

**CITY OF KEENE  
PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE  
AGENDA**

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

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:** approval of meeting minutes: March 11, 2025
4. **Board Business:**
  - a) Exchange Itinerary- 10/22 morning activity, Pumpkin Fest Day, etc.
  - b) Begin Exchange Budget-assign research for trips, transportation and meals cost
  - c) MC2 Student Exchange Support- review and discuss requested \$3024.00.
  - d) Council Report- discuss what to share
5. **Communications:**
  - a)
6. **Reports:**
  - a) Treasurer Report – *Eric*
7. **New Business:**
  - a.)
8. **Next Meeting:** Next meeting is May 13, 2025
9. **More Time:**
  - a.) Fundraiser- cookbook
10. **Adjournment**



City of Keene  
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

5:00 PM

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

Members Present:

John Mitchell, Chair  
Gerald Kuhn  
Doris McColleston  
Gerald Lins  
Eric Weisenberger  
Derek Blunt

Staff Present:

Nicole Howe, Executive Assistant

Members Not Present:

Councilor Andrew Madison  
Mari Brunner  
William Schoefmann, Vice Chair

1) Call to Order

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

2) Roll Call – Appoint Alternates (if required)

Roll call was conducted. Mr. Blunt introduced three MC2 students, Cedric, Camille, and Dylan.

3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting – February 11, 2025

Mr. Kuhn made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of February 11, 2025. Mr. Lins seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Chair Mitchell stated that Ms. Howe reminded him that the PCC needs to choose this year’s PCC Chair and Vice Chair.

Mr. Blunt nominated John Mitchell for Chair. Mr. Kuhn seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

29 Mr. Blunt nominated Will Schoefmann as Vice Chair. Mr. Lins seconded the motion, which  
30 passed by unanimous vote.

31

32 **4) Board Business**

33

34 **A) Next Exchange – review itinerary research assigned at last meeting**

35

36 Chair Mitchell stated that he has some quick updates - Jürgen Herbst told him four police  
37 officers are coming, including the chief and the assistant chief, but there does not seem to be any  
38 interest from the fire department or public works department. He continued that Sandra Howard  
39 from Keene State College (KSC), who runs the chorale exchange, has invited the PCC and  
40 Einbeck exchange members to participate in the chorale dinner on the day of Pumpkin Fest,  
41 October 18. She requests that the PCC/exchange members pay their way for the cost of the  
42 meals.

43

44 Ms. Howe stated that she has confirmation for the visit to the Statehouse, 9:45 AM on October  
45 17. She continued that the Mayor was thinking the group could have lunch there at the cafeteria,  
46 which the PCC would need to order ahead. The Mayor has some contact with the NH Supreme  
47 Court and State Library, too, to see if the group could visit those on the same day. Regarding the  
48 manufacturing tours, the Mayor has received the okay from at least one, possibly two, and is  
49 working on more, for October 20. Chair Mitchell asked if he is all set for the Thursday morning.  
50 Ms. Howe replied yes.

51

52 Chair Mitchell asked for an update from Mr. Weisenberger. Mr. Weisenberger spoke about the  
53 plans for the welcome dinner at The Show Room on Thursday night, possibly preceded by a tour  
54 of the historic theater. He continued that he is still working on the logistics. Mr. Schoefmann  
55 has offered to help him with it. He is working on figuring out the cost. Mr. Weisenberger spoke  
56 about The Show Room details, such as the elements of the space, and potential caterers. He  
57 offered to reach out to a caterer, if the PCC is interested, for them to hold the date. Ms. Howe  
58 spoke of a caterer she could reach out to as well.

59

60 Chair Mitchell asked Mr. Blunt about the day in Concord. Mr. Blunt stated that he looked at the  
61 Tanger outlets, which he threw out as an idea since it was closer to Concord than the Merrimack  
62 outlets, but it turns out the Merrimack shopping outlets would only be an extra ten minutes away,  
63 and from there it is the same distance back to Keene as it is from the Tanger outlets. He  
64 explained why he thinks Merrimack outlets would be the better shopping location. Discussion  
65 ensued about giving people an hour in downtown Concord before the Statehouse visit. Chair  
66 Mitchell asked if they should plan on dinner somewhere near Merrimack or on the way back, and  
67 discussion ensued about the schedule and timing. The group determined that they could be back  
68 in Keene around 6:00 PM for dinner.

