CITY OF KEENE
PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE
AGENDA

Tuesday, August 11th, 2026
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: June 9th, 2026

4. Board Business:
- a) October Einbeck Visit
  - I. Send flight/travel info to: mmclaughlin@keenenh.gov
- b) Pumpkin Fest Participation – Derek and Will
- c) Help Dance Exchange (10/9-10/19, airport rides) – Eric

5. Communications:
- a)

6. Reports:
- a) Treasurer Report – Eric
- b) Annual Report Presentation – 9/23 at 6:00 PM, City Hall Council Chambers

7. New Business:
- a)

8. More Time:
- a) Fundraisers:
  - i.) Cookbook Updates
  - ii.) Non-profit 501(c)(3) Update – Andrew, Eric, and Will
- b) Draft for Requesting Annual Funding – Eric and Will

9. Next Meeting: Next meeting is September 8th, 2026

10. Adjournment

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 9, 2026 **5:00 PM** **2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall**

Members Present:
John Mitchell, Chair
William Schoefmann, Vice Chair
Mari Brunner
Eric Weisenberger
Gerald Kuhn
Andrew Madison

Staff Present:
Meagan McLaughlin, Executive Administrative Assistant

Members Not Present:
Councilor Laura Ruttle-Miller
Derek Blunt
Doris McCollester
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: May 12, 2026

Mr. Weisenberger made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 12, 2026. Mr. Madison seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

4. Board Business

Chair Mitchell thanked the members present for coming today, and asked that they encourage other PCC members to come to meetings, particularly starting next month. He continued that all of the travelers who are not PCC members should also be at the next meeting. He and Mr. Schoefmann have emphasized to travelers that this is a two-year commitment, and the PCC expects them at meetings at this time next year, when the PCC will be at the end of planning for receiving Einbeck visitors. People need to not just host, but be part of the planning for it and be involved in the communal experience.

A. Exchanges

i. Golf

Chair Mitchell stated that there has been no progress with a golf exchange.

ii. Brewer

Chair Mitchell stated that he met with two brewing companies, but this was not business directed. He continued that at the last PCC meeting, they talked about people who are interested in a brewing exchange. They have found four people who would like to go. Three are directly involved as brewers and one is a partner. They are very enthusiastic. One of them has done a lot of research on their own, about the Einbeck area, beer festivals, and the company. They will be a great fit.

Chair Mitchell stated that there is another set of individuals the Mayor suggested, who have expressed an interest in going to Einbeck. He continued that they have some paperwork in. Hopefully they have expressed an interest in helping with Rotary and whatever they can do to move the Rotary exchange along. That is good news.

iii. Bicycle

Chair Mitchell stated that they were hoping one of the Councilors, who was also mentioned by the Mayor, was interested in a bicycle exchange. This is not a trip he can make this year, however.

iv. Runner

Chair Mitchell stated that he does not have information about a runner exchange.

v. Soccer

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he and Chair Mitchell have been in contact multiple times with Jim Fennell at The Fieldhouse. He continued that Mr. Fennell is still trying to line up a couple of coaches, but he is very positive, asking the right questions when he and Chair Mitchell reach out to him. If Mr. Fennell does not have any coaches, they will just try and bring Mr. Fennell, so he knows what it is about and can connect with people in Einbeck. He or Chair Mitchell should be hearing from Mr. Fennell this week. Chair Mitchell stated that it is great to see some movement on a soccer exchange.

Chair Mitchell asked if anyone else had thoughts on the exchange. He spoke about the list of travelers. Mr. Schoefmann stated that he cannot go this year. Chair Mitchell stated that given the current list of travelers, they have a little flexibility in numbers.

B. Eulenfest Participation – maple whiskey, banner update – Mari/Will

Mr. Schoefmann stated that the summary is that the Einbeck committee is very kindly trying to accommodate the PCC's desire to participate in Eulenfest, but there are several steps they would have to go through to make it happen. He continued that he thinks what the Einbeck committee has been alluding to is that helping the PCC go through the process of having a booth at Eulenfest would be kind of a lift on their end. He thinks the PCC should try to come up with something for a different year, and this year, just enjoy the festival. PCC members could maybe help out at someone else's booth, if they want. He has done that before.

C. October Visit – traveler profile information sheets

D. Schedule for Requesting Annual Funding - Will

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he will draft something and bring it to the next meeting, and see what people think. He continued that the idea is that the PCC would set a time of the year that they would be accepting potential funding requests from other organizations for the next fiscal year. The PCC is on the City's calendar, in terms of getting the money on July 1. Mr. Weisenberger stated that he would be happy to help Mr. Schoefmann draft that.

Chair Mitchell asked if the PCC will be limiting participants if they give them a certain time of year. Mr. Schoefmann replied that most of the exchanges are already occurring on consistent schedules. He continued that right around the time of the trip is an excellent opportunity to highlight the PCC and say they are now accepting applications for funding for next year. They can try that with the regular groups, and maybe post a link on the website to whatever the application looks like for other organizations that are interested in coming to the PCC for funding. It is a decent way of organizing this a little bit. He will put something together for the next meeting, for the PCC members to look at. At some point, with all of the exchanges the PCC is trying to incubate, they might hit a threshold at which they need to be budgetarily conscious.

