



DRAFT

**City of Bellingham
Mayor's Sister Cities
Advisory Board**

July 20, 2021

MINUTES

Unless noted, all officially appointed Sister Cities representatives were in attendance.

Absent: Ross Grier, So Youn Park

Staff attending: Councilmember Pinky Vargas, 4th Ward; Brooksana Raney, Mayor's Executive Assistant

Current Sister Cities roster can be found on the City website:

[Sister Cities Advisory Board Roster - City of Bellingham, WA \(cob.org\)](https://www.cob.org/sister-cities)

Welcome

- In president Grier's absence, the meeting was run by Board Secretary, Aidan Maher.
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Roll Call and Introductions

Since the presence of representatives may be seen on the screen, via the Zoom platform, roll call was skipped.

- No visitors
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Approval of Agenda

- Motion made by Mary Hooker, seconded by Aidan Maher.
 - Motion passed.
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Approval of April 2021 minutes

- Motion made by Mary Hooker, seconded by Aidan Maher.
 - Motion passed.
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Public Event Calendar

- During the year, there are several events pending expected to be virtual in lieu of the four Sister Cities Days that happen each year.



- There are other special categories of meeting topics that will also be virtual.
 - More details to come.

City Reports

Punta Arenas – Mary Hooker

- Mary reached out to the school in the city that Bellingham exchanges with but not returned contact.
 - Aidan will send some
- Made a list of all the past exchange host families to contact them to see if they would like to become Sister Cities Association member.

Cheongju – So Youn Park

- Chair absent but Aidan has provided report.
- Working on a location to show CheongJu photos like the exhibit Bellingham sent
- Has been reaching out to people to become members.

Vaasa – Jeff Eastman

- Jeff attended the Finlandia picnic last month.
- The film project is planned for October with PA, Vaasa and Bellingham.

Tsetserleg – Bolor Smith

- Mongolian's biggest summer festival was canceled due to COVID and not enough time to prepare for this year.
- Hopeful school will open on time
- Met with a few new Peace Corp volunteers who were in Mongolia in past and look forward to increasing the Mongolian presence in Bellingham.

Tateyama – Yoko Allen

- Tokyo Marathon is planned for January this year. Other marathons are happening with runners tracking their own time instead of a big, central start.
- Still thinking about Japanese language club



Port Stephens – Steve Racich

- Steve shared information with the Yacht Club about Sister Cities and they are interested to learn more about the PacRim event
 - Would like a presentation to them
 - Still no information if the Pac Rim will be happening

Nakhodka – No Chair

Program Director Reports

- None in attendance to report
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Old Business

Membership Drive

- Crystal has been running the Association membership drive and isn't available for a report
- Missing chair for Nakhodka

Million Trees

- Have a goal of planting a million trees. Looking for grants and members.
 - The committee will meet late this week and report to the Advisory Board as it moves along.
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New Business

Photo Exhibit to Cheongju

- Brooksana showed the images chosen and sent to Cheongju.

Biennale Congratulations Video

- Brooksana showed the short video that Mayor Fleetwood created and sent to the Biennale organizers.

Return to In Person Meetings

- We are hopeful to return to in-person meetings in September making the next Advisory Board in October planned for the Mayor's Board Room.



Sister City Film-Building Project – October

- Jeff E - Working with Lauren and Tom to firm up details. More information to come.

Concert for George Drake

- Jeff Eastman reported that Tapio would like to know if the Mt. Baker Youth Orchestra to do a concert in conjunction with the Finlandia organization and if the Association would like to participate.
- The group discussed George Drake and his contribution to Bellingham.
 - Jeff will contact Tapio about this and follow up with information.
- Jeff Eastman asked if the Sister Cities of Bellingham will be adding any new cities, specifically something in China.
 - It is currently understood that the Association is in the rebuilding phase and not taking on additional cities currently.
- The Japanese Garden Facebook page called the Tateyama Friendship Garden is up and running. Join if you'd like.
 - Have some volunteers clean the area and if improvements are being made to the garden who needs to give permission (from COB).
 - BR will investigate who the contact is to give permissions and get that to Jeff Eastman.

Announcements

- None

Public Comment

- None

Adjourn at 6:35 p.m.

Next meeting October 19, 2021, 5:30 p.m.