

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 12, 2022

5:00 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room
City Hall

Members Present:

John Mitchell, Chair
William Schoefmann, Vice Chair
Mayor George Hansel
Councilor Michael Giacomo
Mari Brunner
Gregg Kleiner

Staff Present:

Helen Mattson, Executive Assistant

Members Not Present:

Dawn Thomas-Smith
Dr. Delene White
Lena Kridlo
Kürt Blomquist

1) Call to Order

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

2) Roll Call

Roll call was conducted.

3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting: March 21, 2022

Mr. Schoefmann made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 21, 2022. Mr. Kleiner seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

4) Board Business

- A) Planning for Possible Keene Delegation to Einbeck – 2nd week of October 2022 – head count of those planning to go, and theme ideas**

Chair Mitchell stated that the PCC discussed needing a head count by next month's meeting, which is important, so they can get that information to Einbeck and Einbeck can prepare properly. He continued that if anyone is having difficulty with traveling or understanding what

they need to do, there are plenty of people who could talk with them. Ms. Brunner stated that she saw in the minutes from last month that everyone is doing their own travel plans. She continued that she would be interested in getting tickets with other people. Councilor Giacomo replied that last time it worked well to have kind of a generic meet-up in Frankfurt, such as in the hotel lobby, and then they all traveled up to Einbeck together. They did not necessarily spend multiple days sightseeing in other cities, just a gathering point somewhere near the airport where there is airport transportation available. That coordination worked well. Chair Mitchell replied that it is now April, so people can plan and coordinate and buy train tickets right to Einbeck. He asked how they should get a meeting point together so people can start buying their tickets. Discussion ensued about the train route, and about whether to fly into Berlin or Frankfurt. Mr. Schoefmann asked what the “Be here, in Einbeck, by this date and time” is this year. Chair Mitchell replied that he thinks it is the Friday at 1:00 PM. Others replied “by Friday morning.” Discussion ensued about the logistics, and what past trips were like. Ms. Brunner stated that it would make sense to arrive Thursday the 6th, spend the night in Frankfurt or Berlin, and take the train to Einbeck in the morning. Mr. Schoefmann stated that the idea is to stay until October 15, but some people cannot stay that long. Chair Mitchell replied that to some extent, those dates were because people from Einbeck assumed they were picking everyone from Keene up at the airport and returning everyone back to the airport.

Regarding Berlin, Chair Mitchell stated that he thinks people from Einbeck have it on their schedule to take the Keene delegation to Berlin at some point, regardless of whether people fly into Berlin. Discussion ensued. Others asked Chair Mitchell to confirm with Einbeck that that is part of the schedule, because they thought, based on the discussion at last month’s meeting, that the people from Einbeck had offered to pick everyone up in Berlin and do sightseeing in Berlin first and then go to Einbeck, and the PCC had decided to decline that offer and have everyone arrange their own travel, which would mean not doing Berlin upon arrival. Chair Mitchell replied that he will email everyone with the answer to this soon. Ms. Brunner asked, what if the Einbeck folks did not pick everyone up in Berlin, but everyone met in Berlin at a designated location. Everyone would not have to take the same flight in or fly in on the same day. It sounds like Einbeck folks wanted that, so they would not have to make another trip to Berlin a different day. Chair Mitchell replied that he is not sure that is the case. He will get clarity on this and email Ms. Mattson tonight so Ms. Mattson can email the PCC.

Discussion ensued about flights and prices. Ms. Mattson asked Chair Mitchell if he could email her with the information or link he used to get his tickets to Einbeck so she could forward on to others/members interested.

B) Discuss Keene Sentinel’s James Rinker, Digital Community Engagement Journalist – Media Opportunities to Help Promote PCC Events and Exchanges

Chair Mitchell stated that he has sent two emails to James Rinker and has not heard back from him. He asked if anyone else has heard from Mr. Rinker. Ms. Mattson replied no. She

continued that he may be overwhelmed with emails. Probably every nonprofit is also trying to connect with him. They will place this item on more time.

- C) Future Exchange Ideas – YMCA, Dance, Rugby**
- D) Fundraising Ideas/Opportunities/Taste of Keene**

Mr. Kleiner stated that Taste of Keene is a go; there are currently 20 restaurants signed up and 13 breweries. He will soon be emailing Ms. Mattson about the next steps for the PCC. Brief discussion ensued.

- E) PCC Exchange Survey/Facebook Updates**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he does not have anything to report. Ms. Brunner replied that Deb from IT usually emails them when someone has filled out a survey. Others replied that the survey should be reposted.

