

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

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

**Tuesday, May 12, 2026**

**5:00 PM**

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

**Members Present:**

John Mitchell, Chair  
William Schoefmann, Vice Chair  
Mari Brunner  
Councilor Laura Ruttle-Miller  
Eric Weisenberger  
Andrew Madison  
Derek Blunt  
Doris McCollester  
Gerald Kuhn (5:06 PM)

**Staff Present:**

Meagan McLaughlin, Executive Administrative  
Assistant

**Members Not Present:**

Gerald Lins

**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.

**3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: April 14, 2026**

Mr. Madison made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 14, 2026. Mr. Weisenberger seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

**4. Board Business**

**A) Exchanges**

- i) Golf**
- ii) Brewer**
- iii) Bicycle**
- iv) Dancer/Musician**
- v) Runner**

Councilor Ruttle-Miller stated that she will make sure to determine whether the woman she knows who has expressed interest in a running exchange can come to the PCC's June meeting.

**vi) Soccer**  
**vii) Coffee Roaster**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that the coffee roaster exchange is "taking a nap" at the moment. He continued that he has not reached out to people about this, because he feels like the number of travelers they have so far is optimum.

**viii) Baker**

**B) Eulenfest Participation – pancakes and NH Maple Syrup, Maple Whiskey, booth setup/décor/banner (logistic input from Einbeck meeting?)**

Chair Mitchell stated that Mr. Schoefmann has been doing a great job, and there have been a lot of emails back and forth about what to sell at Eulenfest, such as whiskey or pancakes. He continued that the biggest takeaway is that the Einbeck committee wants the PCC to have a banner.

Discussion ensued, and PCC members spoke in favor of passing a motion for the PCC to get a banner. Chair Mitchell stated that they need to say something about money. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he would advise they ask someone to get a price estimate for a banner and report back at the next meeting. Chair Mitchell agreed and asked if someone could do that. Mr. Weisenberger replied that he can reach out to someone. Mr. Schoefmann stated that he and Ms. Brunner can talk with the City's communications team. Discussion continued about banner details and options.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that when he talked with the Einbeck committee about how the PCC could participate in Eulenfest, at first they said there was a lot of red tape, like the need for an inspection. He continued that however, it sounds like the Einbeck committee will have a tent for the PCC on Saturday to work in. They are looking for something a little simpler, such as not prepared food. Discussion continued about selling something like Schnapps or whiskey. Mr. Weisenberger gave an idea of where they can probably get bourbon.

Chair Mitchell asked if there was anything else to report from the meeting he had with Einbeck folks this morning. Mr. Schoefmann replied that Einbeck still has people who are interested in golf. He continued that they are looking for the list of people who are planning to attend the October trip. People need to make sure to get their biographies and head shots to Chair Mitchell. Chair Mitchell replied yes, it is very important.

**C) October Visit – Firming list of attendees, traveler profile information sheets**

Chair Mitchell listed the people who have said they are going on the trip. He stated that the total is 14, and Einbeck has invited 20. He continued that Ms. Brunner is a maybe.

Chair Mitchell stated that a little bit of progress has been made with soccer. He continued that there might be a couple of people who would be interested in going, so he advises holding two spots for a month or two, until they hear from those two people.

In response to a question, Mr. Schoefmann replied yes, there is a local brewer who wants to go. He connected with him two weeks ago, and this person will start formalizing some sort of exchange between the breweries here and whoever they get put in touch with in Einbeck. That is up in the air to a certain degree. Mr. Weisenberger spoke about another local brewer he spoke with, who is excited, but he will have to talk with him again about how the other brewer is already committed for this trip. Discussion ensued. Mr. Schoefmann spoke of how the intent is for the brewer he spoke with/about to go to Einbeck this time, make a few connections and establish relationships, and build the brewer exchange from there. The brewer Mr. Weisenberger spoke with can probably start creating their own thing, and it does not necessarily have to be the official delegation they come on, but they might have a spot for them the following year that Keene goes back to Einbeck. Discussion continued.

Chair Mitchell stated that by adding the brewer Mr. Schoefmann is speaking of, and that brewer's family member, they are up to 16 spots. He continued that they are holding two spots for soccer people, and holding a spot for Ms. Brunner, so that leaves one spot. Hopefully one of the Councilors is going for a bicycle connection. Probably one Councilor is going, and he hopes the committee can work with that other Councilor. The footwork of Rotary has already been done, in both directions. It is time to really set up some sort of formal agreement and have something happen. If they do that, it sounds like they can support Rotary. This will be a good trip. Mr. Schoefmann stated that they are supposed to have a follow-up with the fieldhouse at some point this month.

