcommittee. Mr. Blomquist said the goal is to help the Committee determine how much fundraising is necessary annually. The first step is to define what we will spend money on; we know there is an official visit biannually and there is a good record of that spending. Then we will have to determine if there will be recurring funds available for new activities that come to the Committee. Ms. Hornbeck recalled if the Committee continuously supports the same causes then new causes do not have an opportunity, which is not fair. Mr. Blomquist said that is a policy decision for the Committee if they want to set a precedent that funding once does not guarantee future funding. Mr. Hornbeck agreed they should be expected to propose funding requests for reevaluation every year. Ms. Parsells said the Committee has to decide what they want to support. The subcommittee will report back in March or April. Mr. Blomquist said it will be good if this is finalized by June and this will make budgeting in subsequent years much easier. This will be placed on the agenda for more time.

8) Next Meeting Date – February 13, 2018

Agenda Items:

- October 2018 Einbeck visit details
- Begin discussion on mixed group KSC program
- School exchange

Chair Russell-Slack will meet with Mayor Lane to better understand his process for inviting people to the Einbeck visit in October; she will share those details with the Committee via email. Ms. Mattson will ensure the Mayor has the contact list.

9) Adjournment

Ms. Parsells made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Mitchell and carried unanimously.

Hearing no further business, Chair Russell-Slack adjourned the meeting at 5:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker