MINUTES
June 11, 2019

Members Present: Darlene Blake, Madeline Goebel, Heidi Hendrickson, Doug Lewis, Roger Nowadzky, Edgar Ortiz, Peggy Patrick, Ginny Renda, Vidal Spaine, Eleanor Zeff, Li Zhao Mandelbaum

Members Absent: Kerry Bowen, Sherill Whisenand, Hollie Zajicek

Guests Present: Dustin Ingram, Director, Community & Economic Development Outreach, Ames Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development Commission
Wesley Pratt, Student of E-Sport, Grand View University
Wenyan Wu, Member, Shijiazhuang, China City Committee
Carl McPherson

Staff Present: Joyce Warburton, Alex Hassel

On Tuesday, June 11, 2019, Chairperson Mr. Nowadzky called the meeting of the Greater Des Moines Sister Cities Commission to order at 5:07 PM in the MacRae Conference Room, Richard A. Clark Municipal Services Center, 1551 East Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway.

MINUTES
Mr. Spaine moved to approve the May 14, 2019 minutes as presented. Ms. Hendrickson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT
Financial report for July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019 was distributed indicating May 2019 expenses of $313.78 to reimburse Mr. Nowadzky ($199.78) and Mr. Lewis ($114) for their travel expenses related to the April 2019 trip to Kofu, Japan; $17.55 for publication of the April 19, 2019 Sister Cities Commission minutes in the Business Record; $195 to Mr. Nowadzky for gifts purchased for Shijiazhuang delegation trip in May 2019; $61.25 to American Marking for name badges for five (5) Commissioners; and $240 to Polk County Treasurer for printing business cards for 12 Commissioners. Ms. Hendrickson moved to approve the financial report. Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Ms. Zhao Mandelbaum moved to expend up to $300 on gifts for Mr. Nowadzky to take to Pristina, Kosovo in June 2019. Dr. Zeff seconded the motion. Motion carried.

COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT
Mr. Nowadzky shared the following written report.
This will be my last Commission Chairperson Report for Fiscal Year 2018-2019. July 1st starts our new municipal year. In July, I will be submitting my Annual Report to the Commission. We have had a very active year with a number of major activities and an internal organizational restructuring process to better serve our sister city relationships, to enhance the management of the Commission's operation, and to better achieve the Commission's purpose. That process will continue with some fine tuning to meet the present and future tasks of the Commission. As Commissioners leave and new individuals join the Commission, I will be doing some reshuffling on committee assignments to maximize the skills and talents of Commissioners and to appropriately spread the load of a working commission.

This past month, I and Commission Vice Chairperson Patrick had a number of meetings and communications involving the marketing of the Commission and its mission, involving heads of non-profit associations in collaborative efforts including staffing of the Commission’s booth at the Des Moines Arts Festival, and with individuals who had applied for present vacant seats on the Commission. We met with the Greater Des Moines Partnership in regards to possible business development opportunities with our Sister Cities of St. Etienne, France and Pristina Kosovo. We also met twice with the new Kosovo Chief of the Mission, Artan Duraku, in preparation for the City’s delegation to Pristina the last week of this month. Please read her Vice Chairperson report carefully.

In this regard, there are two main Commission activities remaining in June. The first is the Commission's participation in the Des Moines Arts Festival, June 28th, 29th, and 30th. I will defer to the Commission Vice Chairperson on further communication of the marketing training for Commissioners staffing our booth and the final staffing schedule.

The second main remaining June Commission activity is the City delegation to Pristina, Kosovo, also the last week in June. The delegation will consist of Mayor Cownie and myself as Chair of the Commission. As you know, last November the Commission hosted a mayoral delegation from the City of Pristina. At that time, Des Moines and Pristina, the capital city of Kosovo, signed a sister city agreement making Pristina our 5th sister city. The purpose of this mayoral return visit is to create a Memorandum of Understanding or a work plan for joint activities and programs under the sister city agreement.

Planning is also being finalized for our first major activity of the new fiscal year. On July 14th, the Commission will be co-sponsoring with Alliance Française of Central Iowa its 4th annual Bastille Day community celebration. Our French connection is through our sister city of St. Etienne. This year, July 14th Bastille Day falls on a Sunday. Not only put the event on your calendar, but invite your family, neighbors and friends to join us. It is a fun event that they will not want to miss. The event is a pot luck dinner free to the public, with food, wine, music, singing, and games. Further details will be provided by the St. Etienne Committee.

Again, please read the Commission Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Committee Chair reports prior to our Commission meetings, in preparation for the meeting. If you have noticed it has greatly expedited our meetings and has left time for matters needing clarification and discussion.

