



CITY OF DE PERE

Sister Cities Committee
De Pere, WI 54115

Date: July 27, 2006

Committee Meeting

Meeting called to order at 16:05 by Committee Chair Kathy VanVonderen in the Riverview room at city hall.

Attending: Paul Kegel, Jim Stupka, Jerilyn Schad, Lynn Lee, Tracy Hopkins, Larry Delo, Bill Patzke. Absent: Fr Seamus Nielson, Ben Villarruel, Candy Heidersheid, Christine Fossen-Rades (currently in Belize), Ron Baeten, Mayor Walsh.

Kathy passed around a Thank You card for Dr. Elmer for all to sign. Discussions over the great presentation on where they are going and discussion about sustaining the organization. Sounds like they are currently in a downturn. Discussion on foreign speaking sisters that will need and interpreter for languages other than English. Were there 20 couples formed due to these interactions? Money is always an issue; grant money may be available for specific focuses. More money will be available for poorer countries but then it won't necessarily be an equal exchange. Larry stated the Appleton city government is only involved with the Russian group and that the other two are mostly cultural. Kathy stated that it had taken some of the fear out of the selection process. Review of specifics from Dr. Elmer's presentation charged additional discussions at this time. Are they in financial trouble? No they are just at a standstill because of the group, financial is only one aspect. Dynamic changes taking place are dependant on grants and foundations for resources, if you cannot interest area businesses. Sounds like grants will be based on whom we can help. The Japanese interactions are equal and they have been in existence for some time. Stevens Point is not a mutual relationship. Larry stated that they had mentioned no funding came from the city. It was originally started as a humanitarian group with out the city being part of it. Volunteers need to have more equal representation on the committee. Should we contact any other groups for speakers on other cities, Kathy will check (due to no other volunteers).

Kathy passed out list of countries from specific areas of the world that are seeking sisters. Member assignments included reviewing all countries on the list and picking 3-5 that you see may interest the group, then doing complete research on those. Lynn was assigned Europe, Paul took China, Tracey has Eurasia, Jerilyn took the Americas, and Bill ended up with Africa. Kathy relayed the research on a couple of Caribbean locations in these countries Thirmande, Dominican Republic, Jamaica. All seemed more interested in tourism than other areas.

Kathy was contacted by Lauren McKim at Sister Cities, with five additional cities that are not on the official site. Kathy stated they all sound very good, Bill offered to have his intern do the research on them. Generally when looking through the descriptions and goals one will see things of specific interest for communities that could be a sister. Paul asked if size is a factor, consensus is no, the sister cities representative even said to pick one based on common interests. Megtec is still the only company that has responded. They make air quality control devices. Kathy is

scheduled to meet with a representative on Monday at 10:00 am the representative was suggesting looking at three locations in specific Guetenburg, Sweden; Ingre, France; and Megavosch, Czech Republic. Bill emailed them a bunch of information. Larry asked to question whether they were looking at any other countries to expand into. Other questions to ask included, for better financial support would they like to have someone on the committee? Do they have any current similar style relationship in any of the locations they deal with? If anyone thinks of any more contact Kathy with the information.

What about Richardo? Larry felt they are fairly well prepared, a connection with the mayor in Italy had been established. Their mayor travels around promoting these type exchanges. The area is dedicated to promoting the youth in speaking English. They really want student exchanges and there is an active group of 150 people that meet to talk and travel back and forth to Italy - the basic work is already done for us. This may end up a direct connection through Richardo. Do we want him to make a limited presentation? They appear uninterested in Green Bay because they were not receptive to the idea of such exchanges; in fact they appear to be specifically targeting De Pere. They were excited in Italy when describing the city to the Mayor in Italy. The location is just to the north of Florence. Lynn added, it may be difficult for us to choose a single sister. Richardo will be invited and given a strict time limit on a presentation with no commitment attached. Larry felt there was none on their part either they are just very interested and further interaction may require the Mayor to proceed as the contact rather than sister cities.

Goals should be reviewed because of the level of importance and we may not be able to fulfill all of them. We do need to begin narrowing the selection criteria working towards a single sister. We will try to have additional speakers over the next few meetings to make additional presentations.

Next meetings are scheduled for Thursday, August 10, 24 at 4:00. Adjourned 5:10 pm.

Meeting review: felt more interesting because can see things that have potential for our city, when we find a sister we may have to roll with the punches a bit to maintain the relationship, there is a lot of research for next meeting, we are working in the right direction.

Respectfully submitted,

James O. Stupka III

Assistant Fire Chief