

**CITY OF KEENE  
PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE  
AGENDA**

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

5:00 pm to 6:00 pm

2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall



1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call – Appoint Alternates (if required)**
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** November 8, 2022
4. **Board Business:**
  - a.) Update – Student exchange – October Delegation – Elizabeth Cardine – *John*
  - b.) Update – Rotary exchange – October Delegation – Yves Gakunde
  - c.) KSC Music Department – Music Exchanges 2023 – Sandra Howard
  - d.) PCC Exchange Survey/Facebook updates.
  - e.) Future Exchange Ideas – *Will/John*
5. **Communications:**
6. **Reports:**
  - a) Treasurer Report
7. **New Business:**
  - a) Discuss additional guidelines/expectations to be added for people from Keene traveling to Einbeck.
  - b) Discuss next exchange time frame for drafting invitation letter to Einbeck Mayor.
8. **Next Meeting:** Next meeting is January 10, 2023
9. **More Time:**
  - a) Fundraising Ideas/Opportunities
  - b) Pumpkin Fest participation for next year.
  - c) Planning for “Taste of Keene” for next year. Brats and Kraut sales – potential free use of grill and donation for brats and kraut, volunteers.
10. **Adjournment**

1 City of Keene  
2 New Hampshire  
3

4 PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE  
5 MEETING MINUTES  
6  
7

Tuesday, November 8, 2022 5:00 PM 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
City Hall

**Members Present:**

John Mitchell, Chair  
William Schoefmann, Vice Chair  
Councilor Michael Giacomo  
Mari Brunner  
Kürt Blomquist  
Doris McCollester

**Staff Present:**

Helen Mattson, Executive Assistant

**Members Not Present:**

Dawn Thomas-Smith  
Mayor George Hansel  
Gregg Kleiner

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10 **1) Call to Order**

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12 Chair Mitchell called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

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14 **2) Roll Call – Appoint Alternates (if required)**

15  
16 Roll call was conducted. Chair Mitchell welcomed a guest who has expressed an interest in the  
17 committee and is here to observe the meeting and see if this is a group he would like to be  
18 involved with.

19  
20 **3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting: September 20, 2022**

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22 Mr. Blomquist made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 20, 2022.  
23 Councilor Giacomo seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

24  
25 **4) Board Business**

26 A) **Update – October Delegation – Keene to Einbeck – John**  
27

28 Chair Mitchell reported that he, and everyone he interacted with, had a fabulous time in Einbeck.  
29 He spoke of how the trip helped build honest bonds and connections among people. He thinks  
30 the trip was a terrific success.

31  
32 Councilor Giacomo stated that for the future, the PCC needs to establish expectations that are  
33 well understood by everyone attending the trip. He continued that he is specifically referring to  
34 the need for people from Keene to stay with the tour, when it is a tour people from Einbeck have  
35 thoughtfully put together for them, and to not say negative things or veer off on their own. His  
36 host family, who organized the Berlin tour, were hurt by conversations they overheard.  
37 Discussion ensued about the importance of respecting the time and energy the hosts put in.

38  
39 Ms. Brunner stated that she had an amazing time on the trip. She continued that her hosts went  
40 all out, and showed her an amazing time, which made her think a lot about how hosts in Keene  
41 need to do something great in return for people from Einbeck when they come here. She spoke  
42 about the potential for further school connections.

43  
44 Mr. Schoefmann spoke positively about his experiences on the trip as well. He continued that he  
45 agrees with Chair Mitchell's point that the PCC needs to work to make the experience special  
46 when people from Einbeck come here. He was excited by the headway and the establishment of  
47 planned exchanges.

48  
49 Chair Mitchell stated that he agrees with Councilor Giacomo's concerns, and agrees that they  
50 have work to do. Discussion continued. Mr. Schoefmann spoke regarding how meaningful the  
51 time in Berlin was to him, and how he was so grateful to the organizers. Mr. Blomquist stated  
52 that the PCC has already written guidelines/expectations for Keene hosts, and it would be  
53 appropriate for them to write additional guidelines for people from Keene traveling to Einbeck.  
54 He continued that the trips to Einbeck sometimes include invited people who are not part of the  
55 PCC and are maybe experiencing something like this for the first time. Written guidelines on  
56 what to expect would be helpful.