Chair Mitchell reiterated the importance of all travelers sending him their biographies and photos as soon as possible, so he can share those with Einbeck. Discussion ensued. Chair Mitchell stated that he encourages people to buy their plane tickets early, because the prices are going crazy.

#### **D) Schedule for Requesting Annual Funding – Will**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that people have a chance to think about what this looks like. He continued that regarding the funding requests other groups make of the PCC, his concept is for them to start trying to collect requests at the beginning of the year or the end of the year heading into the following year, so the PCC can get a handle on the annual budget instead of doing it ad hoc. It is understandable that people planning exchanges will not always know exactly what the costs will be that they are looking to supplement, until the exchange gets closer. He asked if the PCC members have thoughts about this, and whether there should be rolling requests. Mr. Weisenberger stated that it could be that they have a set amount to give away, and once it is gone, it is gone. Discussion ensued about how it is approximately three organizations per year that the PCC anticipates getting requests from, but they hope more exchanges gain momentum. Ms. Brunner suggested that newly started exchanges should get priority for funding. Discussion continued about how it would make sense for groups that are requesting funding from the PCC to also participate somehow in the PCC's fundraising events, which is how it has been in the past; and about the idea of forming a 501c3 for fundraising purposes, with membership not comprised

of PCC members, and the logistics of that. Mr. Madison clarified that something like a “Friends of Einbeck” group would be a completely separate entity from the PCC, because the PCC is a governmental entity, and the other group would host events, maybe in collaboration with the PCC, and fundraise for the exchanges. Discussion continued about how it would be a good way to keep former PCC members involved, and have some partnerships.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that back to the topic of the requests for annual funding, he will not try and implement a structure and schedule for that unless the PCC members are looking for a more formalized proposal like that. Ms. Brunner stated that she could meet with him to come up with some ideas. Chair Mitchell asked what he is envisioning. He asked if the idea is that groups would submit applications and there would be points they could check, such as whether it is a new group, whether it involves young people, whether they have requested support from the PCC in the past, and so on and so forth. Mr. Schoefmann replied that mostly, the concern is how to move forward with more exchanges, given the limited amount of money the PCC has. He continued that until the 501c3 Mr. Madison is working on is formed and has funds, the PCC is the only group fielding the funding requests. Mr. Weisenberger stated that he would be happy to meet with Mr. Schoefmann and Ms. Brunner about this, too. He continued that he is on the Allocations Committee of the Elm City Rotary Club, and the process of allocating funds is simple and run very well, with a point system and a Google form that requestors fill out. The guidelines have to be very clear. A question to think about is whether groups that receive funds should have to give a brief report at the end. Mr. Schoefmann replied that that already happens, to a certain degree – leaders of exchanges come to the PCC afterwards to talk about what the PCC helped with.

## **5. Communications**

Mr. Schoefmann asked Ms. McLaughlin if the Mayor has received a formal invitation yet for the Einbeck trip. Ms. McLaughlin replied no. Discussion ensued about how the PCC expects it to come soon.

## **6. Reports**

### **A) Treasurer Report – Eric**

Mr. Weisenberger stated that there have been no changes since last month. He continued that the general appropriations balance is still \$16,705. The fundraising account balance is \$17,777.

## **7. New Business**

## **8. More Time**

### **A) Fundraisers**

Councilor Ruttle-Miller stated that she had a potential fundraising idea. She continued that she recently attended a well-attended lecture by a professor whose first book was written on German soldiers during the Revolution. Maybe the PCC could do a collaborative event with the Historical Society and invite him. There are other German specialists at Keene State College, too, who could work with the PCC to create some sort of lecture event.

**i) Cookbook Updates**

Chair Mitchell asked if anyone had anything to say about the cookbook project. Mr. Kuhn replied that he and Mr. Lins talked about it a little at the last meeting, and they are supposed to be getting together sometime. Discussion ensued about how they are still looking for more recipes, so anyone with something to submit can send it to Mr. Lins.

**9. Next Meeting: June 9, 2026**

**10. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 5:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
Meagan McLaughlin