

Minutes of the Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board Meeting of Wednesday, January 4, 2017

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Takako Wakita at 12:01PM.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Members present: Takako Wakita, chairperson; Margaret Saavedra, City-at-Large; Raphael Vazquez, City-at-Large; Missy Zeitoff, Alternate, Dingle, Ireland; Gary Maxwell, Alternate, Toba, Japan; Peter Haslund, Representative, Weihai, China; George Lilly, Representative, Kotor, Montenegro; and Georgia Gastouniotis, Representative, Patras, Greece.

Other Attendees: Linda Gunther, City Representative; Pat Fallin, SCI Representative; and Gil Garcia, SCI SoCal Representative.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** On a motion duly made by Gary Maxwell, and seconded by Georgia Gastouniotis, the minutes of the meeting held on November 2, 2016, were approved.
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The following announcements were made:
 - Takako Wakita introduced the two new members: Margaret Saavedra and Raphael Vazquez, appointed by the Santa Barbara City Council to serve as City-at-large appointees for the next four-year term.
 - Takako Wakita announced that a city in China, Dujiangyan, is interested in becoming a Santa Barbara Sister City.
 - Takako Wakita announced that the 9-11 Concert will be held on Monday, September 11, at 5:30 pm in the Faulkner Gallery of the Central Library.
 - Takako Wakita announced that the United Nations Day Dinner will be held on Thursday, October 19.
 - Takako Wakita also announced that the Sister City Committee of Santa Barbara/San Juan have asked to have it dissolved.
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Hector Miramontes, from the Mayor's Office in the city of Portland, Oregon, was visiting Santa Barbara. He stated that Portland has nine sister cities and one Friendship City.
6. **REVIEW CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2016:** The calendar was reviewed and corrected.
7. **MAP AT AIRPORT – Deanna Zachrisson, Airport Business Development Manager:**
Recommendation that the Sister Cities Map be relocated from the top of the escalator to an adjacent wall. Ms. Zachrisson, explained to the Board that the Airport Department is going to be moving the Sister Cities map from where it is now located to a location on an adjacent wall. This is being done due to the Airport using the current wall space to place advertisements. The Airport Department will be paying all costs for

the map to be moved. The Sister Cities Board indicated it approves this move of the map and thanked the Airport Department for keeping a map at the Terminal.

8. **SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL (SCI) REPORT – Pat Fallin.** The Annual Sister Cities Conference will be held in Virginia Beach, Virginia, from July 13-15 2017. There will be a Youth Summit at the conference; last year 150 young folks attended. For more information, please go to the Sistercities.org web site. The
9. **SCI SOCAL REPORT – Pat Fallin** The SCI SoCal Regional meeting was held on Saturday, November 5, 2016, in Anaheim. The main speaker was from the insurance association on non-profits and what is needed for this insurance. This was a very eye-opening meeting regarding the need for insurance for non-profits. Paul Waters spoke on what is needed for insurance and anyone interesting in getting in touch with him should call him. It is especially important to have insurance for student exchanges. It was mentioned that there are no dues to attend these So Cal meetings; it is part of the annual dues paid to SCI. The next meeting will be held in Valencia and Santa Clarita on March 4 and will feature the Young Artists Showcase.
10. **YOUNG ARTISTS SHOWCASE – Takako Wakita and Gil Garcia.** The theme this year is We're Going Places. We have been participating (mainly through the Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee) for the past few years. Everyone is encouraged to tell your sister city and have the sister city you are with participate. The focus here is on art work. Gil encourages everyone to think of a different venue other than Heritage Bank. Each Sister City Committee (in the past) has one judge appointed. Each Sister City Committee also (in the past) has contributed \$50 for the prize money. Margaret Saavedra is the Chair of this year's Young Artists Showcase.
11. **OPEN WORLD PROGRAM – Gil Garcia:** Congress supported funding this program to bring young professionals to the United States. This year it will be the April 28 to May 6, 2017; and there will be six business oriented, 35-45-year old's coming. Gil will put together a program and is looking for hosts. More details will be given at the next meeting. Please contact Gil Garcia if you want to join the planning committee.
12. **SISTER CITIES GET TOGETHER – Takako Wakita:** The Sister Cities Board did not wish to participate in a get together at this time.
13. **PROGRAMS AND/OR EXCHANGES OF EACH COMMITTEE FOR 2017:** George Lilly proposed at the last meeting that all Sister City Committees bring a list of their plans for 2017 to this meeting. These are listed under the Representative Reports. George has volunteered to help both Weihai and Dingle become more successful.
14. **PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY TV CHANNEL 18 – Jaime Sodusta:** Nothing to report.

