

## Minutes of the Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board Meeting of Wednesday, March 5, 2014

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Takako Wakita called the meeting to order at 12:03 PM
2. **ROLL CALL:** Members present: Takato Wakita, chairperson; Barbara Ellis and Marti Correa de Garcia, City-at-Large members; Blas Garza, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico; Linda Mathews, Toba, Japan; George Lilly, Kotor, Montenegro; Georgia Gastouniotis, Patras, Greece; Michael Fitzgerald & Kathleen Zeitsoff (alternate), Dingle, Ireland; Linda Gunther, City Staff Representative  
  
Guest: Gil Garcia, President of SoCal Sister Cities Association
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** On a motion duly made by Georgia Gastouniotis, seconded by George Lilly, and carried, the minutes of the meeting held January 8, 2014 were approved as written.
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The following announcements were made:
  - Takako Wakita announced that a draft of the Sister Cities International (SCI) annual directory was e-mailed for review and/or corrections. All the Santa Barbara Sister Cities are correctly printed
  - Takako Wakita announced that interest in the 2015 Santa Barbara Library Display would need to be applied for on July 1, 2014
  - Blas Garza announced that Roberto Najera would be the new alternate from the Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** none
6. **REVIEW CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2014:** The following items were added to the calendar:
  - March 17, 2014 – St. Patrick’s Day Walk & event at La Arcada Bistro Restaurant on State St
  - Add to November 5 – 14 “PV-SB delegation visits PV”
  - Young Artist Showcase – exhibition/reception, April 16
7. **NETWORKING/GET TOGETHER WITH MEMBERS FROM ALL COMMITTEE BOARDS:** Barbara Ellis thanked the Greek Orthodox Church for opening their hall for the January 24 Sister Cities Get Together. Although only 14 people attended it was well received. Topics discussed where:
  - budget brainstorming;
  - recruitment & retention; and
  - developing an exchange program

A special thank you was given to Linda Gunther for her work on this event. After a lengthy discussion it was decided to pursue another Networking/Get Together and to ask Pat Fallin to facilitate. Perhaps Pat Fallin can attend individual Sister City Committee’s Board Meetings and brainstorm on each Committee’s priorities in topics to discuss at the next event. It was also suggested that we review the Santa Barbara Board’s mission statement (it can be found on the City of Santa Barbara web-page)
8. **SoCAL CONFERENCE ON APRIL 5, 2014, IN LOS ANGELES:** Gil Garcia, current president of SoCal Sister Cities Association encouraged all to attend. It is easy to register on-line. The conference is being held at the Los Angeles City Hall, Bradley Towers and is free.
9. **SCI CONFERENCE, JULY 31 TO AUGUST 2, 2014 IN SAN JOSE:** Gil Garcia discussed the conference briefly. This would be a good conference to attend since it will be in California.
10. **OPEN WORLD PROGRAM** – Gil Garcia reported that this year’s program has been delayed until December. The situation in Ukraine is being closely watched and if it does take place a city near Yalta that has a sister city in Santa Cruz might also be invited to participate.
11. **2014 YOUNG ARTISTS AND AUTHORS SHOWCASE:** The Santa Barbara High School Art Department has been asked to participate in the artist portion. The date of the exhibition/reception will be announced shortly.
12. **SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL (SCI) REPORT – Pat Fallin:** None

13. **PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY TV CHANNEL 18 – Joe Cantrell** - Takako Wakita reported that Weihai, China has finished their programming and it aired on Channel 18 for several weeks. It can still be seen on the City of Santa Barbara, Sister City web-page. The next sister city to be filmed and aired will be San Juan, Philippines.
14. **REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:**
- Patras, Greece:** Georgia Gastouniotis reported that the committee is active and currently planning the Greek Independence Day, Saturday, March 22 at 6 PM at the St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church. The Committee has eight members and is working on their non-profit status. Six people in Patras have formed an association. If you want to go to Greece the Patras group has agreed to meet with you and possibly give you a tour of the city.
- Kotor, Montenegro:** George Lilly reported on the activities of the Kotor Sister City Committee, handing out a tentative schedule of events for 2014. The two graduates from their Culinary Academy in Kotor, interned at the Peninsula Hotel in Beverly Hills, California. Their story was carried on WABC TV in Los Angeles. With the success of this program a permanent internship program is being worked on. George also suggested that if any sister city had talented musicians they might consider setting-up auditions for the Music Academy of the West's prestigious Fellows Program. The Santa Barbara/Kotor Sister City Committee is working on funding a Polo team from Kotor to come to Santa Barbara. The annual fundraising dinner is being held on March 9<sup>th</sup> at the Music Academy of the West, Lehmann Hall. All are invited.
- Puerto Vallarta, Mexico:** Blas Garza reported on the Santa Barbara/Puerto Vallarta Committee's activities. A successful Valentine's Day dinner at the City College Gourmet Dining Room was held with entertainment by an all women Mariachi group. The big project they are supporting is a health clinic in Boca de Tomaltan. This project is being funded in collaboration with the Jalisco Club, an immigrant club in the U.S. It is a Mexican government program called 3 x 1 whereby the immigrant club funds one part and the government (federal, state & local) funds the balance of the project. A delegation of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department will be going to Puerto Vallarta to teach techniques to the Puerto Vallarta law enforcement groups. This is an exchange that has been ongoing for over ten years.
- Toba, Japan:** Linda Mathews reported on the activities of the Sister City Committee. The documentary film "Pictures from a Hiroshima Schoolyard" was a well attended event. The film will be viewed in Toba in May and it might become a U.S. Government program promoting Japanese culture in local schools. They hope it will be featured at next year's Santa Barbara Film Festival. The annual general meeting was held on Sunday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at the Chase Palm Park Recreation Center. Wade Nomura was the guest speaker and talked about "The Japanese Garden." The deadline for recruitment for the summer school exchange will be at the end of March. This is a family-to-family exchange; students from the ages of 13, 14, and 15 are invited to participate. Recruitment of a chaperon is still ongoing.
- Dingle, Ireland:** Michael Fitzgerald reported on the activities of the Dingle Sister City Committee. All are invited to participate in the St Patrick's stroll sponsored by The Santa Barbara Independent. Refreshments at La Arcada Bristo will follow. The Committee continues to grow. Their main goal is to re-connect with Dingle.
- Weihai, China:** No report made; no representative attended.
- San Juan, Philippines:** No report made; no representative attended.
15. **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marti Correa de Garcia, Secretary