

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday November 10, 2015 4:00 PM City Hall, Second Floor Conference Room

Members Present

Chair Tom Link
Dawn Thomas-Smith
Karen Parsells
Antje Hornbeck (Arrived at 4:35)
Kathy Frink, Treasurer
John Mitchell (Arrived at 4:06)

Staff Present

Members Not Present

Irene Davis, Vice Chair
Steve Russo

Others Present

John Maclean (Arrived at 4:45)

1. Call to Order

Chair Link called the meeting to order at 4:07 PM.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting: July 9, 2015

Ms. Thomas Smith made a motion to approve the minutes of July 9, 2015. Ms. Parsells seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3. Board Business

a) Sharing Community News – media connections –

Ms. Thomas Smith stated that this item is on hold until additional members are added. She shared her concern about capacity at this point. Chair Link stated that Mayor Lane has some possible members to join. Chair Link noted that Jay Kahn and former City Manager, John Maclean, are possible candidates.

Ms. Thomas Smith stated that this addresses the New Membership item on the agenda. Ms. Parsells asked if there are guidelines for new members and suggested giving this type of

information to new members. She continued, stating that there is more to membership than coming to the meetings. Chair Link stated that this is usually handled by the city and when members come to the meetings, they can learn about their duties and the Committee can make this clear. Ms. Parsells stated concern about members who have several other duties and are not able to actively participate in the Committee.

Chair Link stated that Committees usually have staff from the city and members from City Council. Chair Link stated that he will check if Mr. Russo is able to stay on the Committee with his busy schedule. Mr. Mitchell agreed that there have been examples of Committee members who are great at putting in the work and those who are not. He continued, stating that it is important to have a broad range of members. Mr. Mitchell stated that the Committee needs “worker bees” as well.

Chair Link stated that there have been many members, like Ms. Hart, that have come on the Committee but unfortunately had to leave due to other opportunities. Ms. Thomas Smith suggested having a “friend” or sub-group to the Committee that can act in a fundraising or advocacy capacity but would not have to come to every meeting. Chair Link stated that the Chorale Group comes to mind that went to Einbeck, Germany. He continued, stating he would have to ask the City what the policies are for this. Ms. Thomas-Smith suggested framing this like the Friends of the Library Group. She continued, stating that it is an ambassador group. Chair Link stated that this would be a great addition.

Ms. Parsells asked if Ms. Davis is on the Committee. Chair Link replied, yes and stated that Ms. Davis’s company had some complications and she is quite busy with work. Ms. Parsells suggested having Ms. Davis as part of the sub-group if possible. She continued, stating that she is a great asset to the Committee and this format may work for her.

Ms. Thomas Smith made a motion to accept item 3a) *Sharing Community News* and item 4) *New Membership* as informational. Ms. Parsells seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

b) Fund Raising Event – Stonewall Farm – Promotional Ideas

Ms. Frink stated that there was a profit of \$230.17 although the Committee received \$515.00 but had other expenses like registration and petty cash. Ms. Frink stated that many people came to the event but there was also parking and admission costs. Ms. Frink questioned if this event was worth it. She continued, stating that vendors at the Pumpkin Festival did not do well either with one vendor making only about one hundred dollars.

Chair Link stated that the City is currently discussing the possibility of having Fall Festival. He continued, stating that he attended the Forum on a Fall Festival held at Heberton Hall. He questioned the Fall Festival theme of diversity and activities but stated that this could still be a fundraising opportunity. He felt that the Committee needs to research other funding options as well.

Ms. Frink stated that the treasury balance is getting smaller and the Committee needs to work on getting funds.

Ms. Parsells stated that people would come for food and dancing. Chair Link agreed and Ms. Thomas-Smith included a family-friendly atmosphere. Ms. Frink stated that the Committee needs to be aware of the other festivals going on as well. She continued, stating that Langdon Place had an event that was packed; the streets had to be closed down. She is unsure how to get a pipeline into something like this. She continued, stating that the Committee needs to think outside the box and in not choosing weather dependent events.

Ms. Thomas Smith suggested private donations and that having a development person on the Committee would be great. Chair Link stated that the Colonial Theater and a film festival come to mind for fundraising as well. He is not sure if something like this would fill the Colonial Theater. Chair Link stated that he was amazed at how many people came for the concert at Keene State College. He continued, stating that the place was packed. Chair Link stated that perhaps this would be something that the sub-committee group could work on.

