

MINUTES

Advisory Commission on International Relationships

Meeting date: February 29, 2012

Members present: Carol Lindseth, Natalia Hager, Deb Hanson, Janet McLeod, Kay Silk, Robin Baker, Anders Blewett, Sean Johnson, Christina Barsky, Guest Bob Kelly

Meeting called to order at 7:09 PM. Members took a few minutes to introduce themselves .

Minutes:

Carol read the minutes of the previous meeting, supplied by Robin in Janet's absence at the January meeting. Kay Silk moved to approve the minutes as read; Christina Barsky seconded; motion carried.

Financial Report:

Natalia reported she was unable to obtain updated financial information from the City today. Joyce Thares, the ACIR contact going forward, will have that information for us next time. Our balance after the last meeting was \$8,751 and there have been no expenses.

Old Business:

- Association with the City & website Development - We have decided to remain associated with the City. Regarding our website, Anders explained that we still have a domain name that is connected to the City's website. He will not be continuing with the Commission at the end of this term, so Janet will take over updating the web and maintaining the domain name.
- Lethbridge Twinning Society - Harold would like a meeting with us at the Mint Bar for dinner in Sunburst, Montana. Carol reported that Cindy had a lengthy conversation with Harold, who wants to meet and solidify our status as a twin city. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of inviting him to an economic outlook meeting or beginning with something smaller like a meeting with the mayor and city manager or a business teacher at a college. Harold is interested in planning a joint event with us. Christina will invite him to meet with some of us at the Sip & Dip during the Icebreaker Run, since he comes to Great Falls to participate.
- Open World Hosting - Robin discussed our hosting of delegates from the country of Tajikistan. Anders described his perceptions of the country during a visit, describing it as one of the poorest countries in the world. We assume the delegates will be fairly basic in their needs. Robin reports that Taunya agreed to be our interpreter, but we learned that we will likely need someone who can speak Tajik. Taunya does not speak Tajik; therefore we may have to get a qualified, certified interpreter from Open World. Robin has informed Open World of this. Anders has contacts at UM who may be able to serve as interpreters if needed and if they can meet the qualifications.
- Home Hosts - Robin already has all the host families lined up: Lana & Uri, Terry Rogers, Crain's, Keith Tokerud, Lynn & Sandy, Robin.
- Bios - Not received yet; expected six weeks out from the hosting.

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- Schedule and Activities - The delegation is arriving on May 19th (Sat) and leaving the 26th (Saturday of Memorial Day). Discussion ensued regarding an itinerary. We were told that livestock production would be a safe area. Ideas discussed included: visiting a Hutterite Colony, spending a day in Ft. Benton, spending a day in Fairfield, meeting with an FFA board member who has traveled to China, visiting a family farm, visiting a sheep farm.
- A committee was formed to assist Robin with planning the itinerary: Christina, Sean, and Natalia. Ideas were discussed for an initial dinner Saturday night at The Staggering Ox, Goode's BBQ (new location), new Shamrock Irish Pub or other restaurants.

New Business

- Speaker Col. Bannon - Anders updated us on Col. Bannon's offer to speak. He is a Colonel who has been in Afghanistan. Between a Tuesday & Thursday is a good time... late March between 19th and April 6th. A public relations committee was formed to advertise the event: Anders, Christina, Sean, Bob Kelly.
- Election of Officers for 2012. It was noted that Cyndi will be unable to be the Chair. Robin moved to nominate new officers: Sean - Chair, Carol - Vice Chair, Janet - Secretary, Natalia - Treasurer. Christina seconded the nomination; motion carried.

Public Comment

No public comment

Meeting Adjourned - 8:37 PM

The next meeting is scheduled for March 27, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet McLeod, Secretary