

**CITY OF SHEBOYGAN
MAYOR'S INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
Thursday, March 3, 2022**

Chairperson Rich Miesfeld called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm in Conference Room 106 at City Hall (828 Center Avenue, Sheboygan) and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Members present: Mayor Ryan Sorenson, Sarah Schwefel, Alderperson Betty Ackley, Annie King-Close, Dana Elmzen, Pete Janssen, Nick Laurie, Carolyn Miesfeld, Rich Miesfeld, Cole Phillips, and Deb Sabol-Williams.

Members not in attendance: Monica Hart, Deidre Martinez, Dane Schaefer, and Tony Rammer.

Guests in attendance: Mary Koczan and Libby Olbrantz.

Correspondence:

The Deputy Mayor of Culture and Sport from Esslingen sent a letter to Mayor Sorenson, it included a seed packet that Emily Rendall-Araujo (Senior Services director) will be planting this spring for us. We don't know what type of plants they are, so it will be a surprise!

The DPW's Sign Division completed and installed the updated Sister City signs on March 1 at three locations for entrances to the City. Sarah has posted the photos on the MIC Facebook page.

Sarah has been emailing with JMKAC regarding the Levitt AMP concerts and they said that they are planning for the concerts to happen this year; dates are set but the bands are not finalized yet. Ann Brusky has guaranteed us at a minimum one date with a \$500 donation. More info should be available at our April meeting.

Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of February 3, 2022 meeting; all ayes and motion passes.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

1. **Discuss trip to Esslingen.** Geri Hiebing sent us the new schedule today. For those doing the river cruise, they will leave Chicago on September 27, 2022 and arrive in Budapest on September 28. For those doing the Vienna and Munich portion, they will leave Chicago on September 29, 2022 and arrive in Vienna on September 30. For those doing only the Esslingen portion, they will leave Chicago on October 2, 2022 and arrive in Stuttgart on October 3. On October 7 the flight will leave Stuttgart and arrive in Chicago. Sarah handed out copies of a document with a summary of our committee finances, we currently have \$36,344 available. The last time we sent a delegation to Esslingen in 2017, we provided a \$550 travel stipend to each committee member. We are anticipating doing \$550 or \$600 for the travel stipend this year.
2. **Esslingen Fest.** Rich looked into the timing of Zweibelfest and that traditionally takes place in August. So he contacted 3 Sheeps about dates in August that might be available and they have August 7, 14, and 28 available. The committee members unanimously agreed to schedule Esslingen Fest for Sunday, August 14. Rich will contact 3 Sheeps to secure that date and Sarah will contact Ryan Kautzer to see if his band is available.
3. **Middle school exchange student event.** Carolyn said that People To People is anticipating having 18 students total (9 from Esslingen and 9 from Sheboygan). We will get more info about the plans as the timeframe gets closer, they will be here for three weeks in August. We might be able to coincide this with Esslingen Fest.
4. **Esslingen Sister City updates.** Mayor Ryan Sorenson passed around copies of the letter of solidarity that he signed along with other mayors that was initiated by Esslingen to show support for Ukraine. He also mentioned an "Urban Diplomacy Exchange" program that Esslingen is working on – he will be participating in an upcoming Mayor Roundtable virtual meeting. Rich mentioned that he follows the Esslingen Facebook page and the German Consulate in Chicago, both pages post lots of great content.
5. **Tsubame Sister City updates and sub-committee.** Cole mentioned that there is a Tsubame Facebook page that has 50,000 followers. Cole said that he had originally planned on a taking a trip to Tsubame in 2020, but of course that wasn't able to happen. He has a friend who lives about a half-hour outside of Tsubame that he plans to visit – he's not sure if that will happen this year or possibly next year. Mayor Ryan Sorenson said that he has reached out to Tsubame about setting up a Zoom meeting, but he hasn't heard back from them. Cole said that one of the challenging things in communicating with Japanese people is that if our correspondence doesn't have a specific thing that we're asking for that's an action item. Deb suggested that we ask a local elementary music teacher if they would make a video of the students singing a song that

we could sent to them. Betty said that she will contact the music teacher at Jackson Elementary about getting the opportunity to teach them Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star or Mary Had a Little Lamb because those two songs are easy to teach in Japanese. She will give us an update about how things go with that at our April meeting.

6. **Future plans and ideas.** Cole works at Christopher Farm & Gardens and suggested that we might be able to earn money by volunteering to work at an event there to direct parking and assist with giving directions. He will talk to Jay Christopher within the next few weeks and will hopefully have more info about it at our April meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATE: April 7, 2022.

Adjourned at 5:57 pm.