



Village of Hanover Park Administration

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Village Manager
Juliana A. Maller

VILLAGE OF HANOVER PARK SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING

2121 Lake Street, Hanover Park, Illinois 60133

Tuesday, November 15, 2022

7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Sister Cities Committee Chair Pamela Fowler.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Pamela Fowler, Trustee Herb Porter, Frank Grant-Acquah, Jessica Ramirez, Darius Robinson
ABSENT: Committee Members: Arnulfo Flores-Auxiliary, Adelaide Grant-Acquah, Maria Pineda, Gustavo Pineda-Auxiliary, Trustee Liaison James Kemper
ALSO PRESENT: Deputy Chief Victor DiVito, Staff Liaison Katherine Perez

2. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA:

Motion by Frank to accept agenda. Second by Darius. Voice Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

3. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS:

None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Jessica to approve meeting minutes from August 25, 2022; second by Darius. Voice vote: all ayes. No discussion. Motion carried. (Note: The committee didn't convene on September 22, 2022 (no quorum) or October 27, 2022 (cancelled).

5. ACTION ITEMS:

5-a. Penpal program – roll out for 2022-23 school year pending confirmation of participation from schools in ~~Cape Coast~~ Valparaiso and Hanover Park – (Scriber's error noted in that agenda item 5-a. should have referenced schools in "Valparaiso" not schools in "Cape Coast.") – Jessica advised that the school principal in Valparaiso has expressed interest in participating in a penpal letter exchange with Hanover Park students. Trustee Porter noted that he believes Laurel Hill will also participate. Jessica has family members who travel back and forth to Valparaiso, and they may be able to hand-carry letters directly to the school. Katherine noted that if it's necessary to send the letters in the mail instead of hand-carrying, time needs to be allowed for an approximate two-week transit time. Additionally, instructions would need to be provided to the students that the letters cannot be folded or placed in individual envelopes because that would add to the thickness

of the package, increasing the delivery time and postage rate. Discussion followed about having the letter exchange initiate in Valparaiso and which grades would participate. Consideration will be given to doing another letter exchange around Easter time. Trustee Porter asked Jessica to find out what internet capabilities are available at the school for the purpose of possibly conducting a zoom meeting during a school day.

Trustee Porter and Jessica volunteered to coordinate a letter exchange in time for the Christmas holiday which they believe is doable, and they will provide a progress report to the committee at the December meeting.

- 5-b.** Valparaiso update (Jessica); Jesus Gonzales Ortega School scholarships / distribution from FY'22 budget in process (Katherine) – Jessica spoke to Principal Figueroa who advised that the local violence continues and that two parents are missing. Principal Figueroa confirmed receipt of the \$1,000 wire transfer, and she will be sending the names of the student recipients. Jessica inquired about the status of a written communication addressed to the school detailing the scholarship donation from the Village, and Katherine will email a copy to her.
- 5-c.** Report on Cape Coast; travel planning for 2023 Cape Coast visit; presentation of travel packet with estimates for transportation and lodging options – Frank provided a handout with basic travel information. The package cost is \$3,875 per person with a deposit of \$500 due in May and the balance in July. It was noted that the proposed trip from August 24 through September 6 occurs at high season, and this is the recommended time to visit because of all of the activities associated with the Fetu Afahye Festival. The selection of hotel accommodations and air travel arrangements will be dependent on the number of people in the travel party. Methods of making payment to Frank were discussed including the need for some to pay by credit card. Paypal and “Square” were suggested and can be explored. United Airlines and Delta fly into Ghana. KLM, British Airways and Lufthansa have connecting flights.

Frank explained passport and visa requirements, and Trustee Porter commented that when he traveled to Ghana, it took 90 days for visa processing. Trustee Porter made the recommendation that after Thanksgiving, he work with Frank to develop an attractive brochure and travel packet to showcase the travel opportunity and for presentation to others; Jessica to help with the graphic design. Trustee Porter suggested having a general introductory meeting in January, with a down payment due at the end of January with benchmarks set for the remainder of the payments. It's estimated that the travel delegation will consist of 10 - 15 people which would be a nice size and very manageable. So far, Pamela (plus 2), Trustee Porter (plus 3-4), and Frank (plus 5-6) are expected to participate with the number for Darius (and company) to be determined. Frank commented that regardless of the size of the group, the experience will be the same.

- 5-d.** Open Meetings Act - verify completion of online training – Jessica already completed the online training, and Darius will complete the in the near future. Trustee Porter commented that his certificate of completion is on file in the Clerk's office.
- 5-e.** Black History Month event – discussion re proposed theme, date and venue – Past events have been attended by approximately 65-70 people and held at a restaurant, the library and Village Hall. The programs have always been educational and family friendly featuring varied entertainment and guest speakers. Chair Pamela requested theme ideas. Discussion followed and the committee revisited “perseverance” as a possible idea as had been proposed by Darius last year before the event was cancelled. Black Wall Street was mentioned by Trustee Porter as

a possible theme, and the focus could be on the historical implications affecting African Americans today, not as a grievance but as an illustration of the ability to rise above and accomplish.

Trustee Porter wanted to know if the committee would consider hosting the event on a weeknight instead of the weekend given that we wouldn't be competing with the other Black History Month events in the area traditionally held on the weekends. Frank commented that February has long nights, and Pamela noted that people coming from a distance wouldn't like traveling at night. Discussion followed and the committee determined that it would propose hosting the event on Saturday, February 25, 2023, at Village Hall from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. Accordingly, Katherine will reserve Room 214. A very general save-the-date announcement will be prepared for the Hi-Lighter given that it won't be possible to confirm full details of the event prior to November 18 which is the cut-off date for Hi-Lighter submissions. Trustee Porter asked that the same colors that were used for the Juneteenth event also be used for the Black History Month event (gold, red, green). Entertainment and guest speaker options will be explored. If adopted at the Village Board meeting in December, the Sister Cities Committee's FY'23 budget provides for \$750 to go towards hosting a Black History Month event. A flyer will need to be developed, and Darius said that he'd be able to have something to share when discussion continues at the December meeting.

- 5-f.** December meeting date; 2023 meeting schedule – The next monthly meeting will be re-scheduled from Thursday, December 22 to Tuesday, December 13, and all members present confirmed their availability. The list of proposed meeting dates for 2023 will be submitted to the Clerk's office for publication.

6. TOWNHALL SESSION

None.

7. OLD BUSINESS (NON-ACTION ITEMS):

- 7-a.** Recap of recent activities
- Chair Pamela and Frank participated at St. Ansgar's Mexican Independence celebration and host an information table.
- 7-b. Budget activity update**
- \$1,000 from the FY'22 budget was disbursed for the wire transfer to Valparaiso to assist with scholarships at the Jesus Gonzales Ortega School.
 - Chair Pamela brought up the possibility of the committee purchasing a tent and chairs to take to outdoor events, but it was suggested instead that the needed items be requisitioned from Public Works Director TJ Moore.

8. NEW BUSINESS (NON-ACTION ITEMS):

- 8-a.** Upcoming event announcements
- Village Tree Lighting event (Ontarioville Plaza) – December 2
- 8-b.** Agenda topics for upcoming meetings
- Penpal letter
 - 2023 Cape Coast visit
 - Open Meetings Act – online training status
 - Black History Month planning

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Trustee Porter to adjourn at 8:38 p.m. Second by Trustee Porter. Voice Vote: All ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes transcribed by:

Katherine Perez, Interim Staff Liaison

Pamela Fowler, Chair
Hanover Park Sister Cities Committee