Unless noted, all officially appointed Sister Cities representatives were in attendance. Absent: Mary Hooker, Jeff Eastman.

Staff attending: Councilmember Kristina Martens, At-Large Representative; 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)](cob.org)

Welcome

- President Grier welcomed members and guests.

Roll Call and Introductions

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

Review of Agenda

Approval of April 2022 minutes

- Ross made a motion to approve
- Tim seconded
- Motion passed

Approval of July 2022 minutes

- Ross made a motion to approve
- Tim seconded
- Motion passed
City Reports

Punta Arenas – Mary Hooker

- Chair Absent

Cheongju – No chair

- Brooksana and Ross had a call with staff in the Cheongju Mayor’s office. The following actions will be taken:
  - Brooksana will schedule a time in mid-January for mayors to meet virtually
  - They will be discussing three subjects
    - They will do introductions and speak briefly about themselves
    - One topic is Post COVID economic changes one of the upcoming meeting
  - We are planning for quarterly meetings going forward
    - Those meetings may be driven by a topic that arises
  - A translator will be needed for Mr. Lee – they will get a translator
- We also spoke about having artists go to the Craft Biennale this next year
  - Cheongju is interested in having artists from our area
- There was discussion about homestays around the Ski to Sea
  - Please share with all your cities that we will be having Ski to Sea next spring

Vaasa – Jeff Eastman

- Chair absent but sent a report that was shared by Brooksana:
  "Currently there is nothing happening directly with Vaasa. However, our local Finnish community members are gaining momentum with regard to their event planning, one of which will involve Vaasa students. For example, planning for the upcoming Finnish Film Festival is progressing well. It will be held at the FireHouse Arts and Events Center in Fairhaven on Friday evening and throughout most of the day on Saturday and Sunday, February 3-5 respectively. These plans are still very tentative, but we looking at having a social gathering Friday evening that will have a kiosk running that will show vignettes of the various films and documentaries to be shown throughout the weekend. We are selecting Finnish-made or Finnish-themed films that are in English or have English subtitles. One segment of the festival will feature the showing of the films made during the International Film Building event held 17 months ago that included three middle school-aged young ladies from Vaasa along with some older teens from fellow Sister Cities Tateyama (Japan), Port Stephens (Australia), and Bellingham. It is our hope that during this portion of the presentation we can have several of the previous participants ZOOM in and reflect upon their cooperative filmmaking experience.
  A University of Washington professor of Scandinavian Studies has agreed to be a guest speaker and another person well versed in Finnish films has agreed to speak as well. For
right now, though, members of our planning committee continue to view different films and then meet every other week to narrow down our selection of chosen films to show. Once we have our schedule finalized, I will be sure to send it to you. It would be wonderful if Mayor Fleetwood could stop by at some time to perhaps say a few words and sample some Finnish delicacies.”

**Tsetserleg** – Bolor Smith

- Bolor has been speaking with her contacts in Tsetserleg, including the Mayor and Governor.
- Looking at an idea for an art exhibition from Tsetserleg to Bellingham.
  - Should it just be the two cities or open it up for others?
- It was suggested that Bolor contact Allied Arts. They are already interested in participating with the craft Biennale for next year.
  - Brooksana will do an email introduction to Kelly.
- Blue Skies for Children has reached out to school children in two different schools. Scholarships were given and Bolor is hopeful to travel there to see the children this winter
  - There are about 35 students left in the program as of now

**Tateyama** – Tim Schride

- Tim is meeting set this Friday with WCC staff who are involved with the Early Education program
  - They had planned a kindergarten teacher exchange that was cancelled due to COVID
    - Looking to start this up again
- Tim is also meeting soon with Sandy Pratt to gather some documents at the storage facility

**Port Stephens** – Steve Racich

- Having some rain and flooding in Port Stephens
- Not a lot of activities happening
- No news on the Pacific Rim Regatta yet

**Nakhodka** – No chair
Old Business

Member Event in Fall
  o This has been pushed off to Spring around the time of Ski to Sea

Tateyama Garden
  • Scott Blume shared that the garden group had meetings this year with Nicole and Steve N. and Russ (Public Works)
  • Scott is the official park steward for that space
  • Another set for this Thursday
  • Scott will be setting a time to meet with Jonathan from Parks on the next steps for design
  • It’s time to set a design meeting with Jonathan
  • Rock hunting needed to help put them in the new garden space

New Business
  • Adan has submitted his resignation as treasurer

Announcements
None

Adjourn at 6:42 p.m.
Next meeting January 17, 2023, 5:30 p.m.