57  
58 **B) Update – Stonewall Farm Oktoberfest - opportunity to participate – past**  
59 **members' availability for Saturday, October 8 - John**  
60

61 Chair Mitchell stated that the PCC is indebted to the spouses of former members who put on an  
62 excellent show. He continued that Oktoberfest was a big success, with over 1,000 people. Fred  
63 Parsells and his wife worked hard that day, and garnered some support for the PCC. Stonewall  
64 Farm welcomes the PCC's participation next year in a prime spot, and they will be able to sell  
65 food. The PCC should recognize and remember that they have a lot of support outside of the  
66 committee.

67  
68 Mr. Schoefmann stated that it sounds like it is the first item on the PCC's community events and  
69 fundraising calendar that will be created. Ms. Mattson stated that the event was wonderful and  
70 she and her grandchildren had a great time. She spoke about how there was good food, but not a

71 lot of food, and long lines, which indicates that the PCC would do well selling food here.  
72 Discussion ensued, and Councilor Giacomo agreed with Ms. Mattson's points.

73  
74 **C) Discuss Planning "Taste of Keene" for next year. Brats and Kraut sales –**  
75 **potential free use of grill and donation for brats and kraut, volunteers.**

76  
77 Chair Mitchell stated that they will put this on more time.

78  
79 **D) PCC Exchange Survey/Facebook Updates**

80  
81 Ms. Brunner stated that she shared a post that someone else did. Ms. Mattson replied that she  
82 thought the photos came from Yves [Gakunde]. Ms. Brunner replied no, it was someone else's  
83 post. Ms. Mattson replied that they should probably post something on the Facebook page. Ms.  
84 Brunner replied that she did not want to be on her own doing it. Ms. Mattson stated that the  
85 photos she saw were shared on the Keene, NH site; it is great publicity. Mr. Schoefmann  
86 suggested that he and Ms. Brunner draft something together.

87  
88 **E) Future Exchange Ideas – Brewery and Rugby and Other New Connections –**  
89 **Will/John**

90  
91 Chair Mitchell stated that before they get into future exchange ideas, there is an upcoming  
92 exchange to talk about – Karen Seltzer [?] is coming around March 25, with close to 30 people,  
93 for about three days. She has a youth choir and has toured the US several times. He continued  
94 that Sandra Howard will come to the December PCC meeting, because she will be helping to  
95 host the choir group. She will bring a budget and plan of events to the PCC for discussion, and  
96 they will see if the PCC can provide some support. The Parsells family has offered five beds to  
97 help with this, and there might be a need for three or four more beds, if the PCC can think of a  
98 way to help Ms. Howard, short of spending money on a hotel. He has asked Ms. Howard to  
99 share with the PCC what kind of fundraising she has done in the past two months.

100  
101 Mr. Blomquist stated that the PCC needs to think about what kind of support they can offer in  
102 these types of situations – for example, whether the PCC would host a lunch for visitors from  
103 Einbeck versus giving cash. Chair Mitchell replied that he thinks that instead of asking for a  
104 dollar amount, Ms. Howard will show them the plan and see if the PCC can fill in some gaps.  
105 PCC members responded that they like that approach. Chair Mitchell stated that Ms. Howard  
106 will be traveling to Einbeck from May 8 to 15, and that is on her – she will hopefully have data  
107 on what her plans are – but again, Einbeck Voices will be here a couple months later.

108  
109 Chair Mitchell stated that in addition, Keene will be hosting an exchange. He continued that  
110 while the Keene delegation was in Germany, they offered two dates – June or later in the fall.  
111 People from Einbeck have reported that they would like to travel in the fall, which is when they  
112 have typically traveled. He will write a rough draft of an invitation and bring it to the December

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113 PCC meeting for the committee to review. Mr. Blomquist asked if the Keene Mayor sends that  
114 to the Einbeck Mayor. Ms. Mattson replied yes.

115  
116 Ms. Brunner asked if the visit in the fall will overlap with Octoberfest. Chair Mitchell replied  
117 that they do not know yet. Discussion ensued about the timing and the possibilities. Mr.  
118 Blomquist stated that at the PCC's January meeting they will need to start thinking about putting  
119 together a schedule of what they need to do, by when. Chair Mitchell replied that they will not  
120 send the invitation until they know for sure when people from Einbeck would like to come. He  
121 continued that he will make sure that is arranged in the next month. Ms. Brunner stated that it  
122 would be great if they could come right when Pumpkin Fest is starting, October 21.

123  
124 Chair Mitchell reported that pen pals are on. He continued that three (Einbeck) students sent pen  
125 pal information back, which has been given to Fuller School. That should be starting on its own.