15 **REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:** (Limit 3 minutes each)

Dingle, Ireland: Missy Zeitsoff, Alternate, reported that they have a lot of members and that Scott Spaulding wants to be involved again; they will go with The Independent and march in the St. Patrick's Day parade down State Street and have a party afterwards at the La Arcada Bistro Restaurant. They are also planning an Irish Christmas party with a trip to Ireland sometime.

Kotor, Montenegro: George Lilly, Representative, gave the Board the following written report on their Sister City Committee's planned activities for 2017. Classical Music – Auditions for the Music Academy of the West's Prestigious Fellows Program will be held in January in Kotor. If one of our musicians is accepted into the program, he or she will attend the program at the Music Academy in July or August of 2017. Culinary – Two graduates of the Culinary Academy will intern at the Divino's Restaurant in Brentwood in January 2017. They will also spend a day at SBCC's Culinary School prior to returning to Kotor where they have been offered positions on two of Montenegro's finest restaurants. Water Polo – We will meet in August to plan for some of our finest youth water polo players to train and compete in Kotor in 2018. Other - The new Mayor of Kotor and his delegation will be invited to visit Santa Barbara in 2017; our Culinary Academy will hold two classes in Montenegro in 2017; and they will hold two fund raising events in California in 2017.

Patras, Greece: Georgia Gastouniotis, Representative, reported that the Sister City Committee is planning a trip to Patras for a visit in September. If anyone is interested in going, please contact Georgia by July or August of this year. Also, they are planning a skype program in Greece with the high school.

Puerto Vallarta, Mexico: No representative nor alternate attended; however, Margaret Saavedra, now the new Council appointee (and the President of the Committee) handed out the following written report on their 2017 activities and projects. 1) Dinner meetings for the general membership are usually held on the first Wednesday of the month. The Board of Directors meets the second Tuesday of the month; 2) The major fundraiser is held during Old Spanish Days and has provided funding for: Local area projects: I Madonnari; Santa Barbara School of Squash, and the Santa Barbara County Sheriff Law enforcement Exchange. The projects in Mexico include: Supporting the clinic at Boca de Tomatian; Provide financial support for the Santa Barbara Rehabilitation Clinic; and support for the Volcanes Sewing School. 3) The annual visit to Puerto Vallarta will be in the fall and is usually for ten days. 4) Puerto Vallarta Sister City Committee visits for seven days and are hosted in homes of members; the visit is usually in the spring/summer. 5) They have formed associations with other organizations, Rotary for one. 6) The Mexican Consulate provides training for the "Tres por Uno (3X1)" grant funding through the Mexican government. Training for immigrant

groups interested in making improvements in their home towns and participating in “Mixteco/Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP). Members of our Committee are attending in support of the emerging Ventura/Loreto Sister City Group. Margaret also explained that the new Representative and Alternate will be appointed at their new meeting.

San Juan, Philippines. No representative nor alternate attended; no report was made.

Toba, Japan: Gary Maxwell, Alternate, reported that Toba is preparing for their annual new year’s party at the Faulkner Gallery at 5:30 pm for a cost of \$45 for members or \$50 for nonmembers. They are also planning their student exchange for 2017; as well as a spring event for Sushi and Saki tasting. Linda Mathews, Representative, came at the end of the Board meeting and said that they are also monitoring the three new Cherry Blossom trees and may have a cherry blossoming viewing party there.

Weihai, China: Peter Haslund, Representative, reported that they are celebrating the Chinese New Year on February 8, 2017, and reorganizing; there has been a decline in the interest of folks for this Sister City Committee; however, he will give a full report in March.

16 **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gunther, Acting Secretary