

City of Sheboygan  
2021-03-04

BYKL3253FA91

CITY OF SHEBOYGANMAYOR'S INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEETHursday, March 4, 2021

Vice-Chairperson Patrick Siebold called the meeting to order at 5: 15 pm in Council Chambers at City Hall (828 Center Avenue, Sheboygan) and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Members present in-person: Ruth Gerstner, Charlene Hinze, Mark Hinze, Anna Schoen, Henry Schoen, Sarah Schwefel, Patrick Siebold, and Mayor Mike Vandersteen.

Members present virtually: Alderperson Betty Ackley, Jim Graf, Yolanda Graf, Annie King-Close, Carolyn Miesfeld, Cole Phillips, and Trent Rammer.

Guests present in-person: Josh Hernday Executive Director of the Sheboygan Symphony Orchestra.

Guests present virtually: Mary Koczan.

Members not in attendance: Tom Michel, Rich Miesfeld, and Julie Vandersteen.

Correspondence:

On February 2 the email that Sarah sent to all the MIC members had info about letters that were exchanged with Esslingen in January. That email also had info about the draft of the reply email for Tsubame, Sarah emailed the final letter to them on February 4 but haven t received a response back yet.

Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of November 5, 2020 meeting; motion passes.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Esslingen Coffee Talks update from Annie King-Close. This week was the

beginning of this project. There are currently four partnerships (six Sheboygan people and four Esslingen fire department staff members). Annie met with a firefighter named Christian this morning, they spoke for about 20 minutes and had a nice conversation. Mayor Vandersteen asked Annie if any of the Sheboygan dispatcher staff has been involved in these and she said that they haven't been to her knowledge but that she will inquire about that possibility. Discuss Esslingen trip 2022. Carolyn hasn't been in contact with Discovery Travel recently but she is optimistic that since the middle school exchange students are planning to travel in August this year, that means that we should be good for traveling in 2022. Mayor Vandersteen suggested that we should continue to keep an eye on this and hope that pandemic situations improve within the next few months so that we can start planning. Mark suggested that we consider doing the trip in September 2022 instead of May 2022. Youth symphony exchange with Esslingen. Josh Hernday is the executive director of the Sheboygan Symphony and he recently met with Mayor Vandersteen. Josh has a colleague that lives just outside of Esslingen about 45 minutes away. There are about 60 students in the advanced symphony ensemble in Sheboygan. As Josh has been in communication with his colleague, they would like to consider doing an exchange program with the student musicians. Mayor Vandersteen asked Josh if they would need to do fundraising, Josh said yes and that they would need plan for time to do that. Mayor Vandersteen mentioned the idea of this exchange program recently to Rich Miesfeld and he felt that People To People might be interested in being involved as well. Mayor Vandersteen will reach out to Katrin in Esslingen to let her know about the possibility of launching this exchange program. Future possible fundraisers.

Cole has about 500 of the 3-D printed cranes from the project that he started about a year ago that project has been on hold due to the pandemic. He would like to explore the possibility of getting this project going again. He is interested in having a display of the cranes at a venue as a means for an awareness campaign to educate people in Sheboygan about the sister city relationship with Tsubame as well as the possibility of selling these cranes as a fundraiser. Cole will continue to work on ideas for this project and will report back to this committee with future updates.

Regarding fundraising by way of the committee volunteering at the Levitt Amp

concerts like we've done in the past, Sarah reached out to contacts at JMKAC to see if a decision has been made about if those concerts will be taking place in 2021. They replied back to her that a decision has not been finalized yet but they expect to announce their decision by the end of March. Esslingen Fest 2021. Rich has been in contact with 3 Sheeps and they are in support of hosting Esslingen Fest in the fall this year. Yo suggested that we might consider doing this event as a drive-thru event. We will continue to discuss this topic at future meetings. Promoting other Sheboygan international relationships. Sarah asked that if any of the committee members have ideas for stories about international relationships that we can highlight, please provide that info to her and Rich. Sarah referenced the post that she did on the MIC's Facebook page in November that highlighted the relationship between St. Peter Lutheran Church and Apopa, El Salvador we are looking for more ideas like this. Tsubame Sister City relationship next steps and sub-committee. Mayor Vandersteen recently met with Father William Bulson of Grace Episcopal Church he has contacts with the clergy in the Tsubame area. Father Bulson speaks Japanese and Hmong fluently. Mayor Vandersteen will provide Father Bulson's contact info to Cole. Cole said that we need to come up with a clear plan of action and a specific request for Tsubame, otherwise we will continue to indefinitely exchange email pleasantries without getting any further. Cole feels that we need to need to send a liaison to Tsubame to meet with them in person. Alderperson Ackley stated that her father is a native of Japan and has contacts there; she's happy to help with making contacts with the Japanese government. Annie went to Tsubame in the summer of 2005 as part of the high school exchange program and she had an excellent time and would highly recommend aiming to get that going again. She suggested that we consider starting to have virtual meetings with Tsubame to discuss what kinds of programming might make sense. Mayor Vandersteen suggest that Alderperson Ackley, Cole, and Annie become our designated sub-committee and that they have their own meeting so they discuss plans and then report back to the MIC at large.

UPCOMING MEETING DATE: April 1, 2021.

Adjourned at 5: 53 pm.