69

70 Chair Mitchell asked how people see October 18 working, with Pumpkin Fest. Discussion  
71 ensued about what Pumpkin Fest has, the schedule, and about whether to stay at Pumpkin Fest in

72 the evening to see all the pumpkins lit up, or to leave Pumpkin Fest to attend the Choral  
73 Exchange dinner at 6:00 PM on the KSC campus. The PCC discussed which option they thought  
74 the group would prefer, and whether it would be possible to let people individually choose.  
75 Chair Mitchell noted that the PCC's idea had been to determine the October 18 plan and  
76 schedule so they could invite the German Consulate from Boston. He continued that it does not  
77 sound like the PCC can make a firm decision today, but for now they can say that the morning of  
78 October 18 is family time and resting from the previous day's travel, and then Pumpkin Fest any  
79 time after 2:00 PM. The group could meet up at the PCC's tent around 5:30 PM and go as a  
80 group to the chorale dinner.

81  
82 Chair Mitchell stated that October 19 is completely a family day. He continued that everyone is  
83 invited to a chorale concert at the Redfern. There are other optional events on that day.  
84 Monday, October 20 is the city tour day. The PCC will need to determine what to do for lunch  
85 and dinner. Discussion ensued about options. Chair Mitchell stated that they will need vehicles,  
86 because October 20 is a travel day.

87  
88 Chair Mitchell asked Mr. Kuhn for an update on October 21's plan. Mr. Kuhn spoke about a  
89 tour of Bensonwood in (the Walpole area), followed by the American Precision Museum and the  
90 Saint-Gaudens Historical Site, which is like a sculpture park. Going to the Fort at No. 4 is a  
91 possibility, then back to Keene to the Blastos Room. Discussion ensued. Mr. Kuhn spoke about  
92 the possibility of bringing people to see Bensonwood in Keene on Monday, too, so they could  
93 see both locations and the interesting contrast.

94  
95 Chair Mitchell stated that October 22 is the boat ride in Sunapee that Councilor Madison (is  
96 planning). Discussion ensued about other possible activities for that day. Chair Mitchell stated  
97 that maybe it could be a transportation day if they offer hosts the ability to participate, at their  
98 own expense. In response to a question about the timing, Ms. Howe replied that the PCC had  
99 talked about having the boat ride be a cocktail/sunset thing. Chair Mitchell noted that the PCC  
100 will have to think about a meal. He continued that since Monday and Tuesday are so busy, it  
101 would be good to keep Wednesday low-key. Discussion continued about when there will be  
102 time to just walk around Keene and shop in Keene. Chair Mitchell stated that something for the  
103 PCC to work on during the next month or two is figuring out Wednesday morning before the  
104 boat ride, regarding activities or rest time, and what to do about a meal. There is also Thursday  
105 to figure out.

106  
107 Mr. Kuhn suggested asking the Historical Society to do a presentation on the history of Keene.  
108 Ms. Howe suggested the Wall Dogs mural walk. Mr. Kuhn asked about taking people to the  
109 Holocaust Center. Discussion continued. Chair Mitchell stated that they have a good chunk of  
110 Thursday to fill, and Wednesday morning is still open. Mr. Kuhn stated that when he talked with  
111 people in Einbeck, they expressed interest in visiting the Cohen Center in Keene.

112

113 Chair Mitchell stated that the PCC needs to start a budget soon. He asked the PCC to help go  
114 through the list of meals, to see where they are at. Discussion ensued about meals, snacks, and  
115 transportation.

116  
117 Chair Mitchell stated that they need to start thinking about who will be in charge of the money,  
118 and thinking about funding. He continued that they do not need to pick someone today, as there  
119 are other PCC members not present today. The PCC is well ahead of where they were the last  
120 time they hosted, in terms of the framework of what they are going to do. The next big piece is  
121 figuring out how they will do it with the money. He hopes they can have some ideas for the next  
122 meeting, regarding funding; the calendar, especially the Wednesday and Thursday; and  
123 transportation and busses.

