



Village of Hanover Park Administration

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Village President
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James Kemper
Herb Porter
Bob Prigge

Village Manager
Juliana A. Matter

VILLAGE OF HANOVER PARK

SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

2121 Lake Street, Hanover Park, Illinois 60133

Tuesday, June 24, 2021

7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Sister Cities Committee Chair Pamela Fowler.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Pamela Fowler, Trustee Herb Porter, Jessica Ramirez, Darius Robinson

ABSENT: Committee Members: Arnulfo Flores-Auxiliary, Adelaide Grant-Acquah, Gustavo Pineda-Auxiliary, Maria Pineda

ALSO PRESENT: Trustee Liaison James Kemper, Deputy Chief Terrence Sherrill, Staff Liaison Katherine Perez

2. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA:

Motion by Trustee Porter to accept agenda. Second by Darius. Voice Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

3. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS:

None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Trustee Porter to approve meeting minutes from April 13, 2021 and May 27, 2021 (no quorum). Second by Darius. Voice vote: all ayes. No discussion. Motion carried.

5. ACTION ITEMS:

5-a. Penpal program status – to start Fall 2021 at beginning of new school year - Chair Pamela asked new member Jessica Ramirez to “co-chair” and work with Trustee Porter in connecting with the schools to coordinate the penpal letter exchange program. Jessica agreed and provided her phone number so she and Trustee Porter discuss in greater detail later. Chair Pamela advised that the established penpal activities structure would again be followed. Jessica commented that it would be a big undertaking, but that with the general layout set, it would be fine to get restarted. In addition to Ontarioville and Laurel Hill Schools, Trustee Porter said that Parkwood School is also interested in the participating. He believes that by enticing the parent teacher organizations.

to help with the penpal program, that will also encourage them to have more activities and engagement with Sister Cities which would help recruiting efforts. The committee will discuss further the possibility of an initial outreach at St. Ansgar's Mexican Independence event on September 11 where members can staff an information table. It was noted that the committee's brochure is in English only, and Trustee Porter requested that at the next meeting, there be discussion about translation of the brochure into Spanish, including exploration of the cost of translation

- 5-b. Travel planning for 2022 Cape Coast visit and fundraising plans – continued – Due to too many unknowns in the world of travel, next year's proposed group visit to Cape Coast will be deferred to 2023. Fundraising, however, needs to be initiated as soon as possible, with efforts to increase with the creation of an entirely new 501c3 that would be supportive of the whole, not just geared towards Cape Coast as was the focus of the old Friends of Cape Coast 501c3. It was noted that the Friends of Cape Coast registration didn't get renewed. Further discussions regarding a 501c3 will be separate and to occur apart from committee meetings. Trustee Porter urged that discussions get underway. He asked about member availability to arrive early on the date of the next Sister Cities Committee meeting (July 22), so that they could gather in the community room at 6:15 p.m. for a 501c3 planning discussion that would conclude prior to the start of the Sister Cities Committee meeting at 7:00 p.m. Members agreed to do so, and Trustee Porter requested that the community room be reserved accordingly.

Trustee Porter reminded the committee that the Village has been generous in supporting Sister Cities activities with budget funding in the past. Members discussed a few fundraising ideas and described what other organizations have done (virtual wine tasting, poker night / poker tournaments held at a hotel, Chick-Fil-A donation based on a percentage of sales). It was noted that it may be possible to host certain fundraising activities in business parking lots, and Board Liaison Kemper advised that all that may be required to do so is a letter for corporate as is the case for Menard's and Tony's. Jessica suggested that there be focused fundraising discussion at the next meeting and that each member come prepared with a list of fundraising ideas to share with the committee. Thereafter, suggestions can be explored in an effort to finalize a fundraising plan and move forward.

Chair Pamela asked about getting donations from businesses, and Trustee Porter and Trustee Kemper responded that area businesses are already being solicited for donations and sponsorship of Village events and activities.

