

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, September 12, 2023**

**5:00 PM**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

John Mitchell, Chair  
Mayor George Hansel  
Councilor Michael Giacomo  
Kürt Blomquist  
Derek Blunt  
Doris McCollester  
Gregg Kleiner (remote, lost connection  
sometime between 5:05 and 5:19 PM)  
Gerald Lins, Alternate  
William Schoefmann, Vice Chair (arrived at  
5:15 PM)

**Staff Present:**

Helen Mattson, Executive Assistant

**Members Not Present:**

Dawn Thomas-Smith  
Mari Brunner

**1) Call to Order**

Chair Mitchell called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

**2) Roll Call – Appoint Alternates (if required)**

Roll call was conducted.

**3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting – August 8, 2023**

Mayor Hansel made a motion to approve the minutes of August 8, 2023. Councilor Giacomo seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

**4) Board Business**

- A) Activity Planning for Upcoming Exchange with Einbeck in Keene – Final Review for the September 22–30, 2023 Exchange**

Chair Mitchell stated that they are looking to make a couple changes to the schedule, particularly Saturday the 30<sup>th</sup>. He continued that the plan is to leave at 10:00 AM, to do some activities in Boston before the flight. Discussion ensued and others agreed with that change to the calendar. Chair Mitchell proposed an addition to the schedule for Saturday the 23rd, and discussion ensued. The PCC agreed with the addition of the pickle festival.

Chair Mitchell stated that the Einbeck guests have questioned whether they will be dressed up enough for the activities, and he assured them to come as they are and it will be fine. Discussion ensued about the importance of everyone having appropriate footwear for the mountain hike, and a windbreaker or jacket.

Chair Mitchell stated that the other issue to discuss is the details of the pickup at the Boston airport. Discussion ensued about who is driving which vehicle and related logistics, and about drivers and transportation for the other activities on other days.

Chair Mitchell asked if they need to create an agenda for the welcoming meeting. Discussion ensued about this as well as the farewell dinner.

Mr. Schoefmann arrived at 5:15 PM.

Discussion continued about food and drink at the farewell dinner. Councilor Giacomo asked for people to make/bring/contribute side dishes and folding chairs if possible.

- B) PCC Exchange Survey/Facebook Updates**
- C) Update on Student Exchange with MC2 – October 9–22, 2023**

Chair Mitchell asked Mr. Blunt to give an update. Mr. Blunt reported that preparations for the exchange are going well. He continued that they have finalized host families, for eight students and two teachers, and the itinerary. Chair Mitchell asked if he could share the itinerary with the PCC. Mr. Blunt replied yes. Discussion ensued.

**5) Communications**

Chair Mitchell stated that he has been communicating with Jürgen Herbst and a couple other people, and they all seem excited.

- 6) Reports**
  - A) Treasurer's Report**

Chair Mitchell stated that they will skip this today.

- 7) New Business**
  - A) Discuss Additional Guidelines/Expectations to be Added for People from Keene Traveling to Einbeck**

Mr. Blomquist stated that they should add the upcoming Visa requirements to the guidelines. That is something for folks to be thinking about. Chair Mitchell agreed. Discussion ensued.

**8) Next Meeting – October 10, 2023**

Chair Mitchell stated that in addition to the October 10 PCC meeting, he thinks they should have a follow-up meeting for hosts, and PCC members should attend. Discussion ensued about scheduling. PCC members proposed inviting the hosts to the October 10 PCC meeting instead, and perhaps having the meeting at 6:00 PM instead of 5:00.

**9) More Time**

**A) Fundraising Ideas/Opportunities**

**B) Pumpkin Fest, potential fundraising opportunity. Brats and Krauts sales – potential free use of grill and donation for brats and krauts, volunteers**

Councilor Giacomo gave an update on Pumpkin Fest, October 21. He stated that he got the PCC a vendor spot, if the PCC wants it and is prepared to do it. He continued that they are signed up to make and sell “German fare,” so it could be brats and krauts, or potato pancakes. If the PCC does not want this vendor spot, he/the Pumpkin Fest organizers need to know in the next few days. Discussion ensued about who is available. Chair Mitchell stated that it sounds like at least three PCC members are available. Councilor Giacomo gave information about the next meeting for the vendors and what the PCC needs to do to prepare for the event. Discussion continued, and Councilor Giacomo recommended creating a working group to prepare for the event.

**C) Update on Other Future Exchange Ideas – YMCA/Youth Centers – Pickle Ball – Dance**

**D) Other**

Mr. Lins stated that he has a full set of German (language learning) CDs to share, if anyone is interested, and he will bring it to the next meeting. Mr. Schoefmann stated that a beginning German language group has been meeting at Brewbakers. Chair Mitchell gave more information about it, and recommended it. Discussion ensued.

**10) Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 5:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
Helen Mattson, Staff Liaison