

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, June 8, 2021**

**5:00 PM**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room**  
**City Hall**

**Members Present:**

John Mitchell, Chair  
William Schoefmann, Vice Chair  
Mayor George Hansel  
Councilor Michael Giacomo  
Dawn Thomas-Smith  
Mari Brunner  
Dr. Delene White  
Gregg Kleiner

**Staff Present:**

Helen Mattson, Executive Assistant

**Members Not Present:**

Kürt Blomquist, Ex-Officio  
Lena Kridlo

**1) Call to Order**

Chair Mitchell read a prepared statement explaining how the Emergency Order #12, pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04 issued by the Governor of New Hampshire, waives certain provisions of RSA 91-A (which regulates the operation of public body meetings) during the declared COVID-19 State of Emergency. He called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM.

**2) Roll Call: Appoint Alternates (if required)**

Roll call was conducted. Chair Mitchell welcomed Gregg Kleiner, new member, to the committee. He continued that they are all looking forward to meeting in person next month.

**3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting: May 11, 2021**

Ms. Thomas-Smith made a motion to approve the minutes of May 11, 2021. Mr. Schoefmann seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

**4) Board Business**

**A) Introduction of New Member: Gregory Kleiner**

Gregg Kleiner introduced himself and stated that he became interested in this committee because he is German, with both of his sets of grandparents having emigrated from Germany. He was fascinated to learn, when he moved to Keene, that Keene's partner city is in Germany.

**B) Student Pen-Pal Ideas: High School 16-18 year olds**

Chair Mitchell stated that he has nothing to report. He asked Ms. Thomas-Smith if there was any news from the middle school about this. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied no.

**C) Fundraising Ideas/Opportunities**

***a) Survey Gmail address for sharing (donate button has been created)***

Mr. Schoefmann stated that due to preparing for the Taste of Keene event, he did not have time for this. He continued that he will try to do this tomorrow.

***b) Update on Fundraiser, "Taste of Keene" food and beer festival***

Chair Mitchell stated that he thinks this was a terrific success. He asked the Mayor to speak to the City's understanding of how this went. Mayor Hansel replied that from the City's perspective he thinks it went about as well as it possibly could have. He continued that he is very appreciative of the Keene Young Professionals Network (KYPN) and the PCC for contributing to the event, and all of the volunteers. He does not know what the total is for what they might have earned, but maybe Councilor Giacomo does.

Councilor Giacomo stated that from the KYPN's perspective, and virtually everyone's perspective who knew anything about it, it was an overwhelming success. They were hoping for 1,000 to 2,000 people and probably it was more than double that number. He continued that the KYPN has not quite finished all the final math; they are trying to make sure they have all of their expenses in order. It looks like the PCC's share of the total ticket sales will be a little over \$500.

Chair Mitchell stated that it was a very positive experience and it was nice to have all of the committee working together, and that was reflected in the community as well. He continued that there were many happy people and it seemed like everyone was good-natured and had a good time. Councilor Giacomo stated that people have been talking to him about the event and the only brewery booth anyone has mentioned by name is the PCC/Einbecker. Everyone really liked it. Discussion continued about the success of the event. Councilor Giacomo stated that besides the money raised, the event was great exposure for the PCC. Many people do not really know what the Partner City program is, so it was great for them to have faces to connect it with. Mr. Schoefmann agreed, and added that some people were interested and stopped by because they have a German connection of some sort. He continued that it was definitely worthwhile, if only for the PR. Chair Mitchell replied

yes, the PR was fully as good as the financial return. It was good to hear how many people already knew about the PCC, but it was also good to spread the word to others who were not aware.

Councilor Giacomo asked how the raffle went. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they got about \$82 from the raffle. He continued that Ms. Mattson has some names and phone numbers and will do follow-up phone calls so winners can accept their prizes. Many people said they did not care about the prizes and just wanted to donate. Ms. Mattson replied that she will not know until she calls them. Dr. White stated that a number of people just donated money, too.

Chair Mitchell stated that it was a very positive experience. He continued that that is what the old Pumpkin Festival and other fundraisers used to be like – a lot of fun for PCC members to participate, and a lot of fun meeting people from the public and letting them know what the exchange is about. And everyone chips in so the clean-up goes quickly, and they are left looking forward to the next one.

### *c) **Holiday Market***

Chair Mitchell stated that he is not expecting any progress, since they have been so busy with everything else, but he asked if Ms. Brunner had any more thoughts about the holiday market for today. Ms. Brunner replied that they are going to put the holiday market on hold for this year. She continued that she has not talked with Mr. Schoefmann and Dr. White about it yet, but her sense is that it will be on hold. She will be going on maternity leave in about 4 weeks, and the fact that they have not met in the last couple of months means they are probably looking at this as a longer-term idea. But they are all still really excited about it. They will keep this on the back burner.