126  
127 Chair Mitchell stated that at the December meeting, he expects Sandra Howard to be here, and  
128 contacted Elizabeth Cardine asking her to come as well, to report out on her progress with the  
129 student exchange. He continued that he hopes she can give the PCC a five- to ten-minute update.  
130 It looks like German students would like to come to Keene in October 2023. This will be  
131 something the PCC can help with, but hopefully most of it is in kind. Keene students plan to  
132 travel to Germany in 2024. It is nice to see this moving again.

133  
134 Chair Mitchell stated that it looks like the soccer exchange is for 2024. He spoke with the  
135 Germans during this trip and they do not believe they could put a team together any sooner than  
136 that. According to Wally Secord, the next visit should be Einbeck to Keene. Mr. Blomquist  
137 asked if there is a person in Keene working on the soccer exchange. Chair Mitchell replied yes,  
138 a person who works part of her day at Stonewall Farm, and they are very excited. She has been  
139 working with Mr. Secord, and he has offered to give her a lot of support. She seems to  
140 appreciate the scope of the work and she is working methodically. She has a good connection  
141 with the indoor soccer facility in Swanzey.

142  
143 Mr. Schoefmann stated that he did not get much into the brewery side of things, but Albert  
144 Thormann can help with that. Councilor Giacomo stated that he chatted with him a bit about  
145 it, and Einbeck has a very different setup than Keene, with no microbreweries. Mr. Schoefmann  
146 agreed and stated that it is more about getting exposure for people in Keene to the oldest brewery  
147 in the world, for a starting point. He continued that Wulf (Miessling) will help him reach  
148 out to the Einbeck rugby club, as a middleman. He is drafting an email to one of the club  
149 members. There was also talk of people's interest in bicycle tourism, golf, and dance, as other  
150 exchange focus points.

151  
152 Chair Mitchell stated that Karen Saltzer is coming here from Germany with her youth choir and  
153 has no one to partner with as an exchange counterpart. He continued that she is bringing young  
154 people who are singers, approximately ages 12-18. Who could she partner with here? Mr.  
155 Blomquist replied that they could ask the KSC choir folks if they know of local youth choirs.

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156 Discussion ensued. Mr. Schoefmann stated that he will reach out to Shannon Huntley, who may  
157 have someone he could talk to. Mr. Blomquist stated that he wonders if it has yet been  
158 determined where the youth choir from Germany will sing here. Chair Mitchell replied that Ms.  
159 Saltzer has been working on that with Ms. Howard, but Ms. Howard has her own group, The  
160 Voices, so she has just picked this up as doing more than her share. Maybe the PCC should try  
161 to work something else for Ms. Saltzer with her youth choir, so that they have a partner. He  
162 wonders about MoCo Arts. Discussion continued about MoCo and other local possibilities or  
163 people to reach out to, such as asking the KHS music department if they know of any  
164 resources/groups to connect with.

165  
166 Mr. Schoefmann asked Chair Mitchell how he wants to divvy this up, so they are not just leaving  
167 this hanging until the next agenda. He continued that he can talk with someone in the [Alliance  
168 Club? Lion's Club?]. Chair Mitchell replied that Corey Cook [??] is his neighbor, so he can ask  
169 about his stepdad, and he will try and contact someone at the high school. Mr. Blomquist stated  
170 that he will connect with someone at MoCo Arts. Discussion continued.

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171  
172 Chair Mitchell asked if Mr. Schoefmann has anything more right now. Mr. Schoefmann replied  
173 that if people from Einbeck come to Keene in the fall that is ideal for exposing them to rugby,  
174 because the season kicks off in September. Mr. Blomquist replied that potentially October 20 to  
175 27 could be the official exchange; they could look at what is going on during that timeframe.  
176 Ms. Brunner stated that Boston, MA or Portland, ME would potentially be nice places to bring  
177 Einbeck visitors to. Discussion continued. Mr. Blomquist recommended that everyone write  
178 their ideas down, so they have them. Chair Mitchell stated that the first step is to find out what  
179 dates Einbeck wants for sure. He continued that he can bring that information to the December  
180 meeting, and they can work on their invitation letter. After that, what Ms. Brunner is talking  
181 about, figuring out the activities and logistics, will be the focus. Mr. Schoefmann added that it  
182 could be a subcommittee/working group.

