

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 9, 2021

5:00 PM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

William Schoefmann, Vice Chair
Kürt Blomquist
Dawn Thomas-Smith
Mari Brunner
Dr. Delene White
George Hansel, Mayor
Councilor Michael Giacomo

Staff Present:

Helen Mattson, Staff Liaison

Members Not Present:

John Mitchell, Chair
Lena Kridlo

Vice Chair Schoefmann read a prepared statement explaining how the Emergency Order #12, pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04 issued by the Governor of New Hampshire, waives certain provisions of RSA 91-A (which regulates the operation of public body meetings) during the declared COVID-19 State of Emergency.

1) Call to Order

Vice Chair Schoefmann called the meeting to order at 5:09 PM.

2) Roll Call – Appoint Alternates (if required)

Roll call was conducted.

3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting – February 9, 2021

Mr. Blomquist made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 9, 2021. Ms. Thomas-Smith seconded the motion.

Ms. Thomas-Smith noted that the Minute-taker had a question about the spelling of a person's name in the "Communications" section.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

4) Board Business

a. Planning for future exchanges with Einbeck

i. Future exchange ideas – YMCA, Dance, Rugby

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that the Rugby Club is aware of the opportunity and are, probably like the other organizations right now, awaiting the end of the COVID-19 restrictions to see what happens. He continued that they are currently not making any plans in the rugby world for competitive play, but that may change with the increase in vaccines.

Mr. Blomquist suggested they talk with the Einbeck group about the possibility of having some sort of virtual event. Is there any cultural event happening, and could they have a virtual get-together of some kind? Discussion ensued about the idea and who the contacts are. Ms. Mattson suggested Chair Mitchell contact someone in Einbeck. Mayor Hansel suggested a virtual beer-tasting event. Vice Chair Schoefmann asked if Mayor Hansel can contact someone in Einbeck, and Mayor Hansel agreed. Mr. Blomquist asked if Dr. White could touch base with someone as well. Dr. White replied that the Cohen Center is running a lecture series, which she will send the committee more information about. She continued that the Music Department has a series happening online as well. Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that a great way to reach out to Einbeck would be to share information about virtual events happening in Keene that they could attend. For example, the Historical Society, too, has some virtual workshops/events; they can try and put a list of ideas together for Mayor Hansel to reach out to Einbeck with. Mayor Hansel replied yes, he welcomes any links/information/event listings people have to send him, and he can then communicate with the Mayor of Einbeck. Discussion continued. Vice Chair Schoefmann asked anyone who knows of virtual events happening in March or April to email him information by the end of the week so he can forward a comprehensive list to Mayor Hansel.

ii. Student Pen-Pal Ideas

Vice Chair Mr. Schoefmann asked if there has been any motion on this. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied that she thinks how it was left was that Chair Mitchell, through his connection with Fuller School, found a fifth grade teacher who was interested in moving forward with this. She continued that he would have an update next time. Keene Middle School would possibly be “phase 2” if it goes well with Fuller. Ms. Brunner stated that new PCC member Lena Kridlo had also talked about reaching out to the Surry Charter School about this. Discussion continued. Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that he will touch base with Ms. Kridlo and follow up with Chair Mitchell, too, and hopefully they will have some good news at the next meeting.

Dr. White shared that the Goethe Institute might be a good resource, in terms of ideas to give to teachers, to help facilitate the pen pal program. It gives ideas and a little bit of structure for how

students can communicate with each other. Vice Chair Schoefmann asked her to email the committee the information.

iii. Discuss Promotional Activities/Media Opportunities to help promote PCC events and exchanges – Dawn

Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that she does not have anything new to report. She continued that last year she shared a draft of a calendar/brainstorm of content the PCC could share on FB. They could look at that again. Of course it is easiest when they have photos and content for exchanges in person, when they can get that information, but if there are other things they can be doing – like the virtual events they talked about today – then it makes sense to move forward in sharing that.

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that there was some talk about trying to collect some photos through the survey the PCC is doing. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied that Wally Secord reached out to her and said he will be giving her soccer-related photos but needs to reschedule that, for COVID-related reasons. Hopefully that will happen in the next month or two. She continued that she does not think the survey has photo upload functionality. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that the most recent version of the survey he saw had an “upload file” option.