5) Communications

Chair Mitchell stated that he heard from the MC2 Charter School, and they are very interested in working on an educational exchange. He continued that MC2 has one or two representatives who would like to travel with the Keene delegation on the official exchange. He emailed a teacher [at KHS] that he worked with, and hopes that that teacher can start communicating with the MC2 people. Mayor Hansel replied that one of the two will be Elizabeth Cardine, and the second is probably her husband, Andrew.

Chair Mitchell stated that he heard from KSC's Sandra Howard that she would like to travel with her chorale group of students, tentatively May 8 to 14, 2023. He continued that she wants the PCC's help with facilitating that exchange. They can invite her to a meeting or two and have her on the agenda when he knows what her availability is. Discussion ensued about the PCC's funds. Mr. Schoefmann asked if they have a framework/process for how the PCC considers funding requests. He continued that in the past he had suggested asking, "What is your maximum request?", like a grant process. Discussion ensued and Chair Mitchell stated that the PCC will expect a group to have an itinerary/plan, what they are looking for, and what they have raised. Mr. Schoefmann stated that they could have a rolling deadline for proposals for travel/exchange. Mayor Hansel stated that he likes the idea of the PCC doing a match (matching the funds that a group has already raised). Ms. Mattson replied that it gives some incentive. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they can look into that.

Chair Mitchell stated that he will invite Ms. Howard to a meeting, to see if she can give the PCC an idea of what she is looking at.

Chair Mitchell stated that the PCC has also had communications from Albert Thormann, who is speaking for the Choir St. Nicolai. He continued that Dr. Kridlo translated for the PCC. This

group would like to come and sing for four or five days starting March 24, 2023. They have done this before, and would like to do concerts in Keene area churches, for pre-Easter services. They can house themselves but would prefer to stay with host families for the social connection. The PCC could help coordinate places where they could sing or help find host families. He asked the Mayor for his thoughts. Mayor Hansel replied that he thinks they should ask the two Rotary Clubs about those dates. He continued that many of them have been hosts before, so they understand what it is. They can ask the Rotary Clubs to put together a list of folks that might be interested in hosting. He would be happy to reach out to them if the PCC would like. Chair Mitchell thanked him.

6) Reports

A) Treasurer Report

Mr. Kleiner stated that there is nothing to report; the balances are the same as they were at the last meeting. He continued that there is \$5,019 in one account and \$19,103 in the other. Discussion ensued about the cost of hosting exchanges.

Mr. Schoefmann made a motion to accept the Treasurer Report. Councilor Giacomo seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

7) New Business

A) Update – Rotary Club’s Total Contribution to Einbeck for Humanitarian Effort for Ukraine

Ms. Mattson stated that the Rotary Club raised \$10,000 to donate. Mayor Hansel stated that there was a nice article about it in the Einbeck newspaper. Mr. Schoefmann asked which Rotary Club this was. Ms. Mattson replied Keene Elm City Rotary Club. She continued that the Keene Rotary Club was planning to work directly with the Rotary Club in Einbeck and raise their own funds separately. The news about the Elm City Rotary Club’s contribution to Einbeck was shared at a City Council meeting, but she has not seen anything in the Keene Sentinel about it. Chair Mitchell stated that he met with Yves Gakunde, who is potentially interested in joining the exchange, and he said that he and the Rotary Club were not ready to publicize their contribution to Einbeck. He wanted a few days to make sure everything was done and the money was truly transferred. He wants to present it publicly with a nice opening about how, if other people want to donate, they can use the same system now that they know it works.

B) KSC Music Department – Interest in Exchange (KSC to Einbeck)

Chair Mitchell stated that as discussed previously in the agenda, Sandra Howard at KSC is interested in doing an exchange. He continued that he will contact her to invite her to speak to the PCC about the big picture of what her needs are, what her plans are, and what she and the Music Department have done on their own. Mr. Schoefmann replied that if she has a hard request for funding, she can share that information when she comes to a meeting, so the PCC can

do its financial planning. He continued that if Ms. Howard is not comfortable talking about it in the meeting, maybe she can let Chair Mitchell know ahead of the meeting. Chair Mitchell replied that that would help her determine which meeting to come to/when to schedule it.

Mayor Hansel stated that he will invite Elizabeth and Andrew Cardine to the next meeting. Chair Mitchell asked if they should invite Mr. Gakunde as well. Others replied yes. Ms. Mattson replied that she will invite him.

[Returning to the topic of a previous agenda item], Councilor Giacomo asked what the current total is for the number of people going to Einbeck, and what Einbeck is comfortable with. Ms. Mattson replied that her count is 12 or 13 people. Brief discussion ensued.

- 8) **Next Meeting is May 17, 2022**
- 9) **More Time**
 - A) **Student Pen-Pal Ideas – High School 16–18-year-olds**
- 10) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 5:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Helen Mattson, Staff Liaison