Chair Link stated that CD's and holiday music would also be a good fundraiser. He continued, stating that people made thousands of dollars from this fundraiser. Ms. Thomas-Smith suggested a calendar. She continued, stating that an Oktoberfest event previously discussed would also be a great fundraiser because of the German theme.

Chair Link noted other successful events like Tastes of Keene or a chocolate festival. Chair Link stated that he would like to have a full Committee before creating a plan and brainstorming ideas. Chair Link stated that it is important to stay away from events where the Committee loses money.

c) School Exchange – Keene/Einbeck – John

Chair Link stated that everything seems to be going very well. Mr. Mitchell stated that there are many activities to keep the students busy. He continued stating that the New York City trip was great and Ms. Davis's company was very generous and donated funds for the hotel rooms.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the article in Keene Sentinel was also helpful. He continued, stating that many people commented on the article and did not know about the exchange until then. Mr. Mitchell stated that since the German visit, students have asked how they can get involved next year. He continued, stating that asking for donations is appropriate and many inquired at the welcoming dinner on how to help the Committee. Chair Link noted that a student was quoted in the newspaper and paraphrased that: *it was one of the coolest things to happen in his life.*

Chair Link stated that there was a terrific turnout at the event and that the Keene students have benefited as well. Ms. Parsells stated that the kids loved the contra dancing and playing basketball with the Police Department.

d) Facebook page – social media –Dawn

Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that she owes a paragraph description for this item and it is on her list.

e) Signs for Public awareness of Einbeck/Keene partnership

Chair Link stated that this has received a lot support from Mayor Lane and Mr. Blomquist. He continued, stating that Mr. Blomquist and the Public Work Department will be working on this. Chair Link stated that he will keep the Committee up to date on the process.

f) The Mendhelssohn School/Keene

Ms. Hornbeck stated that Mr. Kampa is no longer supervising this project and is in contact with the new director who noted that July will not work but possibly August. Ms. Hornbeck stated that this will coincide with the high school students going over and that she has also connected with Mr. Thormann who stated that the Committee is thrilled to have students come over. She continued, stating that the grades who will go over range from grades 8-12. Ms. Hornbeck stated that if the students go in August it will be the week after the 8th grade Washington DC trip which will be tight. Ms. Hornbeck stated that she will keep the Committee up to date. She continued, stating that she will know by December 15th.

Chair Link stated that Mr. Kampa was very supportive in this exchange and he is still at the school but there was a political change due to funding. Chair Link stated that there are five musical schools in Einbeck which makes funding difficult. Ms. Hornbeck stated that she will report back to the committee in December.

4. New Membership:

Chair Link restated that Mayor Lane has three people to assign to the Committee: John Maclean, Jay Kahn and Pamela Russell Slack.

Ms. Hornbeck asked if Mrs. Thomas-Smith was able to connect with the fundraising person from the hospital. Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that she had connected with the woman from the hospital and unfortunately, at this time, does not have the capacity to join our committee. Chair Link stated that it is hard for people to help with fundraising if they are already doing development for another source.

Chair Link recapped what the Committee discussed for Ms. Hornbeck. Chair Link stated that he is unaware of new members will be appointed to the Committee.

This item was previously accepted as informational.

5. Communications:

6. Reports:

a.) Treasurer Report – Kathy Frink

Ms. Frink stated that there is \$14,556.07 in the budget. Ms. Frink stated that this represents the funds from Stonewall Farm and the money given to the Einbeck exchange which was \$7,200. Chair Link reminded the Committee that Keene will be hosting the Police and Fire Department from Einbeck. Mr. Mitchell stated that the school is working very hard to not put any financial burden on the Committee for the April trip to Einbeck. Ms. Parsells asked if there will be any money left over from this current exchange. Mr. Mitchell stated that they will be cutting it close. Chair Link stated that it is costly to have such a full agenda.

Ms. Thomas-Smith asked if the Committee is invited to the upcoming dinner event to which Mr. Mitchell replied, yes. Mr. Mitchell stated that meals have been a significant expense.

7. **New Business:**
8. **Next Meeting:** Next meeting date: December 8, 2015
9. **More Time:**
10. **Adjournment**

Chair Link adjourned the meeting at 4:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lana Bluege, Minute-taker

November 10, 2015