COMMISSION VICE CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT
Ms. Patrick shared the following written report.

Des Moines Arts Festival. We are in final preparation for the arts festival June 28-30. Non-profit organizations who are assisting at our activities table are Des Moines Downtown Chamber, Friendship Force, Japan American Society of Iowa (JASI), and Iowa Department of Human Rights. We still have a couple of open times and will continue to find other non-
profits who may want to participate. Each of these organizations will provide two volunteers to help at the activities table. The Commission will also provide one Commissioner or volunteer to help at the activities table and one Commissioner to greet the crowd and market the Sister Cities. Any positions not filled at any of the sessions will need to be filled by Commissioners, so I may be approaching you closer to the festival in that regard.

Commissioners working the marketing aspect of the festival have been asked to attend a training session so that we are all on the same page about what information we are providing about the Commission and what questions may need to be diverted elsewhere. Thank you to Madeline Goebel for helping us with the marketing end of this event!

Supplies have been purchased for the pig corner bookmark, and I will ask during the Commission meeting for volunteers to help cut and fold sometime during the week of June 17th. We will decide the place and time based on the volunteers’ availability.

**Fiscal Budget.** We are required to turn in general expenses by June 21st to be paid out of this fiscal year. We are purchasing marketing items, such as a custom tablecloth and bookmarks, and will expend what we can in this regard.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Shijiazhuang Committee**

Ms. Zhao Mandelbaum shared the following written report related to the May 14-22, 2019 trip to Shijiazhuang, China:

**Day 1 (5/15):** Airport pick up and check in the hotel in Beijing. Received a tour at the Ambassador Residency and then a dinner with the Ambassador and Chris Branstad.

**Day 2 (5/16)**

Morning: Grand View University delegation had a tour of Beijing E-sport tournament stadium and had collaboration talks with the marketing director of the top E-sport team in China.

Kuder: Had a business meeting with an education group that could distribute Kuder products in China to about 25% of all the schools.

Afternoon: Attended Shijiazhuang Investment Forum. All delegation members learned a lot about Shijiazhuang’s various industries, investment policy, and best practices.

Evening: Delegation had a wonderful Beijing duck dinner thanks to Kuder’s generosity.

**Day 3 (5/17)**

Morning: Departed hotel in Beijing and drove to Langfang hotel.

Afternoon: Attended Hebei Friendship City exhibition opening ceremony and walked around all the booths.

Evening: Dinner at hotel.

**Day 4 (5/18)**

Morning: Attended first Roundtable Hebei International friendship city meeting.

Afternoon: All paid a formal visit to the Lang Fang Trade Show. We saw equipment to educate people about the winter Olympic Games, food & beverage, clothing, construction materials, industrial components, drones, AI, etc. We had a wonderful time!
Evening: Official dinner hosted by Hebei Government. The Deputy Governor and the Deputy Secretary General, among other officials (the Vice Director of Agriculture Department, the Vice Director of Education Department, the Vice Director of Develop and Exchange Commission, the Director and Deputy Director of Foreign Affairs Director of Hebei) attended the dinner. Deputy Governor Xia toasted all delegation members. It was a very memorable evening.

**Day 5 (5/19)**

Morning: Departed hotel and drove to Shijiazhuang.

Afternoon: Visited Hebei museum and learned about the rich history and cultural heritage in this province. Then the group headed over to the “Ancient city”, which contains a very well-preserved 2,000 years old town, city wall, pagodas, and temples.

Evening: Dinner hosted by Shijiazhuang Foreign Affairs Office. We reviewed our friendship in the past 34 years and discussed possible future corporation.

**Day 6 (5/20)**

Morning: Visited Shijiazhuang vocational school and discussed possible exchange in e-sport with Grand View University.

Afternoon: Roundtable meeting with the Director of Education, Agriculture, Human Resource, Commutation and Tourism. We discussed many exchange ideas and possible projects.

Evening: Dinner with Foreign Affairs Office.

**Day 7 (5/21)**

Morning: Took bullet train from Shijiazhuang back to Beijing.

Afternoon: Arrival to Beijing and culture exploration.

**Day 8 (2/22)**

Departure back to the U.S.

Ms. Zhao Mandelbaum introduced Wesley Pratt, Student of E-sport of Grand View University, who participated via phone. Mr. Pratt shared his experience as a member of the delegation. Mr. Pratt indicated he is a Junior at Grand View University majoring in Marketing and is an e-sports athlete. He primarily plays League of Legends, which is the most popular video game in the world; and he is in the top 100 in the nation for that game. He is considering going to China in the future to participate in an e-sport tournament. E-sports have no language or border barriers and is an excellent way to reach across cultures and distances. Mr. Pratt made the following recommendations for future trips: 1) Check into mobile phone carriers to make sure international plans are available. 2) Provide “survival techniques” for when traveling as part of a delegation.