124  
125 Mr. Lins asked what the PCC is thinking about the meal at his house. Discussion ensued. Chair  
126 Mitchell stated that he thinks Mr. Lins will have a lot of help from people, and they could plan to  
127 have a few grills. They do not need to hire anyone to cook or rent tables and chairs; they have  
128 people who could help with that. Mr. Lins spoke about the open barn they could use if it rains.  
129 Discussion continued about the space and logistics.

130  
131 Mr. Weisenberger asked if Chair Mitchell is asking PCC members to start contacting vendors  
132 and so on to see how much all of these activities will cost and put together a budget. Chair  
133 Mitchell replied that he thinks the first step is what they are doing now, figuring out how many  
134 transportation days, how many meals, and so on and so forth, and then they can divide up that  
135 work. For example, someone could go and find out how much a certain number of days of van  
136 rentals would cost plus fuel, and someone else could get ballpark estimates from restaurants, and  
137 someone else could get breakfast items donated from a business, and so on and so forth. He  
138 continued that as he said, everything is going well, and the PCC is way ahead of where they were  
139 last time. Discussion continued about transportation details.

140  
141 Chair Mitchell stated that once they determine details like which days need vans and which  
142 meals are needed, PCC members can find out what the ballpark figures are and bring the  
143 information to the PCC as a whole. The PCC can give feedback on those figures and plans and  
144 they can adjust as needed. Once the PCC agrees on the plan, then they go back and get the firm  
145 numbers and have a firm budget. It adds up fast. It is typically \$12,000 to \$16,000. He spoke of  
146 how the PCC and the Einbeck committee have both been working on reducing costs, and people  
147 are still having just as much fun and the exchanges are growing.

148  
149 **B) Fundraising Ideas and Opportunities**

150  
151 Mr. Kuhn asked Mr. Lins if the idea of the cookbook (with recipes from Keene and Einbeck)  
152 was meant to be a fundraiser. Mr. Lins replied yes. He continued that if it does not raise any  
153 money it would still be a good thing to do, but they were thinking of selling it at Pumpkin Fest.  
154 Discussion ensued with ideas about the cookbook and how and where to sell it.

155

156 **5) Communications**

157 **A) Derek Blunt – Yard sale fundraiser to benefit student exchange – update**

158  
159 Chair Mitchell asked Mr. Blunt how MC2’s fundraiser went. Mr. Blunt replied that it went very  
160 well and MC2 is planning another for the spring. He thanks everyone who helped out and  
161 stopped by. He will keep everyone posted about the next one. MC2 welcomes donations for  
162 their next yard sale.

163  
164 **B) Facebook – “Keene Partner City Committee” – like, share, suggest**

165  
166 Ms. Howe stated that she got access to Facebook, so if anyone has anything they want to post,  
167 they can. She continued that the PCC has not posted for over a year. It would be great to share  
168 some photos from the last exchange, for example. She encourages anyone who has not yet  
169 liked and shared the Facebook page to do so. Chair Mitchell asked if the PCC can post the  
170 photos, or if someone else (in the City) has to. Ms. Howe replied that she does not know, but  
171 PCC members can send her photos to post, with captions.

172  
173 Ms. McCollester stated that she posted the PCC’s Christmas card to Einbeck and was told she  
174 was not supposed to do that. She continued that she suggests Ms. Howe check the rules (about  
175 who can post). Ms. Howe agreed.

176  
177 **6) Reports**

178 **A) Treasurer Report – Eric**

179  
180 Mr. Weisenberger stated that the fundraising account has a balance of \$16,182, and the general  
181 appropriations fund has a balance of \$17,506.

182  
183 **7) New Business**

184 **A) Notification of Council Action – Reports to the Council by Boards and**  
185 **Commissions**

186  
187 Chair Mitchell stated that Ms. Howe shared that the City Council is asking for some type of  
188 report. Ms. Howe stated that it is optional. She continued that the City Council has brought up  
189 the fact that City boards and committees do not get a lot of recognition for what they do and the  
190 City does not get to hear about a lot of them. Thus, if the PCC wants to give a report, they can,  
191 written or verbal. It would be at the beginning of the fiscal new year, in July. If the PCC wants,  
192 they can report on their successes, goals, challenges, and so on and so forth.