- 5-c. Cape Coast Improvements – Progress report on sign and status of 2020 scholarship funds – Chair Pamela has talked to Frank who relayed some sad news about the school in Cape Coast where he is presently on site. There is an impasse with the teaching staff. The school is shut down. The school is in deplorable condition. Frank is talking with both parties; it doesn't look good. This situation is impacting the new signage project (school and hospital) which hasn't proceeded yet as Frank would like to have both signs completed at the same time. Members expressed disappointment about this news. Discussion followed about the need to suspend distribution of money to Cape Coast for the 2021 scholarships and general needs, putting the matter hold until the situation resolves itself. With this in mind, Trustee Porter commented that with regard to the 2021 budget, he'd like to go before the board to request authorization to use the

money allocated for the Cape Coast scholarships and shift use of that money to instead make a donation at the orphanage. He asked the committee to come together in considering and agreeing to proceed with the suggestion.

Trustee Porter motioned that a request be put forward to redirect funding away from the school in Cape Coast (Hanover Park Primary School) and to instead send that money as a donation to the orphanage. Second by Chair Pamela. Voice vote. All ayes. Motion carried.

It was noted that in addition to support of the school, the Hanover Park Sister Cities Committee has also assisted with other projects in Cape Coast including the play center at the hospital and the battered women's shelter (i.e., sheltered waiting area) at the regional police headquarters.

- 5-d.** Focus on Valparaiso – An overview of some previous Valparaiso-related activities was provided including reference to items listed in the brochure. Activities were noted such as celebrating milestone sister city anniversaries; hosting receptions for travel delegations (Valparaiso Mayor and students from the University of Zacatecas); selling candies; supplying uniforms for the boys soccer team; and participation at St. Ansgar's Mexican Independence event (parade). Unfortunately, the Valparaiso sub committee came upon hard times over the past year so there hasn't been any activity. It was noted that a big soccer event was in the process of being planned for 2020, but that fell through due to the shutdown and events getting cancelled. Now with everything opening back up, there can be a renewed focus on activities. The committee is pleased that new member Jessica will be able to assist in reestablish connections with Valparaiso.
- 5-e.** Funds for schools in Valparaiso (scholarships) and Cape Coast (scholarships and general needs) – timing of distribution and verification of contact information for designated recipients – Jessica will reach out to the school principal in Valparaiso to confirm the name of the designated recipient; verify that the contact and banking details are up to date; ensure that ID credentials are valid; and verify that school is open with classes being conducted. Katherine will email a legible copy of the information currently on file to assist in verifying the information. As was discussed earlier in the meeting, distribution of funds allocated for Cape Coast is on hold.
- 5-f.** Feedback from Illinois State annual conference – Chair Pamela, Trustee Porter, Frank and Jessica participated in the Illinois state virtual conference on April 23. There were connection and sound quality issues that made it difficult to stay online and hear everything. Trustee Porter noted that there would be a sister cities presentation at the annual Illinois Municipal League conference and that sister city representatives from around the state traditionally attend the awards portion of the conference. This year's IML conference is scheduled for September 23 – 25 (Thursday through Saturday), with the sister cities presentation traditionally taking place on Friday. Pending receipt of confirmed details about the IML conference, Chair Pamela suggested that consideration be given to attending the IML conference as a group. Trustee Porter said he will find out the attendance requirements and report back to the committee.
- 5-g.** Review of 2021 budget goals in preparation for developing 2022 budget request – The committee's budget request will need to be in finalized form by July 28, 2021, so that it can be reviewed and entered into the system. It was announced at the Village's budget kick-off meeting that budget requests are to remain flat with no increases over the 2021 budget. The budget goals

are to align with the Village's strategic goals (financial health; focused economic development and re-development; maintain and enhance infrastructure; community image and identity; effective governance) and the Village's visions (to be recognized as a great community to live, visit, work and do business; service through innovation; fiscally responsible and transparent). There was discussion regarding the 2020 budget performance, status of 2021 budget goals, additional accomplishments in 2021 and proposed goals for 2022. Attendees provided input and verbiage to draft the required budget documents. Jessica provided a budget performance analysis which helped determine the line item amounts to be requested for 2022. Although not approved in the final 2021 budget, the committee wishes to request funds to help pay for the expense of two members' attendance at the annual 2022 Sister Cities International conference, specifically the registration fee (2 x \$650) and a subsidy to help cover the associated transportation/lodging costs (2 x \$500).

The proposed 2022 budget request will include line items for office supplies (**\$100**); memberships/subscriptions (**\$670**); postage (**\$150**); annual SCI conference registration for two attendees (**\$1,300**); travel expense related to cost of attending annual SCI conference (**\$1,000**); annual state conference registration (**\$900**); hosting special events for Juneteenth and Mexican American Heritage (**\$1,500**); scholarship donation for Jesus Gonzales Ortega School in Valparaiso (**\$1,000**); and advertising in the Zacatecas Festival program booklet (**\$300**). (Total amount \$6,920.)