Mr. Kuhn stated that at the last meeting, there was mention of how the PCC replenishes its account. He continued that he knows it is primarily through the City and Pumpkin Fest. He asked if they are allowed to seek something like corporate fundraising. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he thinks yes, but that might accompany this larger strategy they are talking about. Mr. Madison replied yes, of the nonprofit. Mr. Schoefmann stated that he, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Weisenberger will get together and talk about what it takes to create a nonprofit. Ms. Brunner stated that in the PCC's charter, they do have the ability to accept donations. She continued that they even used to have a "donate" button on their webpage.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that these two agenda items – the request for annual funding, and the nonprofit – can go together. He continued that he thinks there is value in knowing what the PCC will be spending on funding requests from groups so they know what they need to be aiming towards for fundraising. Ms. Brunner agreed and stated that if the PCC, as a City committee, is giving funds out to different groups, they should have a transparent process for doing that. Others agreed. Chair Mitchell replied that that is important, along with deciding what the PCC's goals are with the funds. He continued that someday, they will probably even have to look at formalizing a process for how to choose travelers. They have had the goal of developing exchanges, but it is possible that someday they might run into some trouble with that if they do not have the right protocol to fall back on. He thanked Mr. Schoefmann for working on this.

5. Communications

Chair Mitchell stated that he received a communication from the Fuller School's German Club. He continued that it has raised $102 for an animal shelter in Einbeck. The students have friends in Germany, and they email back and forth. It is a fun, popular club. The students wanted to do something for their friends in Germany, and decided upon supporting the animal shelter. After school, they offered to do odds and ends for teachers for a dollar an hour, and they also collected some donations. It is a great experience for the students. Discussion ensued. Mr. Madison asked if the travelers will be bringing the animal shelter donations to Einbeck. Chair Mitchell replied yes. Mr. Madison replied that it might be a little late, but maybe the PCC could reach out to the Humane Society and see if anyone wants to join the Einbeck trip. Discussion continued about whether there are open spots for travelers depends on what happens with soccer, so they will have to wait and see.

Chair Mitchell stated that he met with the German teacher of the high school and tried to explain the PCC's work. He continued that he invited the German teacher to come to PCC meetings anytime.

6. Reports

A. Treasurer Report - Eric

Mr. Weisenberger stated that there has been no change to the treasurer report since last month. He continued that the appropriations account has $16,705 and the fundraising account has $17,777.

7. New Business

Chair Mitchell asked if there was any new business. Mr. Weisenberger stated that he just had a question. He continued that the dance exchange is happening, with Einbeck travelers coming to Keene around the same time as the PCC is traveling to Einbeck. He asked if PCC members who are not traveling to Einbeck this time should be participating with the dance exchange in some way. Discussion ensued, and Chair Mitchell stated that they could talk with Kristen Leach about that, because she might want help and might want a representative from the PCC. Mr. Weisenberger stated that he is in the Rotary Club with her, so he can check in with her. Others agreed and thanked Mr. Weisenberger.

Ms. Brunner stated that last time, the PCC talked about some local brewers who might be interested in traveling, and how they did not yet know if there were spots for them. She asked if there is an update on that. Chair Mitchell replied that they left four spots open for brewers. He continued that two people were interested right away, and another two were not sure, and later decided yes, they want to go, so now all four spots are filled. Discussion ensued. Mr. Schoefmann and Chair Mitchell gave more information about how it happened with the brewers.

Chair Mitchell stated that he stressed to the brewers that this is not about sending a certain brand of brewery to Einbeck, but about sending Keene people who are interested in brewing to Germany. The PCC is not supporting one brand/brewery over another. It is an opportunity for Keene people who want to involve themselves in a partnership or friendship with German people who have a common interest in beer, not about trying to promote a brand or product. There was positive response from all of them. He thinks it will be a nice group of people. Discussion continued.

Chair Mitchell stated that the PCC is not bringing a City gift or a Committee gift; they are no longer doing gifts other than personal gifts. He continued that the new travelers will need a heads up about what they should be bringing. Mr. Kuhn stated that they can talk about that at one of the get-togethers.

Chair Mitchell asked when they should have that first meeting for travelers. Discussion ensued. The group decided the first meeting will be August 4, 2026, at 6:00 PM, at Chair Mitchell's house.

8. More Time

A. Fundraisers

i. Cookbook Updates

Chair Mitchell asked if anyone had any update on the cookbook fundraiser. Ms. Brunner asked if the PCC could get a list of what has already been submitted. Mr. Kuhn stated that Mr. Lins has been the one collecting all of the submissions. He continued that he has been waiting for Mr. Lins to contact him and his wife; he does not want to jump in, but he and his wife are glad to help if Mr. Lins reaches out. Mr. Schoefmann stated that he thinks they need a report out from Mr. Lins so people know how to help. Discussion ensued. Chair Mitchell and Mr. Schoefmann noted that anyone who has something to contribute, or wants to help but does not know how, should reach out to Mr. Lins and ask. Mr. Kuhn replied that what he is offering is graphic design and making the book itself, if that type of help is needed, but he does not want to step on toes. Mr. Schoefmann encouraged Mr. Kuhn to check in with Mr. Lins.

ii. Non-profit 501©(3) Update – Andrew

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he does not have any update about the non-profit. Mr. Madison replied that he does not have an update right now, either, but they are working on it.

Ms. Brunner noted that Pumpkin Fest will occur while the group is in Einbeck. She asked if the MC2 School will be running the PCC booth there again. Mr. Schoefmann replied yes, and since he will not be traveling to Einbeck this time, he will jump in and help with that, as will other PCC members who are in Keene then. Chair Mitchell agreed and spoke of the importance of the PCC staying active with that. Discussion ensued.

9. Next Meeting – July 14th, 2026

Chair Mitchell stated that the next PCC meeting is July 14th. He continued that he will make an effort to remind all of the travelers to attend, and by then, he hopes to have all of the email addresses that he assumes Ms. McLaughlin does not have, to give to her.

Mr. Kuhn asked if, once they collate all of the information that the travelers are sending, the travelers could have a copy of that information, so they know the other travelers. Ms. Brunner replied that that is a good idea. Others agreed and discussion ensued.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 5:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Meagan McLaughlin, Staff Liaison