Ms. Zhao Mandelbaum introduced Mr. Dustin Ingram, Director, Community & Economic Development Outreach, Ames Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development. Mr. Ingram shared the following presentation:
Introduction to the ACC and AEDC

- The Ames Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development Commission serve the Ames and Story County communities.
- Under the Chamber umbrella, there are a multitude of affiliate organisations.
- A robust and specialized staff provides services in all aspects of economic development.
- The Community & Economic Development Outreach role administers services to small- to medium-sized cities in Story County.

Thank You to the GDSM Sister Cities Commission!

While not included in the Greater Des Moines region, our office is thankful for the opportunity to strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones.

Our Main Takeaways

- Cultural exposure introduced a better way of thinking about international relationships.
- Hebei Province, and Shijiazhuang specifically, is ripe for an enhancement of its economic relationship with Des Moines and Central Iowa.
- We have similar goals.
- New friendships have potential to flourish.

Visiting During the Sino – U.S. Trade War

- Present tensions affecting our economy from the local to federal levels in the USA
- Economic development depends on mutual goals, awareness of competitive advantages, and partnerships.
- There is room for a local response to this challenge.

Locally, we want the same things.

- Beautification and tree-planting in China shows a desire to enhance quality of place while improving its environment.
- The Langfang Fair demonstrates a commitment to innovation that solve our most pressing global issues.
- Advanced K-12 education shows an acknowledgement of the critical need for workforce and skills development.
- The first Hebei Sister City Exhibition reflects an eagerness to maintain and expand global diplomatic relationships.
Mr. Ingram spoke about the Ames Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Commission (which is similar to the Greater Des Moines Partnership). They had been invited to participate in this delegation trip, when the Greater Des Moines Partnership was unable to.

Mr. Ingram also presented a check for $500 for the Friends of Sister Cities Commission from the Ames Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Commission.

**Stavropol Committee**
Mr. Spaine shared the following written report.

Stavropol responded to my request for an invitation to the Stavropol Day celebration in September saying that they have not established a date for the celebration because they will be thick in election campaigns for regional representatives during that time. They promise to get back to me as soon as they have a date.

Tatiana reported to me that they are fully on board with the idea of doing art exchange with our Des Moines School District. As a matter of fact, to show that they are really serious with the idea, they are prepared to send more drawings or paintings around the theme of "Global Warming". Our students in Des Moines will have to respond in kind. They have also been informed that our students are currently on summer break.

I received from Stavropol the names of the schools and contact persons to be able to facilitate school partnerships in the near future. These schools, I was informed, have total
immersion programs that gives opportunities to students to study intensive English Language. They informed me that the students who attend these schools are well versed in the English Language and learn most of their subjects in the English Language. More to come.

From: Шмырькова Татьяна Николаевна [mailto:TN.Shmyrkova@stavadm.ru]
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2019 4:57 AM
To: Spaine, Vidal <vidal.spaine@dmschools.org>

Dear Mr. Vidal Spaine,

In accordance with your request we send the updated information about the partner schools in Stavropol and the contacts of the persons in charge of communication with the educational institutions of Des Moines:

1. Municipal budget educational institution Secondary school with in-depth study of English № 1 of Stavropol
   Website: www.перваяшкола26.рф, Email: sch_1@stavadm.ru
   School Principal: Ms. Irina Shatskaya, office phone number +7(8652) 23-46-62
   Person in Charge: Ms. Tatiana Cherevko, cell phone number +7-903-417-24-85

2. Municipal autonomous educational institution gymnasium № 24 of Stavropol named after Lieutenant General of Justice M.G. Yadrov
   Website: www.stavgymn24.ru, Email: gimn24@yandex.ru
   School Principal: Ms. Alexandra Budyak, office phone number +7(8652)77-23-72
   Person in Charge: Ms. Lyudmila Fedotova, phone number +7(8652)77-23-71, cell phone number +7-909-768-14-42

3. Municipal budget educational institution secondary school with in-depth study of the English language № 42 of the city of Stavropol
   Website: www.stavschool42.ru, Email: sch_42@stavadm.ru
   School Principal: Ms. Natalia Voronina, office phone number +7(8652)71-18-73
   Person in Charge: Ms. Tatiana Mayorova, phone number, cell phone number +7-988-709-88-40

4. Municipal autonomous educational institution Lyceum № 5 of Stavropol
   Website: http://stavsch5.ru/, Email: sch_5@stavadm.ru
   Lyceum Principal: Ms. Nataliya Cheremnykh, outer office phone number +7(8652)94-14-15
   Person in Charge: Ms. Nina Grivennaya, cell phone number +7-928-012-01-43

With a view to restore cooperation, could you please send us the information about the partner schools in Des Moines, and the contacts of the persons in charge of cooperation in each school. The above-mentioned Stavropol educational institutions are ready to participate in joint programs and projects.