STATUS OF 2021 BUDGET GOALS

-- Engage local Sister City groups; and participate in other area cultural events --

Incomplete - Nothing to report due to COVID and the cancellation of events.

-- Engage community service groups and Village committees in opportunities to interact internationally -- *Incomplete* - Nothing to report due to COVID and the cancellation of events.

-- Award scholarships to students in Cape Coast and Valparaiso. -- *In progress.*

Scholarships will be awarded to students at the Jesus Gonzales Ortega School in Valparaiso pending receipt of verified contact information for the designated recipient and confirmation that the school is open. No funds from the 2021 Sister Cities Committee budget will be distributed to Hanover Park Primary School in Cape Coast because it has shut down operations and classes aren't being conducted.

-- Attend annual state conference -- *Completed* – Four committee members participated in the 2021 online virtual state conference on April 23, including member Frank Grant-Acquah who attended in person, representing the committee and also serving in the role of an Illinois Sister Cities Association board member.

-- Pursue school-to-school relationships with Cape Coast, Valparaiso and Hanover Park -- *Incomplete* - There is no activity to report due to COVID and classes being conducted remotely.

-- Host 2021 Black History Month event -- *Cancelled* – The 2021 Black History Month was initially postponed because it wasn't possible to plan for an in-person event in February due to restrictions on group gathering. It was anticipated that another (replacement) event could possibly be held in June (Juneteenth), but again it wasn't possible to plan for an in-person event since the status of the COVID restrictions couldn't be confirmed far enough in time to allow for adequate planning.

-- Participate in Mexican Independence celebration -- *Pending* – The committee will support an event at St. Ansgar Church in support of Mexican Independence.

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- New member Jessica Ramirez was appointed to the Sister Cities Committee in 2021.

2022 BUDGET GOALS

- 1. Engage local Sister City groups; and participate in other area cultural events.**
First through fourth quarters. The Committee will meet area Sister City groups to share experiences, and it will participate in cultural events in the area.
- 2. Engage community service groups and Village committees / commissions in opportunities to interact internationally.** *First through fourth quarters.* The committee will engage community service groups (e.g. Lions, Scouts) and Village committees to act together and develop strategies for greater visibility and exposure of Sister Cities.
- 3. Award scholarships to students in Valparaiso.**
Third quarter. The Committee will award scholarships to students at the school in Valparaiso.
- 4. Attend annual state conference.**
Second quarter. Committee members will register and attend the Illinois Sister Cities State conference historically held in April.
- 5. Pursue school-to-school relationships with Cape Coast, Valparaiso and Hanover Park.**
First through fourth quarters. The committee will continue coordinating the penpal program for school students.
- 6. Host Juneteenth event.**
Second quarter. The Committee will host a Juneteenth event in June.
- 7. Participate in Mexican Independence celebration.**
Third quarter. Committee members will participate in an activity supportive of the Mexican Independence celebration in September.
- 8. Attend annual Sister Cities International conference.**
Third through fourth quarters. Two committee members will register for and attend the 2022 Sister Cities International conference.

6. TOWNHALL SESSION

None.

7. OLD BUSINESS (NON-ACTION ITEMS):

7-a. Recap of recent activities

- The annual Illinois Sister Cities Association conference was held virtually on April 23.

7-b. Budget activity update

- Katherine advised that payment for the Sister Cities International annual dues (\$610) has been requisitioned.

8. NEW BUSINESS (NON-ACTION ITEMS):

8-a. Upcoming event announcements

- Annual SCI virtual conference, July 15-16, 2021 – Registration is now open.

8-b. Agenda topics for upcoming meetings

- Focus on Valparaiso
- Participation Mexican Independence event at St. Ansgar's
- Fundraising Ideas
- Cape Coast improvements – Progress report on signs and status of 2020 scholarship funds

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Pamela to adjourn at 8:51 p.m. Second by Trustee Porter. Voice Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes recorded and transcribed by:

Katherine Perez, Interim Staff Liaison

Pamela Fowler, Chair
Hanover Park Sister Cities Committee