



April 18, 2023

MINUTES

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

Absent: XX

Staff attending: Councilmember Hannah Stone; 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://cob.org/sister-cities)

Welcome

- President Grier welcomed members and guests.
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Review of Agenda

Approval of October 2022 minutes

Motion made by Ross; seconded by Tim. Motion passed.

Approval of January 2023 minutes

Motion made by Ross; seconded by Tim. Motion passed.

City Reports

Punta Arenas – Mary Hooker

Mary is reaching out to people in the city and is connecting with social media contacts at the city in hopes to re-kindle relations.

Cheongju – No chair

- Ross he spoke with some potential new members, Roger Griffin and his wife Yevette, this morning after they met Tim Shride at the Ferndale Cherry Blossom Festival. They may be interested in participating or even chairing the city relationship. Roger gave a brief overview of his interest and experiences on the continent of Asia and specifically Korea. He spent many years working with the Pacific Asian Travel Association and got very familiar with travel and tourism in Asia.



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- Brooksana will look into the idea of two people sharing the chairship. She will check the BMC.

Vaasa – Jeff Eastman

- Jeff is traveling to Vaasa in June and will be taking a few tokens to their government. Ross suggested Jeff should visit the local school that has been connected to Bellingham through the Peace Grant.
- Finlandia Film Festival was a great success. Thank you to Mayor Fleetwood for attending and speaking a few words.
- Ross feels it is a good idea to do a connection of Aslan Brewery to one in Vaasa. He will work on forming that relationship. He suggests Jeff see if he can locate a brewery that may be interested in partnering.

Tsetserleg – Bolor Smith

- Bolor went to Mongolia over the Mongolian New Year.
- There is some interest of athletes attending Ski to Sea but didn't know if there will be an international team to add them to.
- Mongolian event is being thought about for June or July but not sure if it will happen.

Tateyama – Tim Shride

- Noriko has begun doing her Ikebana arrangements at City Hall in the lobby and Mayor's office. She comes on the first and third Monday of the month at 10AM and people are welcome to come and watch or ask questions.
 - Mayor Fleetwood is grateful to support and have these beautiful arrangements back.
 - A class may be in the works through Parks.

Port Stephens – Steve Racich

- No participants coming this year for Ski to Sea. Have expressed interest in the Pac Rim Sailing race when it returns.
- There is a marathon in July. If there are any runners you know that may be interested in participating in the marathon, let Steve know.

Nakhodka – Derek Moscato

- Derek is in beginning stages of meeting important community members who have worked with Nakhodka, including Stowe Talbot and Tim Douglas.



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- Although Bellingham has been asked by people via a social media to discontinue our City relationship because of the current war.
 - Brooksana shared Mayor Fleetwood has expressed we will not be discontinuing our relationship because the Sister Cities organization is about building friendship relations across continents that fosters understanding and peace.
 - Ross suggested Derek reach out to Juneau Alaska to learn about how they are progressing with their relationship with their Sister City since they seem to be getting stronger.
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Old Business/New Business

Ski to Sea participant update

- We have no participants that will be coming.
- Considering being in the Memorial Day Parade.

Tateyama Garden

- Scott Blume shared that planning is proceeding.
- The library is also doing some remodel that may affect the garden.
- Meeting with Parks Operations about pruning.
- A weeding party is being planned on May 6th. This is the same day as the plant sale at the library and that may bring out new people.

Haar German City Interest

- There needs to be an individual to come forward and show interest in Sister Cities to champion the new community relationship. It is a long term relationship and needs to be approached that way.
- There would need to a commitment from Haar to build the relation that would also be willing to be in it for the long run.
- Is it wise to add on another City when we have challenges to fill chairship we already have?
- Do we need to discontinue one of our current Cities to add a new one?
- Need to be able to add to the overall mission and relations of the larger Sister City.
- Ross will send BR the guidelines on how a Sister City is created.

Upcoming events for Mayor or City to attend

- None at this time.
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Announcements & Public Comments

- Welcome Rebecca Maloy who joined as a guest. She is interested in pursuing a Peace Grant to go to Vaasa.
 - Laurie has suggested we do a postcard campaign. This would be an opportunity to see if there are people in Bellingham that have family or connections in our Sister Cities. Then do an exchange. The idea will be fleshed out and brought to the City if support is requested.
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Adjourn at 7:11 p.m.

Next meeting July 18, 2023, 5:30 p.m.