Sincerely yours,

Tatiana Vasilenko
Head of International and Interregional Relations Department
Stavropol City Administration
m. (8652) 26-41-79

Saint-Etienne Committee
Dr. Zeff provided the following written report.

The St. Etienne committee met and worked on identifying and justifying non-travel opportunities. We also researched a travel expense proposal in case we are able to arrange a visit to St. Etienne in May 2020. In response to the letter we sent in April, we received a
letter from St. Etienne’s City councilor in charge of Sister Cities and International affairs. The letter was the first direct connection we had received since 2015, and we are happy to be back in direct contact. The St. Etienne Committee is working to add a few more details to our information power point.

A. Non-Travel Opportunities

1. Des Moines Schools educational connections—via International Baccalaureate program (real time communication of classrooms, skype, etc.: Opportunity for professional exchange of ideas between educators; development of cross-curricular programs, history, sociology classes not just language programs)
   A. Involves the community
   B. Creates awareness of sister city connections
   C. Promotes international awareness, inter-cultural communication, understanding and respect (also an International Baccalaureate goal)
   D. To make Des Moines citizens more aware of the opportunities afforded by having Sister Cities

2. Establish closer Arts and Music (Performing Arts) connections: Connect Modern Art Museum in St. Etienne with Des Moines Art Center; The Des Moines Metro Opera with the Massenet Opera Company
   A. Creates awareness of sister city connections
   B. Promotes international awareness, inter-cultural communication, understanding and respect
   C. Des Moines Metro Opera will celebrate its 45th Anniversary in 2020 and is interested in attracting writers and singers from around the world (i.e., St. Etienne)
   D. To make Des Moines citizens more aware of the opportunities afforded by having Sister Cities

3. European Heritage Association and other Arts and Culinary Festivals, and French organizations such as The Alliance Française of Greater Des Moines, etc.
   A. Involves the community
   B. Creates awareness of sister city connections
   C. Promotes international awareness, inter-cultural communication, understanding and respect (also an International Baccalaureate goal)
   D. To make Des Moines citizens more aware of the opportunities afforded by having Sister Cities
   E. In addition and other thoughts on this connections:
      As I (from Sarah Voss) think about agenda items #C and D, I thought that perhaps a link to an official video from the tourist board might be an appealing inclusion, for residents of our city to get a glimpse of what our sister city looks like? It could also be used to present the city to potential points of connection in DSM.

   Some links to consider when we discuss: [www.youtube.com/user/saintetiennetourisme](http://www.youtube.com/user/saintetiennetourisme)

4. Business and trade connections
   A. Involves the community
   B. Creates awareness of sister city connections
C. Promotes international awareness, inter-cultural communication, understanding and respect (also an International Baccalaureate goal)
D. Establish economic links that connect the cities (Berkwood Farms), (Confluence Brewing Co.)
E. To make Des Moines citizens more aware of the opportunities afforded by having Sister Cities

B. Contact with St. Etienne:

We have reconnected after five years.

We received a letter from St. Etienne in response to a letter we recently sent along with our power point detaining the relationship between Des Moines and St. Etienne over almost 35 years. This letter acknowledges our strong and ongoing connections with St. Etienne: the Chefs’ connections and the school exchanges, but does not want to encourage any “grand events” (exchange visiting delegations, for example) between the two cities at this time. At the same time, however, they have forwarded our letter and the PowerPoint to some business connections; a Robert Selby, who would like to foster some new connections with Des Moines businesses. We are beginning to work on these new ideas for Sister City links.

Here is the letter I wrote to Roger communication my thoughts on the recent developments.

I am pleased that we have made some useful contact with St. Etienne after a five-year hiatus. We have some excellent existing connections that continue to link our cities together positively and to the benefit of both entities, and we have identified some new possible connections, some of which were facilitated by St. Etienne. These connections have been acknowledged by St. Etienne and have benefited Des Moines, creating jobs with the chefs’ connections and promoting cultural and language-learning experiences for Des Moines area residents. These ongoing projects signify a successful and ongoing Sister City relationship.