Vice Chair Schoefmann asked about Ms. Thomas-Smith’s list of things to organize and find in order to generate content. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied that she did a year-out draft for review, with brainstormed ideas of things they could be sharing. She continued that she will dig that up and re-share it. Vice Chair Schoefmann asked her to email it to everyone.

5) Communications

Vice Chair Schoefmann asked Ms. Mattson if there are any communications. Ms. Mattson replied no.

6) Reports

a. Treasurer Report

Dr. White stated that there are no changes to report.

Ms. Thomas-Smith made a motion to accept the Treasurer Report. Mr. Blomquist seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

7) New Business

a. Fundraising Ideas – Survey with donate button

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that Ms. Mattson forwarded a copy of the survey with the agenda packet. He continued that there is the capability to upload photos. They should probably have

someone do a test run with the survey. Ms. Mattson replied that she did. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied that she did, too, and the content is good but she has suggestions for how to improve the formatting and functionality to make it easier and simpler for folks to fill out. Discussion ensued. Ms. Mattson asked for Ms. Thomas-Smith and others to write down their feedback and what specific changes they want and email that to her, so she can forward that to the IT Department. Dr. White stated that she tested the survey, too. She gave some suggestions for improvements. Ms. Mattson asked her to email her. Ms. Thomas-Smith suggested they create a Google Doc that they can all contribute to, so their feedback is coordinated and consolidated and they are not getting their wires crossed and confusing the IT Department. Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that he and Ms. Brunner can help Ms. Mattson facilitate that.

Ms. Brunner asked if they want to use Survey Monkey so they do not have to go through the IT Department. Ms. Mattson replied that she is concerned that Survey Monkey may not be secure enough, if they have a “donate” button/link attached at the bottom of the survey. Discussion continued about formatting. Ms. Mattson asked if they want to create another survey without a request for donations, so the PCC could create the survey using Survey Monkey or Google, and save the survey with the donation capabilities for another time. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied that she is trying to think of the advantages and disadvantages from a communications perspective, functionality perspective, and data perspective. Discussion ensued about the purpose of the survey and to what degree it is a fundraising effort versus an effort to gather stories and photos, and whether to compile the group’s feedback into a Google document and send that to IT, or to create a survey on their own on a different platform. Ms. Thomas-Smith spoke of the possibility of using the survey to gather stories, photos, and information, and if they get people’s contact information, sending them an email at a later time, thanking them for their participation and inviting them to donate. Others expressed interest in that idea. Ms. Mattson stated that the PCC’s webpage now includes a link people can click on to make a donation.

Discussion continued about survey formatting. Dr. White asked if they should set up a PCC Google Drive or something similar, for photo storage. Mr. Blomquist stated that the question might be whether they can have a PCC email account. Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that he could take the ball from here and ask IT, and loop Ms. Mattson in. Ms. Mattson agreed.

Ms. Thomas-Smith asked where feedback about/edits for the survey should go now. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that he will see if the IT Department can share the survey to the PCC’s Gmail account, if they get one set up, so they could use the survey template. Dr. White stated that she will share the survey that she originally created, too.

b. Einbeck’s Street Art – Update

Vice Chair Schoefmann asked if anyone had an update. Ms. Mattson replied that she has not heard any feedback on this. These coloring books were shared with the Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department and the Keene Public Library, Miranda Nielken and Chair Mitchell took 20 and 25 to share with teachers/students. She continued that she has 13 left. Ms. Thomas-

Smith stated that the question was if they received any back or photos of them, so they could share with Einbeck. Ms. Mattson stated that she will check if they have even been distributed to kids yet. Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that it would be good to have a hashtag people could use while posting about it to social media. Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that she thinks it was a contest, and they were supposed to get the coloring books returned. Discussion continued about how it is still a fun activity for the kids even if it is not a contest. Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that he thinks this can come off the agenda now. Others agreed.

Vice Chair Schoefmann asked if anyone had items for next month's agenda. He continued that he and a few others have been exploring ideas for what a Holiday Market could look like, and in April they would like to talk to the committee about it and get some feedback from people. They also would like to meet with Mr. Blomquist about it to get his feedback. Brief discussion ensued. Ms. Mattson stated that she will put it on next month's agenda.

- 8) Next Meeting – April 13, 2021**
- 9) More Time**
 - a) Review Rules of Order and Compare with Other Advisory Boards**
 - b) Student Exchange – Update on Postponement**
- 10) Adjournment**

There being no further business, Vice Chair Schoefmann adjourned the meeting at 5:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

No Staff Edits.