

# City of Clearwater

*Main Library - Council Chambers  
100 N. Osceola Avenue  
Clearwater, FL 33755*



## Meeting Minutes

**Thursday, January 25, 2024**

**4:00 PM**

**Main Library - Council Chambers**

**Sister Cities Advisory Board**

## **Roll Call**

**Present** 4 - Board Member Robert Kantor, Board Member Lina Teixeira, Board Member Melinda Bacon, and Board Member Doug Kelly

**Absent** 3 - Vice Chair Pamela Gene Benton, Board Member Stephanie Chill, and Board Member Indira Yengera

**Also Present** – Amber Brice – Arts and Cultural Affairs Coordinator and Rosemarie Call – City Clerk

### **1. Call to Order – Board Member Kelly**

*The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.*

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

2.1 Approve the minutes from the July 27, 2023 and October 26, 2023 Sister Cities Meetings.

**Board Member Teixeira moved to approve the minutes from the July 27, 2023 and October 26, 2023 Sister Cities meetings. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

### **3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda – None.**

### **4. New Business Items**

4.1 Discuss the middle school exchange Trip from Nagano, Japan

The middle school students from Nagano, Japan will be visiting Clearwater, March 20-26. We still need homestay families for these students and teacher chaperones.

*Ms. Brice reviewed the tentative itinerary and said 12 students and two chaperones will be participating in this year's program. She said seven to nine host families are still needed. Staff is hoping to recruit more host families.*

4.2 Update on official delegation dates to Nagano, Japan

City Manager will wait for the newly elected City Council to decide on dates to go to Nagano. The dates will most likely be in the beginning of October 2024.

*Ms. Brice said the high school students are expected to visit Clearwater October 29, 2024 through November 3, 2024. Since trips cannot overlap official delegation visits, the City may move its trip to the beginning of October. The dates will be finalized after the March 19 election.*

#### **4.3 Discuss the High School Trip to Nagano, Japan**

The application for the high school trip to Nagano, Japan is closing January 28th. We will hold interviews and 4 scholarship recipients will be chosen. All students must be residents of the City of Clearwater regardless of where they attend school.

*Ms. Brice said seven applications were received thus far. The application period closes in three days. She said the students may start the trip in Nagano in order to prepare for the school festival and then go to Tokyo.*

*In response to questions, Ms. Brice said four applicants will receive a fully funded scholarship from the City. Prospective applicants who participated in the middle school program are eligible to apply.*

*Discussion ensued with comments made that the program provides students a great opportunity and wonderful experience.*

#### **4.4 Ixmiquilpan Artist Incorporated into Signal Box Program**

Our new Sister City is Ixmiquilpan, Mexico and local Ixmiquilpan artist, Edgar Islas who goes by TuTuBixi, was selected by the Clearwater Arts Alliance for their signal box art program called "Thinking Outside the Box". Edgar created this image specifically for the North Saturn neighborhood. The beautiful image depicts many notable images from Ixmiquilpan is now visible on Palmetto Street and N Keene Rd. This was a great way to tie in our Sister City relationship to our arts programming.

*Ms. Brice presented a depiction of the artwork used for the signal box program.*

### **5. Old Business Items – None.**

### **6. Director's Report**

*Clearwater Sister Cities, Inc. representative Candace Hays said 17*

*students were interviewed for the Young Ambassadors exchange program. She said 12 students and nine chaperones will be participating this year. Six of the students are Clearwater residents and all chaperones are educators in Pinellas County. The City of Clearwater will award one Clearwater student a full scholarship to participate in the exchange; she will work with Ms. Brice to identify that student. Ms. Hays encouraged all to attend the social this Sunday, as it would be a great opportunity to meet the Young Ambassadors.*

### **7. Board Members to be Heard**

*Board Members supported efforts that fostered cultural exchange with the City's sister cities during these divisive times and looked forward to the upcoming Nagano trip.*

### **8. Adjourn**

*The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.*

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Chair - Sister Cities Advisory Board

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Reporter