

Anchorage Sister Cities Commission Meeting
Wednesday, March 24, 2021 @ 6:00pm
Conducted via Microsoft Teams

Foster mutual respect, friendship and goodwill between Anchorage and foreign sister cities; and facilitate commerce, economic, cultural and educational exchanges.

Commissioner Roll Call: 6:10 p.m.

- Erin Kirkland, Chair - present
- Hiroko Harada, Vice Chair - present
- Yeon Min, Treasurer - present
- Alex Post, Secretary - present
- Jin Chen - present
- James Gaddis - present
- Nan Ha - present
- Yohyon Pharr - excused
- Robin Brooks - present
- Lo Crawford - excused
- Aaron Leggett - absent

Staff Support – Camilla Hussein-Scott, Special Assistant to the Mayor
- present

Assembly Liaison - Assembly member Christopher Constant - absent

1. Call to order, Introduction of guests

1. Mike Kaplan: interested in becoming a Commission member. Long time faculty member at APU in Outdoor Studies. Also serves as the Eco League Rep. APU is a member of the UArctic, along with UAA, UAF, and the Anchorage Museum. He worked with an individual from Tromso through the Museum and is interested in extending the collaboration with Tromso. Will be teaching a class at this time until the end of April. He will try to attend the next meeting.

Erin let him know that as soon as he is confirmed by the Assembly then he will be added to the Google Drive access.

2. Approval of agenda - Approve: Yeon Second: Robin

3. Approval of previous meeting minutes Approve: Jin Second: Hiroko

1. Erin to update the Commissioners roster with emails and Alex will update all the Google Drive permissions next week based on those email addresses. Erin will also get the minutes posted in the muni SCC website once some site issues are fixed. If the Google Drive is still not working for everyone after permissions are fixed then Alex can start emailing minutes after the meetings. April meeting to include Google Drive training.

4. Treasurer's Report (Yeon Min)

1. No transactions in March. \$5,924.49 is the current balance.

5. New Business

- Monthly presentations by each city team - Lo Crawford/James Gaddis
 - Suggestion to have commissioners make a presentation regarding their cities and contacts. One city per month. There was general agreement that it would be good idea, but need to keep it to a time limit.
 - Hiroko: can we review sister city relationships every five years to see if we want to continue the relationship. Erin: how does a city determine if the relationship is due to continue? Camilla will pose the question to the deputy Chief of Staff to see if there is an inactive status.
 - Camilla suggested reaching out to Magadan via CRAFT one last time. They may have some connections. Erin and Hiroko can reach out.

6. Old Business

- Update on new commissioner applications (Camilla Hussein-Scott)
 - Still awaiting further applications. Brandon Locke from world languages at ASD is interested.
- Moving Commission bank account to Muni (Camilla Hussein-Scott, Yeon Min, Erin Kirkland)

- Camilla will redraft the resolution and forward for Commission approval (was 2020-01 resolution). Will hold on further bank account action until resolution is approved.
- Erin, Yeon, Hiroko will go to visit the bank to make sure that the accounts are accessible to them. It is unknown if there is a checkbook or debit card linked to the account.

7. Subcommittees

- Airport signage (Erin Kirkland/Robin Brooks)
 - No updates, Erin and Robin will reach out.
- Website/social media (James Gaddis)
 - No updates. Yeon will remove Ruth from the website.
- Events/Activities (Lo Crawford, Erin Kirkland)
 - Monthly internal presentations under consideration (see above)

8. Sister Cities International (Erin Kirkland)

- Member portal access for ASCC.
- Erin will resend the link once Google Drive is updated with new access controls.
- We all have access to webinars that are useful.

9. Sister Cities Reports

- Chitose (April 21, 1969) - Hiroko Harada, Aaron Leggett
 - No updates this time. The only activity is related to Dimond High School and the exchange program. ASD is prohibiting any exchange programs at the current time. Brandon Locke reached out to see if Sister Cities International can assist. Ongoing meetings are happening to see if there is a solution.
 - Hiroko and Erin attended the 10th anniversary of the 2011 Japan earthquake. Hiroko thanked the Mayor for her message and asked Camilla to pass this on. Hiroko has sent more information to everyone that participated. A story about the event was published in Japan on their Facebook. Erin asked James to include in our Facebook page.
 - Hiroko received an award as Outstanding Educator of the Year.
 - Once the UAA campus is open we will have a meeting in Monty Dickerson Tea Room.
- Tromso (Sept. 26, 1969) - Vacant
 - no update
- Whitby (March 15, 1978) - Alex Post, Yeon Min
 - Whitby has been awarded 17 million GBP in Town Deal funding and are proposing arts, building, and community projects. Alex and Yeon will reach out to let them know that Anchorage would like to see if there are opportunities to be involved.
- Darwin (Sept. 11, 1982) - Erin Kirkland, Robin Brooks

- Darwin is moving ahead with a Sister Cities Expo online at some point this summer. Will be asking Anchorage to provide information about the city. Erin has asked Camilla to send it to the Mayor's office. The city does not know what will happen after July 1. The city asked that Erin keep in contact. Erin is concerned that this is a big event and there isn't Commissioner bandwidth to plan for a large event with high expectations from Darwin. Erin will send out the information to the Commission so that everyone can determine if this is an event that we can support.
- Incheon (Nov. 15, 1986) - Yohyon Pharr, Nan Ha
 - No updates
- Magadan (June 22, 1991) - Lo Crawford
 - Having a hard time getting in touch with them. Erin and Hiroko will make one more attempt to contact them.
- Harbin (2018) - Jin Chen, James Gaddis
 - A South China Post journalist has been in touch with Jin. He was in Anchorage reporting on the summit last week. He had questions about sister cities. She will reach out to James when the journalist contacts her with a date for a meeting.
 - The Mayor's office in Harbin reached out. Jin's firm was contracted to help with the event and after that the office contacted her. She needs to find letters from the Anchorage mayor to the Harbin mayor. Jin has access to the Google Drive and will check that the letters are not in there before Camilla pursues further.
 - There is a pen-pal program for age 15-18 available. Jin to send a link to Erin for review to see if we can promote it.

10. Comments / Announcements

1. Erin: What do commissioners think about swapping around cities? Is this something that we can look at? We can have more than two people per city. It is historically what has happened.

Hiroko: we should talk about what the issue is to see if there is a resolution. Are the cities we have interested in our city? Many cities have staff that work with sister cities full time, most of the commission work is volunteer.

Camilla: Anchorage does not have an international team, Camilla deals with those requests. All of the volunteer work is appreciated.

Hiroko: Is there more funding available for the commission as part of the city's international presence?

Camilla: These are conversations that can happen once the bank account transfer is complete.

Adjourned: 7.25pm (Approved: Robin; Second: Jin)

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 @ 6:00pm (conducted via Teams video conference)

Adjourn