I suggest that we follow up on our new leads: work with Robert Selby on business connections; get Olivia Howe linked to St. Etienne teachers and the Johnston school program as well as to the Educational Affairs City Councilor; continue attempts to connect the Des Moines Metro Opera to the Massenet Opera by contacting the Massenet Opera itself (contact information on the power point and below) and the Cultural Affairs Councilor; continue brief contacts with Denis Combe, the Sister City connection on the St. Etienne City Council; work on linking Drake University professors with the conservatoire in St. Etienne and with the Design groups, etc. We have several ideas and approaches, for mutually profitable connections, we can use without costing DM or St. Etienne money. I see the facilitating of contacts and profitable links between the cities as worthwhile and I believe that the letter we received from St. Etienne also felt this way. When the Sister City idea first developed around 40 years ago, many cities viewed the organization and the connections to be made as paths to development and internationalization. St. Etienne, awakening to more centrist city governments and decentralization of the national government decision-making style, might have over done its modernization drive and in fact has many, many Sister Cities. At some point, this must have become unmanageable, as each city wanted special treatment for visiting dignitaries, etc. and the expense of hosting them became too heavy and without enough benefits to the city’s residents. So the current city administration has chosen to downsize these relationships and to act, as I see it, more as a facilitator to enable city entities to continue past relationships and make new ones. We have
to find relationships which will benefit both cities to show that a Sister City connection is good for our cities.

We have now re-established our ongoing relationship, and we need to continue to demonstrate to St. Etienne the usefulness of our Sister City relationships and forge new ones where we see (or are offered == Robert Selby) opportunities. There is no reason to discontinue this relationship in my opinion. Other European cities will be in similar positions, and the City Council in DM also promotes us as facilitating international connections. In my opinion, moving ahead as a “facilitator” is a perfectly fine position to be in at this point, and we will also be in a good place, if and when, the St. Etienne City Council changes after new elections.

School and Education Contacts in St. Etienne for Olivia Howe

www.saint-etienne.fr/

Corinne.L'Harmet-Odin@saint-etienne.fr: (9ème adjointe on the St. Etienne City Council in charge of higher education affairs) and: Sami.Kefi-Jérome@staint-etienne.fr (also educational affairs, elementary schools and connections to the national government, 10th adjoint)

Ville de Saint-Étienne / Saint-Étienne City Council
Hôtel de Ville - BP 503
42 007 Saint-Étienne Cedex 1: www.saint-etienne.fr
Contact the French and Spanish teachers in the Johnston schools who have overseas exchanges.

Proposed Travel Expenses to St. Etienne for 1 to 2 people (if possible to arrange)

Flight to Paris = @ $1500
Train From Paris to St. Etienne (2nd) $200
Hotels = @ $120 X 5 = $600
Food = $75 X 5 = $375
MISC. = @$325
Total for one person = @ $3000; X 2 = @ $6000

Volunteers will be needed for the Commission’s Marketing Table, as well as to assist with set up and tear down. Please considering attending and lending a hand where needed. It is hoped Mayor Cownie will again be able to attend and participate in the program.
Mr. Spaine reported that a group of French students will be at Drake during this same period of time, and hopefully they will be able to attend the event.

Kofu Committee
No report was provided for Kofu.

Pristina Committee
Ms. Patrick shared the following written report.

Pristina, Kosovo. Mayor Cownie and Roger Nowadzky will be traveling to Pristina on June 23rd to meet with Mayor Ahmeti and other principals to reach an action plan between our two cities. Roger and I met with the Chief of Missions, Artan Duraku, in the local Kosovo Consulate’s office with Mayor Cownie joining us by telephone. Ideas were exchanged by both sides as to how we can connect our two cities. Roger is in the process of drafting an action plan to work with in Pristina. Pristina is in the process of setting up meetings for Roger with those who will be involved in making the exchanges happen.

Italy Committee
Nothing new was reported.

Education Committee
Mr. Spaine indicated he is still in need of the requested information from a couple of the City Committees that will be shared with Ms. Olivia Howe, International Baccalaureate (IB) Development Coordinator with the Des Moines Public Schools in the near future.

OLD BUSINESS
Des Moines Arts Festival – June 28-30, 2019
Discussion was held regarding either moving forward or pulling out of participation in the Festival. It was decided to move forward and work on information related to marketing of the Commission.

NEW BUSINESS
Mr. Nowadzky reported that Bill Sherman and Shelley Bain have chosen to resign from their positions on the Commission. Efforts are being taken to fill these and other vacancies on the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT
Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Spaine and seconded by Mr. Ortiz. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM.

NEXT MEETING
The next meeting will be July 9, 2019 at 5:00 PM in the MacRae Conference Room, Richard A. Clark Municipal Service Center, 1551 East Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway.