

# MINUTES

## Advisory Commission on International Relationships

Meeting date: November 27, 2012

Members present: Carol Lindseth, Cyndi Baker, Janet McLeod, Christina Barsky, Natalia Hager, Paul Gallardo, Bob Kelly.

### Minutes:

The meeting was officially called to order at 7:09 PM. Motion to accept minutes was made by Paul Gallardo, seconded by Christina Barsky. The minutes were approved as read.

### Financial Report:

Natalia submitted the balance of \$11,135.66 - nothing has changed.

### Sister Cities Report:

Christina reported on the meeting with Harold from Lethbridge that took place on Black Friday. He has talked to Sister Cities on our behalf and is setting up a conference call to talk with us about twinning with our group. We have an invitation to attend a holiday potluck December 3rd with the Twinning Society of Lethbridge. They also talked about a cultural exchange where professionals from each city would form a panel and invite the public to a discussion.

Background: They were founded by Pres. Eisenhower in 1956 with the idea of diplomacy, promoting peace through mutual respect and cooperation, creating relationships. Since then, every president of the U.S. is the honorary chair of Sister Cities International. They are focused right now on creating partnerships with Muslim countries. They have an elected governing board. It is also funded by the State Department - to the tune of \$400,000 in 2009. There are different membership levels and members are part of a network of citizen diplomats. Individual memberships cost \$50 per year, so one of us could join as a non-voting member. If we join as a city or county it would cost \$680 per year. Harold is joined as an individual but works through Culver City, California to participate on the city level - because his group is joined as a Sister City with Culver City. Our next step is to talk to Sister Cities to explore what is open to us on the city-membership level.

Bob moved that we support Christina's individual membership as a Sister City with Lethbridge. Natalia seconded the motion. Discussion ensued regarding who will be involved, how much participation it will demand of the group, and if we vote in favor of it, we are voting to participate as a group. The motion passed. Christine will request the check from the City and then look further into what our membership provides.

### Open world Hostings

June 19-29 - Khazikstan Agricultural Diversification Hosting

Sep 5-15 - Moldova Accountable Governance & Energy Policy

Timing issues were discussed - the end of summer might be difficult to get people together. The beginning of summer is much easier, as people on the commission are more available. Planning for both hostings would have to take place simultaneously. Bob Kelly is willing to spearhead

## MINUTES

the Agricultural hosting in June. After discussion about the logistics of hosting two groups, Christina moved that we select only the Agricultural hosting in June. Cyndi seconded the motion. Motion carried. Bob will submit the documents to Open World. We will not host the Moldova delegation.

### Educational Opportunities

Cyndi Baker presented her findings regarding a geography bee. ACIR would not be able to host it, as it has to be run through a school. Ruth Eucker at the school district is enthusiastic about our participation in it. It has to go to a teacher who runs it and keeps the packet. We have missed the opportunity this year, but we could be involved next year. Also, UM has a geographic association that is open for free membership. Cyndi joined and discovered there are other members in Great Falls. We might partner with social studies teachers and others in the city who could be involved. Our goal would be promotion literacy. The state one is March 30, 2013, and the national bee is May 22-24 in Washington, D.C. The state bee was held in Billings last year. Larry Fink, the coordinator, is someone we could contact. We would like to find out if it moves around; could we have it here? 101 students participated in the state bee in March. By next fall we might be able to get more involved with a local bee, the winner of who would go to state. It costs \$100 to register and get the packet, so we would need to push it locally and figure out ways to recruit schools (and come up with the money).

### Library Schedule

Mark Johnson of Missoula is booked to come to the library Thursday, Feb 28th (Cyndi will confirm the date). He lectures on cruise ships in the mid-East and is a wealth of information.

### Public Comment

No public comment

### Meeting Adjourned at 8:15 PM

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 22, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,  
Janet McLeod, Secretary