### **5) Future Exchange Ideas**

Chair Mitchell stated that he knows there were some rugby players at the beer festival area [at the recent fundraiser], and he thanks Mr. Schoefmann for bringing them. He continued that they were polite and professional and worked hard to help the PCC. If they are representative of who the PCC could send as exchange people, they would be a good face for Keene. They were great people to have around and he is grateful.

### **6) Discuss Promotional Activities/Media Opportunities to Help Promote PCC Events and Exchanges**

Chair Mitchell asked if Ms. Thomas-Smith had any updates. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied not at this time. She continued that they have the calendar as a go-to, if they wanted to look at that again to review opportunities and planning, if that helps guide their future direction.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that Ms. Brunner got a post out ahead of the event. He continued that he does not know what kind of impact it had, but it was good to be able to do a little outreach on the fly. Ms. Brunner replied that they reached over 600 people with that post. Brief discussion ensued about the sharing of social media posts.

Dr. White stated that she took a few photos at the event, if that is helpful. Ms. Mattson replied that she took a couple as well that can be shared. She continued that she can try posting a photo on Facebook. Chair Mitchell stated that a photo of Ms. Mattson and Lena Kridlo at the booth went out to Jürgen Herbst and Albert Thormann.

Ms. Brunner asked if they should announce the raffle winners on Facebook, if the winners are willing to be recognized. Ms. Mattson replied yes, as long as they have accepted the prize and give permission for their names to be shared.

**7) Communications**

**A) Email From Einbeck – Update About Resuming Exchanges**

Chair Mitchell stated that with the exception of sending the email with the update about the fundraiser and some photographs to Germany, he is not aware of any communications. He asked if Ms. Mattson is. Ms. Mattson replied no, just the email that he forwarded to her, saying that Einbeck wants to put off visits until July 2022. She continued that she put that in the agenda packet for everyone to read.

**8) Reports**

**A) Treasurer Report**

Dr. White stated that they talked about the numbers earlier. She continued that the “46” account is down \$300, because they used \$300 for the fundraising event purchases. They do not yet have the total amount they brought in from beer sales. Councilor Giacomo replied that the KYPN will have a check going to the PCC this week. He asked if he should bring it to Ms. Mattson. Ms. Mattson replied yes, and she can put it in the account, along with the excess cash and the raffle money. Dr. White stated that in addition, they made \$82 from raffle sales/donations.

Chair Mitchell asked Councilor Giacomo if the event was positive enough that the city might see another similar event this season. Councilor Giacomo replied not that the KYPN is organizing. He continued that the feeling he got from the folks he talked with is nothing negative happened with the whole event; it was overall an incredibly positive experience. Short of some kind of insane super-spreader event, which is not likely or possible, he thinks they can look forward to other events this season, such as music festivals and the upcoming Juneteenth recognition/celebration. They are currently having many discussions about whether the food festival will happen again next year. They designed it to be a one-time event but its success may mean it happens again. However, they would have to clear a lot more money, because the City comped them many services this year and they would not expect that to continue.

Mr. Schoefmann made a motion to accept the Treasurer Report. Ms. Thomas-Smith seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

9) **New Business**

Chair Mitchell asked if there was any new business. Hearing none, he moved to the next agenda item.

10) **Next Meeting is September 14, 2021**

Chair Mitchell stated that the next meeting will be in person. He asked if it will be in the same meeting room it used to be in. Ms. Mattson replied yes, she has it reserved for September 14, 2021 at 5:00 PM. Chair Mitchell asked everyone to think about whether 5:00 to 6:00 PM is the appropriate time to be meeting and fits everyone's schedule, or if they need to choose a different time for future meetings.

11) **More Time:**

**A) Review Rules of Order and Compare with Other Advisory Boards**

Chair Mitchell asked if the Mayor had anything to say about this today. The Mayor replied no, it can wait until they meet in person.

**B) Student Exchange – Update on Postponement**

Chair Mitchell stated that he has no update.

**C) Planning for Future Exchanges with Einbeck**

Chair Mitchell stated that he knows Mr. Schoefmann is looking at a few possible exchanges. He asked if anyone else had anything. There was no response.

Chair Mitchell asked if the group wants to meet in July or August. Councilor Giacomo replied that many of the PCC's agenda items are related to the schools, which means they would not make much progress in the next couple months on those. He continued that they also do not have any fall exchanges planned. He is okay either way, but he does not think the PCC has a lot going on in the summer. Chair Mitchell replied that they will keep their plan to meet in September.

There being no further business, Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 5:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
**Helen Mattson**, Executive Assistant