



# CITY OF DE PERE

---

Sister Cities Committee  
De Pere, WI 54115

Date: October 19, 2006

## Committee Meeting

Kathy passed out packets of information with the agenda, minutes of the last meeting, and the article written for the Journal.

Meeting called to order at 16:07 by Committee Chair Kathy VanVonderen in the Riverview room at city hall.

**Attending:** Jim Stupka, Lynn Lee, Paul Kegel, Larry Delo, Christine Fossen-Rades, Mary VanVonderen, Bill Patzke (late).

**Absent:** Fr Seamus Nielson, Jerilyn Schad, Ben Villarruel, Tracy Hopkins, Candy Heidersheid, Ron Baeten, Mayor Walsh.

Mary VanVonderen, MEGTEC marketing services manager information: work phone: 339-2787  
email: mvanvonderen@megtec.com. Has been with the company for over thirty years.

Review of minutes from the last meeting, ok no corrections.

Kathy started introductions for the benefit of the new member. Mary had several discussions with members of DBA talking about the committee with Jerilyn and Tracy, she was considering the timing for joining the group and looking for more input from us. The main concern was joining a group that could eventually end up nowhere and have to end after efforts were made.

Informal discussion about Milevsko as a top choice in a short list of possible sisters. Suggested that we do not want to close the door in case additional members may have input on other choices.

Kathy had a discussion with George Brown from Humana with regard to possible participation in the group. He stated that he was already limited with regard to any additional participation in groups but he would talk to other members at the Humana office who could have interest. Mary suggested writing to other companies in the City of De Pere, Kathy was suggested that personal contacts might be more effective since we had already sent letters soliciting interest. Plan administrators had provided a sister recommendation and Humana had recommended Costa Rica. A discussion ensued about options for contacting businesses and then specific occupations that could benefit and enrich the group. Medical professionals and architects were primary contacts. Bill will contact Performa. Jim will contact Dr. Van Sistine, Kathy will contact Aurora, Bill will contact Mac Dental, and Paul will contact Fox Dental.

Christine presented on Pontassieve stated that she worked to get the information used three interns and the school library services but only came up with hotels. Seems to be a suburb of Florence and all information seems to revolve around that city. It is similar in size to the City of De Pere with an

extensive history dating back to the 1200's when modern people settled near the banks of its river. Economy is primarily agricultural in nature dealing mostly with wine, oils, and leather goods. Currently at 20,000 people and growing since the railroad access was established. They have a celebration in May with wine and foods.

The group discussed the impression from Riccardo and the potential nature of exchanges with the Italian connections. Kathy stated that Riccardo was currently back in Italy and had been speaking with the mayor of Green Bay after our last discussion with him.

Discussion on the article as presented in the email with the last minutes, all though it was good and hoped it would assist us in adding members. Lynn had contacted the woman's club to have the idea broached at a meeting. The hope is planting a seed with the membership will inspire someone to consider joining. Mary suggested a presentation to the different service organizations. Larry suggested putting up the article at the community center in looking for potential participants because the bulletin board gets a lot of interested traffic. There may be people in the community that already have experience with sister cities. There was a discussion about making a choice before adding more members and it was felt that the choice should be slowed until any new members could be added to assure they felt ownership for the decision. Jim will talk to the Optimists, Larry suggested talking to the Rotary (Ben may be a member) they are an international organization and may already have some foreign ties. Marty from the parks department talked to Paula who talked to Lori and would let us know if they could find any seniors with interests in participation. Kathy gave her the information on the two cities that may be a good fit. We need to interest some youth, perhaps someone from a student exchange program.

Group review of priorities and goals, our main emphasis was on youth, economics, arts and culture with everything else secondary except size and background, which were not important. Mary suggested a mission statement based on the three main areas of interest. There are professional magazines for the bay area (i.e. Marketplace, Bay Business Journal...) she suggested an interview with the Mayor or Kathy. Mary will look into this as a potential avenue to publicize the groups efforts.

Discussions on Ingre, it was difficult to gather extensive information because the web translations were so bad. The information hints that they have an interest in wind energy. Comments were that the French in general are unwilling to speak English and may feel offended by those who do not speak their native tongue. Discussion and review of Milevsko, that they have the premostratensian monastery and a population about half our size. They have a lot of rivers close by and they have an annual festival around Easter time. They seem to be the industrial center of the mostly agricultural area in the Czech Republic and they have a site for a pilot energy project. Kathy suggested looking into a Norbertine connection to see if we can gather more information. Mary will attempt to make contact with the personnel from the company that had to live there for a few years to get more insight into the locale. She will also attempt to find out who the right contacts are with in order to proceed. Review of Gottenborg, Bill felt we would be more of a little sister. They already have three sisters and another connection. Mary stated that we had the wrong spelling for our Chinese area and that is why Paul was having so much difficulty. The correct information is the Song Jaing district. Bango a Ripoli seemed to be similar comments as Christine had just relayed, it all focused around Florence.

Discussion for the space left when the old bridge is removed, could this space be named for the city's first sister. It was suggested that any spot in the city could be named for the sister to recognize the connection with our new counterpart. Kathy reviewed what was discussed at the meeting because so much ground had been covered. The group will try to make contacts with businesses, architects, and

doctors. We have the article for the newspaper, the article will be posted at the community center, Lori will need to check with the groups of seniors, Sam Dunlop will need to check with possible foreign students, Kathy will check with the foreign exchange participants and talk to the school representatives. We need to take our three main goals and incorporate them into a mission statement, which could be included in the interview for the business journal.

Discussion about potential for announcing a sister city with the opening of the bridge, building bridges of other types - this may be possible if we really get moving. Should we put signs on the bridge, should we determine the ending date as a goal - it was felt these should be left open.

Meeting review: Paul stated we may be losing members because this project started two years ago, we need to get a city nailed down. Bill is "pumped" he sees a light at the end of the tunnel. All members seemed genuinely please with progress. Mary is very excited and hopes to help the group making connections and presentation for the public.

Next meetings are scheduled for Thursday, November 2, 16, 30 at 4:00. Adjourned 5:25 pm.

Assignments for the next meeting - Look at adding new members to the committee. Jim will develop a web site for the project.

Respectfully submitted,

*James O. Stupka III*

Assistant Fire Chief