183  
184 Ms. Brunner asked if the PCC could propose the dates of October 20 to 27 to the Einbeck  
185 delegation. Chair Mitchell replied yes. Mr. Blomquist replied that they should keep in mind that  
186 (Keene) people will be involved in the other festival (Pumpkinfest)(Octoberfest?), so they need  
187 to make sure they have enough people and resources to manage the Einbeck visit. He continued  
188 that another question to think about is what they want to emphasize as the exchange idea/theme.  
189 It used to be more economically oriented, with people from Keene and Einbeck visiting each  
190 other's businesses, for example. Once they determine the theme, they can integrate in activity  
191 ideas like going to Portland or Boston. Discussion ensued about past visits that Keene has  
192 hosted and potential themes. Ms. Brunner stated that if part of the purpose of the official  
193 exchanges are to make connections for potential other types of exchanges, that is helpful – they  
194 could do a little bit of rugby, a little bit of dance, and so on and so forth, and try to foster the  
195 ideas and connections and see what pans out. Others agreed.

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197 **5) Communications**

199 Chair Mitchell stated that he has already shared the communications he has had. He asked if  
200 anyone else had communications to share. Hearing none, he moved to the next agenda item.  
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202 **6) Reports**

203 **A) Treasurer's Report**  
204

205 Ms. Mattson stated that she printed out Mr. Kleiner's report, since he was unable to attend today.  
206 She continued that the good news is that the Partner City appropriation account is up to \$12,000.  
207 They got a \$7,000 appropriation on July 1, which the City Council voted for. Left in their  
208 miscellaneous account is \$18,840.90, which includes the expense for the magical history tour  
209 paintings that they gifted to the Mayor of Einbeck. ~~sent out.~~  
210

211 Ms. McColester asked how Einbeck received Keene's gift. Chair Mitchell replied that it was a  
212 very good experience; the gifts were very well received. Councilor Giacomo stated that the  
213 Walldogs murals in Keene were not up when Einbeck last visited, so it will be great to be able to  
214 show them to the Einbeck visitors when they come in the fall.  
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216 **7) New Business**

217 **A) Music Exchanges/Sandra Howard – For next agenda (December)**  
218

219 Chair Mitchell stated that Sandra Howard will be coming to the December meeting, and  
220 hopefully Elizabeth Cardine, and he would like to invite Yves [Gakunde, of the Keene Elm City  
221 Rotary] as well to give a three-minute update on the work he observed and how that worked out.  
222 How the PCC helped facilitate that, and the value of that, should not be underestimated. The  
223 Rotary did a lot of work to raise over \$10,000 to help displaced Ukrainians in Einbeck, and Ms.  
224 Mattson directed them to the PCC, and within a couple hours, Mr. Gakunde was able to be in  
225 contact with the Mayor of Einbeck. Members of the PCC knew the Mayor and even the banker  
226 that the money went to. It was very positive, because those connections were already in place  
227 and able to be used. Mr. Blomquist stated that Einbeck has a Lion's Club, so another potential  
228 connection could be between the Lion's Clubs and Rotary Clubs.  
229

230 Chair Mitchell stated that something for the next agenda is: some great people went on the trip to  
231 Einbeck, and if the PCC is not careful, they might lose track of them when it comes to the  
232 hosting process. He wonders if the PCC can come up with some creative ways to maintain  
233 connections with those people and maintain their enthusiasm for being hosts/involved with the  
234 Einbeck visit to Keene. Mr. Schoefmann suggested a gathering at Chair Mitchell's house. Chair  
235 Mitchell replied that if someone could figure something like that out on Facebook, maybe  
236 quarterly, he would be glad to host it or someone else could. He continued that it would be great  
237 for them all to meet regularly. It has been a while since the PCC had this much on their plate,  
238 and it seems like the plate will continue to fill. This is a good thing, but it would be helpful to  
239 spend time together more frequently than once a month for an hour. Mr. Blomquist suggested  
240 they have an evening follow-up with the people who went, maybe first thing in the New Year, to  
241 encourage their continued interest in planning and hosting. Discussion continued.

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- 8) **Next Meeting – next meeting is December 13, 2022**
  - 9) **More Time**
    - A) **Discuss Keene Sentinel’s James Rinker, digital community engagement journalist – Media Opportunities to help promote PCC events and exchanges**
    - B) **Fundraising Ideas/Opportunities**
    - C) **KSC Music Department – interest in exchange for 2023 (KSC to Einbeck)**
    - D) **Pumpkin Fest participation for next year**

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253

10) **Adjournment**

254 There being no further business, Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 5:48 PM.

255  
256 Respectfully submitted by,  
257 Britta Reida, Minute Taker

258  
259 Reviewed and edited by,  
260 Helen Mattson, Staff Liaison Staff Member(s) Name(s), Title(s)

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