

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

5:00 PM

**2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall**

Members Present:

John Mitchell, Chair
William Schoefmann, Vice Chair
Gerald Kuhn
Doris McColleston
Gerald Lins (left at 5:25 PM)
Derek Blunt, Alternate
Councilor Andrew Madison

Staff Present:

Nicole Howe, Executive Assistant

Members Not Present:

Mari Brunner
Eric Weisenberger

1) Call to Order

Chair Mitchell called the meeting to order at 4:55 PM.

2) Roll Call – Appoint Alternates (if required)

Roll call was conducted.

3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting – May 13, 2025

Mr. Schoefmann made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 13, 2025. Mr. Kuhn seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

4) Board Business

A) Exchange Itinerary – Continued Discussion/Activity Planning for October 15-24, 2025

Mr. Schoefmann stated that there are not many changes to the itinerary from the last time the PCC saw it. He continued that Wednesday, October 15 is pick-up in Boston, probably with

Enterprise vans. Chair Mitchell stated that pick-up time is probably 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM, but that is not guaranteed.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that Thursday, October 16 is orientation/welcome at City Hall with the City Manager and the Mayor, and a Colonial Theater tour before the welcome dinner at The Showroom.

Councilor Madison arrived at 5:00 PM.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that Friday, October 17 is the State capitol in Concord, and shopping at the Merrimack outlets. Ms. Howe stated that they firmed up two things for that morning, so she updated the itinerary there from the Mayor – Statehouse at 9:45 AM, and Supreme Court at 11:00 AM.

Mr. Schoefmann continued that Saturday, October 18 is Pumpkin Fest. He continued that the idea is that several people (from the PCC and MC2) will be there working (at the PCC's vendor booth), and they need to firm up the plans for when Einbeck guests are meeting up with them. They need to send an invitation to the German Consulate. Following Pumpkin Fest is the dinner with the Chorale Exchange at the Keene State College campus, from 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM.

Sunday, October 19 is a "host activity day," meaning that the hosts will be finding activities for their visitors to do. Once the hosts have a meeting or two, they will probably have some ideas for activities.

Mr. Schoefmann continued that Monday, October 20 is the Upper Valley/Rt. 12 day, which includes Bensonwood, the American Precision Museum, which Mr. Kuhn got some information about, and possibly lunch at Saint-Gauden's.

Tuesday, October 21 is a local business and government tour day, including visiting the local Bensonwood manufacturing in town, Precitech, Harrisville Designs, Summit Winery, and dinner at the Dublin Tap Room. Discussion ensued. Chair Mitchell stated that people in the precision machining optics program at the college are willing to offer the group a tour, short or long, any time after noon. Ms. Howe stated that the Harrisville Designs visit has not been confirmed yet; the Mayor is working on this.

Mr. Schoefmann continued that Wednesday, October 22 is the Lake Sunapee day, which includes potentially the Mt. Kearsarge Museum. The Lake Sunapee Cruise in the evening will be the highlight. Lunch has yet to be determined. Councilor Madison gave more information about the cruise, and continued that he suggests Sunapee State Park or Salt Hill for earlier in the day. Another idea is the Mt. Sunapee ski resort, maybe the chairlift ride and lunch. Discussion continued with more lunch ideas.

Mr. Schoefmann continued that Thursday, October 23 is a free day and the farewell dinner at Mr. Lins's house. There is the idea of a pre-dinner rendezvous at Copper Cannon Distillery. Friday, October 24 is the Einbeck visitors' departure.

Mr. Lins asked if anyone knows where you can get Einbecker (beer). Discussion ensued about Einbecker beer, the farewell dinner, local breweries, and the possibility of revisiting the idea of having a brewery exchange.

Chair Mitchell asked if the group has ideas for who they should invite to the welcome dinner, such as Councilors, people from past exchanges who have been instrumental, MC2 students, and so on and so forth. Discussion ensued. Chair Mitchell spoke about the chorale exchange dinner. He asked PCC members to let him know if they plan to attend, with a reminder that the PCC is covering the costs for their Einbeck visitors and PCC members will be paying for themselves. Discussion continued.

Mr. Kuhn stated that he needs some clarification about the Bensonwood visit, regarding what day and time they want, and how long of a tour they are interested in. Discussion ensued. Mr. Kuhn stated that he has not heard back from the Precision Museum yet, but he let them know they would be a group of about 20 people. Discussion continued about the order and timing of the activities on that day.

B) Exchange Budget – Updates from Committee Members' Research on Costs

Chair Mitchell stated that he is pretty sure they do not have budget issues at the moment that they can discuss. Mr. Schoefmann replied not fully, but they have some rough estimates. He continued that so far, the ballpark is about \$8,588. Last time, it was about \$10,000.

C) Schedule "Host Meetings" in July, August, and September

Chair Mitchell asked if they want to start scheduling the meetings for the hosts. Discussion ensued. Chair Mitchell asked if Mr. Schoefmann was working on the host list. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he was hoping Chair Mitchell would make those assignments like he did last time. Ms. Howe replied that she has a list of the initial people who were going to be on the exchange, and they started pairing people up based on who was paired up previously. She continued that she will pass the list around for people to write their names on. Discussion continued about the list of travelers and the hosts.

Mr. Lins left at 5:25 PM.

Chair Mitchell stated that to summarize, they will have two (host) meetings in August and one in September. He continued that someone will try and get in touch with Helen, (regarding hosting). He asked who else they could reach out to. Discussion continued with suggested names.

5) **Communications**

6) **Reports**

A) **Treasurer's Report - Eric**

7) **New Business**

A) **Pumpkin Festival 2025 – Begin Discussion of Plans, Budget, Donations, and Volunteers**

Ms. McCollester asked about volunteers for Pumpkin Fest. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they do not have a formalized list yet. Mr. Blunt stated that they are confident about having a good group of students, and they are always happy to have more volunteers. Discussion continued. Chair Mitchell stated that at the next meeting, they will have to do a lot of planning for Pumpkin Fest. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he and Mr. Blunt can talk before then, too, and he will loop in Ms. Brunner. Chair Mitchell suggested they see if Kristen from the dance exchange knows people who might want to volunteer, too.

Chair Mitchell stated that the other day, there was a Zoom meeting between the Einbeck committee's chair and assistant chair, Mr. Schoefmann, and himself. He continued that it went very well, and they were enthusiastic about doing it again. He and Mr. Schoefmann will try and make it a monthly event. Other PCC members are welcome to attend, as long as there are not enough of them to create a quorum. They did not discuss much business. Einbeck members are warming to the idea of a cookbook, initially surprised by the idea, but they are positive about it. Mr. Schoefmann stated that they seemed shocked that people from Keene had so many requests for German recipes.

8) **Next Meeting – July 8, 2025**

9) **More Time**

A) **Fundraiser – Cookbook**

10) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Nicole Howe, Executive Secretary