193  
194 Chair Mitchell replied that they used to do this when Kendall Lane was Mayor, and he thinks it  
195 is a good idea. He spoke about how it is a great way to get information about the PCC out there,  
196 and the Councilors are friendly people. Discussion ensued. Ms. McCollester asked if the City  
197 Council is looking for an itemized report of where the money goes. Ms. Howe and Chair

198 Mitchell replied no, it is not about the money. Ms. Howe added that the PCC could choose the  
199 report's format and contents. Mr. Blunt stated that he would be happy to help with such a report.  
200

201 **B) MC2 Student Exchange Update & Request of Support**  
202

203 Dylan stated that he, Cedric, and Camille are here representing MC2, a small charter school in  
204 Keene. He continued that they do not have a large student body, but students are heavily  
205 involved within their school. They do a lot of fundraising and plan their own projects, such as  
206 the yard sale fundraiser. Students have outside learning opportunities such as internships, where  
207 they get to do full work days outside of school. Being a small school, they have some  
208 challenges. They are not as well known in the area, compared to bigger schools like Keene  
209 High, and they have less funding and have to do their own fundraising.  
210

211 Dylan continued that he, Cedric, and Camille are part of the Germain Exchange program at  
212 MC2. They have a class about it, and he is here representing the class. Their school, especially  
213 the German Exchange, aligns well with the PCC, because MC2 students are trying to show their  
214 German Exchange students what America is like, particularly Keene. They want to show them  
215 Keene's local businesses and local markets, such as the Wyman Tavern and its Keene history.  
216 MC2 has had a good connection over the past couple of years, with two MC2 staff members, Mr.  
217 Blunt and Mr. Kuhn, on the PCC. MC2 has made a strong connection with the PCC and they  
218 would like to ask for some funding assistance. He will pass out copies of their itinerary to show  
219 what they are asking for. The list is itemized and includes mileage, because it would help them a  
220 lot to have assistance with travel expenses.  
221

222 PCC members asked MC2 students questions. Discussion ensued about the timing of the student  
223 exchange, the PCC's exchange, and the chorale exchange.  
224

225 Chair Mitchell asked Cedric why he wants to be in the Einbeck group. Cedric replied that he has  
226 had an interest in Germany for a while. He continued that he thinks it is a great place, and it is  
227 amazing that he has this opportunity to go there at no cost to himself, and to help fundraise for it  
228 and plan it. He thinks going to Germany will be a great experience he will have memories of for  
229 the rest of his life.  
230

231 Mr. Weisenberger asked how many students are looking to go to Germany in the spring. The  
232 students replied eight.  
233

234 Chair Mitchell asked Camille why she wants to be involved in the Germany Exchange. Camille  
235 replied that she has had an interest in Germany for quite a while, and because this is so student-  
236 led, she wanted the experience of forming these bonds and planning this trip. It is a big thing.  
237 She has been having a great time participating in the planning process. She looks forward to  
238 making connections outside of the country, and the idea of getting to know people different from  
239 herself drives her curiosity.  
240



241 Ms. McColleston asked if she is interested in specific cities. Camille replied no, she is interested  
242 in Germany as a whole. She continued that she is fond of Germany's culture, arts, and language.  
243 She has been interested in Germany since middle school, and it is great to finally have a chance  
244 to (be involved with) something she has been fascinated with for years.

245  
246 Chair Mitchell asked the students to talk about what Mr. Blunt has them doing to prepare for this  
247 exchange. Dylan replied that 14 students have had three meetings each week. He continued that  
248 they do German language lessons every Friday, led by a student. They do readings and do  
249 reports on them and compete against each other in a Duolingo class. Camille stated that they  
250 have also been planning their itinerary, and the yard sale fundraiser was planned and run by  
251 students.

252  
253 Chair Mitchell asked if there were any further questions for the students. Hearing none, he  
254 thanked them for coming, and for speaking and preparing their paperwork. He continued that the  
255 PCC will meet again and they need a larger group of PCC members than this to discuss MC2's  
256 request. They will have an answer for MC2 within two months, possibly within a month.

257

258 **8) Next Meeting: March 11, 2025**

259

260 Chair Mitchell noted that the next meeting is April 8, 2025. The agenda is a typo.

261

262 **9) More Time**

263

264 **10) Adjournment**

265

266 There being no further business, Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 6:01 PM.

267

268 Respectfully submitted by,

269 Britta Reida, Minute Taker

270

271 Reviewed and edited by,

272 Nicole Howe, Staff Liaison

