

March 26, 2013

MINUTES  
Advisory Commission on International Relationships

Members present: Carol Lindseth, Janet McLeod, Paul Gallardo, Kay Silk, Pam Haugen, and guests: Sandra Erickson, Lynn Baker, Dean Koffler.

Since guests were in attendance, Carol asked everyone to introduce themselves and talk about their relationship to ACIR.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:14 with a quorum present.

Carol reminded board members of the importance of attending all meetings and welcomed those who cannot participate fully on the board to associate with ACIR as a volunteer, helping out with special projects. Carol also explained that, according to the City, she can remain the Chairperson, since we do not have our open positions filled and there is no other Chairperson available. Janet and Kay have been recommended for a second term. Bob Kelly will complete his term even though he is now a City Commissioner. Dean Koffler has applied for membership to the Board, as has Sandy Erickson. These will be presented at Tuesday's City Commission meeting, and Paul Gallardo will accompany them to make sure they are introduced at the meeting.

MINUTES: Kay moved to accept the minutes of the last meeting, Paul seconded; the motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT: No change in the account from \$11,136.66, but we need to reimburse Cyndi for \$68.89 in hosting expenses for Mark Johnson. It was mentioned that the City will not pay for alcohol, so it was decided that Cyndi will need to submit a receipt and/or itemization of the expenses. Also, Mark Johnson submitted a meal receipt. The board's consensus is to deduct the \$10 charge for wine and reimburse \$18.90 of his meal receipt and pay mileage to Mark at the rate of \$.0555/mile. Kay will submit Mark Johnson's reimbursement on a memo to Joyce. We will ask Cyndi to submit a receipt to the Board itemizing the food and tip for her dinner with Mark.

MARK JOHNSON PRESENTATION - The event was a great success. According to Kay, he is available again after September. Mark did an outstanding job and is very interesting and knowledgeable, drawing a great crowd. Everyone agreed that using the library is convenient, as we are able to piggyback on their advertising and there is no rental fee. We will continue to work around their schedule for booking the facility.

OPEN WORLD HOSTING\_ - It was confirmed that the funding for all 2013 Open World hostings is a go. Bob Kelly and Sandy Erickson recently met and drafted a preliminary plan for the June 21-29 hosting, a Friday through a Saturday. Sandy handed out copies of the tentative itinerary, mentioning that last year we took the group to large production farms, but many of the delegates were working in their homeland as small-scale apricot farmers. Therefore, our focus this year will be a little different.

Itinerary:

We will expect more involvement from the host families on the nights that we don't have a scheduled event, and will also ask them to be very flexible in case an impromptu gathering is planned. We will again hold a "touch base" meeting every morning, this time at Faster Basset. Each day has a theme. A first day "entry" into the City with a police escort is a fun suggestion that may or may not work. Kay suggested a visit to the Farmer's Market on Saturday, the day after arrival. The Interpretive Center has always been included, as the teams have enjoyed learning the local history. The River's Edge Trail is

included, since it is something unique to Great Falls. A visit to Helena will again be included but will be more organized so that we don't lose track of any delegates. The forum on Tuesday night is to give small Ag-businessmen an opportunity to highlight their operations and products. Timeless Seeds was suggested as another possibility, as was a visit to a micro-brewery to show the different grains used in making local beers. The Front Public House is already on the schedule and may do the same thing (but it can get noisy later in the evening - and certain nights they have music). Evan, of Bowser Brewery, is a good connection as well, but his pub closes at 8 PM while Front House is open until 10. Columbia Grain has a 110 car grain elevator, which is impressive. Precision Farming showed an interesting video last time. In Ft. Benton, Delma took the group for 4-wheeler rides, which was popular. The public reception is scheduled for Wednesday and could be held in the Gibson Room, as it has everything we need - except a P.A. which may not be necessary. We will ask the City to give us a break on it. For Thursday, we hope the rodeo can fall under "livestock study" to complete the education requirement. Friday, June 28<sup>th</sup> is the Lewis & Clark Festival featuring various demonstrations along the river, such as canoe building, etc., which may interest the delegates. It was noted that Russian Cossack history shares a few similarities with our Lewis & Clark exploration, and once that connection is made the delegates connect better with our local history. Other ideas given included the Groundworks Farm, similar to Bountiful Baskets, which sells fresh produce at a discount; the local Pea Pod community farms; and tours of the dams. Ryan Dam, which offers a tour on Friday, could work for the picnic if we have an alternate location in case of rain; Black Eagle Dam has a Saturday tour, and Rainbow Dam has a Sunday tour. Matt Marcinik is the coordinator (Region Park Manager). Friday night all of us will get together for an appreciation dinner, and we are looking into catering instead of a restaurant. 3D, Scheel's, and the CMR Museum have very nice rooms, some at no-charge. Day-of-arrival activities are still up in the air until we know the group's flight schedule. The past few years we have had a welcoming potluck to keep the delegates awake and orient them to a new time zone. Another idea is to let them rest up.

#### Other details:

The interpreter is in place, a van is in place; however, there is not yet a budget. Sandy's current figures are based on the past two hostings, averaging six persons for each meal. Janet will ask DA Davidson to again donate Sunday brunch at the country club. The picnic can be a potluck put together by us.

Host Families: Janet will try to recruit host families. Bob Kelly has two bedrooms; Sandy & Lynn have one extra bedroom.

In the past we have invited the commissioners to our activities, which we will do again. Someone needs to buy gifts for each delegate (a CD with photos of the week was well received last time). Tim Boland had presented the Russian justices with pictures of the falls, and Sandy & Lynn Baker, who traveled to Russia for a visit, report seeing these pictures framed and hung on the justices' walls. They obviously liked them. Another idea is to get commemorative coins from the Chamber.

All board members are asked to email additional ideas to Sandy at [k7luh@yahoo.com](mailto:k7luh@yahoo.com).

#### NEW BUSINESS -

Future projects: **Speaker Series...** We discussed the idea of a speaker's bureau – perhaps holding four presentations per year, continuing at the library whenever possible. We revisited the idea of joining in on events done by the Helena group with Ron Lukenbill. Sandy and Lynn have met with Ron and have information about what their group does. The question is: Would our groups be a good fit for a partnership? To help answer this, Sandy & Lynn will present their information at a later meeting. In the meantime, each board member is asked to find out who might be available as a speaker, and to scope out any associations with whom we could work. Everyone is to give it thought and bring names.

**Vision/Purpose...** We need to get the early minutes from the ACIR board – the board that put this commission together. Cyndi might have the binder – a book was left by Sean when he moved away. It

would be helpful to have it copied and available for new people to the commission. In earlier years, the City provided a binder plus a nice portfolio, but then people didn't want to carry it to the meetings. We need to put something similar together – in a sleeker format that recaps what the commission is all about and what we've done in the past. **Naturalized citizens ...** Paul has been looking into that and called the clerk's office. The ceremony is in a different place quarterly and there are usually 20 or so people being sworn in. We discussed getting a thank you gift for them, something that highlights their value to as a U.S. citizen. Two or three organizations attend these ceremonies, reading a statement of welcome to the candidates; the mayor is also present and greets them as well. There is a reception afterward. We would have to be pre-scheduled and go through channels to be involved. Paul will continue to follow up. **Exchange Student Pizza Party...** This past year attendance was down, primarily because there were so few exchange students in the Great Falls public schools.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comment

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

NEXT MEETING: April 23, 2012 at 7:00 PM – Civic Center