

# City of Clearwater

*City Hall  
112 S. Osceola Avenue  
Clearwater, FL 33756*



## Meeting Minutes

**Thursday, October 27, 2016**

**4:00 PM**

**Council Chambers - City Hall**

## **Sister Cities Advisory Board**

## **Roll Call**

**Present** 4 - Chair Sallie Parks, Vice Chair Terrence Gourdine, Board Member Candace Hays, and Board Member Pamela Gene Benton

**Absent** 2 - Board Member Hoyt Hamilton and Board Member Desaray Dilday

**Also Present:** Christopher Hubbard - Cultural Affairs Specialist, Patricia O. Sullivan – Board Reporter

Awaiting approval

### **1. Call To Order**

*The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. at City Hall.*

To provide continuity for research, items are in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

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

#### **2.1 Approval of minutes from July 28, 2016 meeting**

**Member Benton moved to approve minutes of the July 28, 2016 Sister Cities Advisory Board meeting as submitted in written summation. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

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

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

*Cultural Affairs Specialist Christopher Hubbard said Nagano Exchange Teacher Atsushi Katsuyama arrived in Clearwater on October 16 and will visit local schools and be presented to the City Council on November 3, 2016, A sayonara party will be planned. It was stated Mr. Katsuyama was introduced to the Pinellas County School Board.*

#### **4.2 Young Ambassador Trip Update/Dates**

*Mr. Hubbard said the Young Ambassadors will travel to Japan on June 6, 2017 and spend June 14 – 21 in Nagano.*

*Board Member/CSCI Clearwater Sister Cities, Inc. Representative Candace B. Hays reviewed efforts to advertise the trip; application deadline is December 16, 2016. She will notify board when interviews are scheduled. She said last year's 2-week trip to Nagano and other Japanese cities cost each participant approximately \$3,250.*

#### **4.3 Nagano Middle School Visit**

*Mr. Hubbard said approximately 8 Nagano Middle School students will be in Clearwater February 18 – 24, 2017. They will visit local schools and tour Clearwater Marine Aquarium and Bright House Field.*

#### 4.4 High School Exchange Program

*Mr. Hubbard said it was requested that the High School Exchange Program start in 2017. As proposed, 4 Clearwater students and 1 chaperone will travel to Nagano for 1 week next summer. Travel dates will be coordinated with Nagano and the Pinellas County School schedule. The City Council voted to provide a \$2,000 travel scholarship for each participant. Mr. Hubbard will research transportation costs.*

*Mr. Hubbard said the program will accept rising freshmen through rising seniors. Young Ambassador experience was not a disqualifier. He reviewed qualifications for participation. It was recommended that participant selection occur by March to allow sufficient time for fund raising, orientation meetings, and obtaining travel documents and multiple small gifts. Mr. Hubbard and CSCI members will facilitate orientation meetings.*

*Consensus was for Cultural Affairs Specialist Christopher Hubbard to serve as the program's Administrator and the student review panel to include Administration Support Manager Felicia Donnelly as City Liaison, Member Pam Benton as School Representative, Member Candace Hays as Sister Cities Advisory Board Representative, a Clearwater Sister Cities, Inc. member, and a previous Young Ambassador or Exchange Student.*

*Member Benton and Mr. Hubbard will determine qualification and selection standards for the teacher chaperone.*

#### 4.5 Update of Governing Documents

*Mr. Hubbard said staff supported adding a community representative as the 7th member to the board to aid with quorum but opposed removing the resident requirement for the student representative as the City wanted a majority of City residents on the board.*

#### 4.6 Panhellenic Federation of Florida

*Mr. Hubbard said the Mayor had forwarded the Panhellenic Federation of Florida's request for the City to add the island of Kastellorizo, Greece as its newest Sister City member. With a population of 493, Mr. Hubbard said residents interested in participating in visitor exchanges with Clearwater may quickly be exhausted. While the City had another Sister City in Greece, there was no contact between the cities. Current staff levels would be unable to handle additional visitor exchanges.*

*Discussion ensued with a suggestion that staff reach out to Kastellorizo and, as a gesture, ask if they were interested in being a Sister City and a question if the Panhellenic Federation of Florida was willing to manage the program.*

**Member Benton moved to recommend the City investigate if the City's current Sister City in Greece was interested in continuing its Sister City relationship with Clearwater before revisiting the Panhellenic Federation of Florida's invitation to establish a Sister City relationship with Kastellorizo. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.**

## **5. Old Business Item: None**

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

*Member Hays said CSCI met on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Main Library, more than 55 people attended the CSCI tasting event in September, and CSCI was taking Exchange Teacher Katsuyama to dinner.*

*Mr. Hubbard reported all City advisory boards were requested to present their annual activity summaries to the Council and invited members to attend Chair Parks presentation on December 1, 2016.*

*Mr. Hubbard said he had attended a presentation that day by the Economic Ambassador from Japan and met the Counsel General.*

*Mr. Hubbard said the City Council had started reserving funds for exchanges celebrating the 60th anniversary of the City's Sister Cities relationship with Nagano.*

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

*Member Gourdine reviewed his previous request for the Council to fund scholarships for underprivileged students to participate in student exchange programs. He said providing funding would not be a slippery slope as the Council had granted funds to the Clearwater Arts Council and High School Exchange Program. He said funding would directly benefit citizens of Clearwater, not a private organization. He said CSCI had kept the student exchange program going after the City discontinued its high school program.*

**Member Gourdine moved to have a special hardship funding component in the amount of \$3,800 each for the purpose of financial aid to cover the cost for 2 economically distressed families to send their middle school child on a Clearwater Sister Cities student exchange to Nagano, Japan. The motion died for lack of a second.**

*Discussion ensued with a recommendation for a similar amount for high school students, and comments that the \$2,000 funding for each participant in the high school program was not an easy sell to the City Council, that \$2,000 would be sufficient to cover high school exchange program costs, that the Council would not amend the current budget, and that the requested amount was not a budget buster.*

**Member Gourdine moved to establish 2 permanent special hardship funding components in the amount of \$2,000 each to cover the cost for 2 economically distressed families to send their Clearwater middle school child on a Clearwater Sister Cities student exchange to Nagano, Japan. The motion died for lack of a second.**

*Discussion ensued with comments agreeing that some students were short-changed re learning opportunities and a concern that the Young Ambassadors program only addressed the needs and desires of middle class white students. It was noted that two organizations had sponsored a foster child for this year's Young Ambassadors trip and CSCI members worked at City events to fund the organization's scholarship program. It was suggested the board thank the City Council for committing scholarship funds and wait before recommending additional funding.*

## **8. Adjourn**

*The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.*

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Chair - Sister Cities Advisory Board

Attest:

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Board Reporter