

Minutes of the Santa Barbara Sister Cities Board Meeting of January 8, 2020

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Pat Fallin at 12:00P.M.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Members present: Pat Fallin, Chair, County-at-Large; Margaret Saavedra, Vice-Chair, City-at-Large; Whitney Rush, Secretary, City-at-Large; Brian Slattery, Representative, Dingle, Ireland; George Lilly, Representative, Kotor, Montenegro; Georgia Gastounitis, Representative, Patras, Greece; Gil Garcia, Representative, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico; Albe Dumlao, Representative, San Juan, Philippines; Linda Matthews, Representative, Toba, Japan; Peter Haslund, Representative, Weihai, China;

Other Attendees: Oscar Gutierrez, Council Liaison and Linda Gunther, Staff to Board
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** On a motion duly made by Peter Haslund and seconded by Gil Garcia, the minutes of the meeting held on November 6, 2019, were approved.
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Pat Fallin encourages board members to attend each other's events. For events with a cost of admission, members of the Sister Cities Board should receive member rate instead of guest price. Pat Fallin asks each representative to bring this idea to their committees. Peter Haslund and Margaret Saavedra agree it is a good idea. Pat Fallin also asks groups to consider their Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce membership and if it is not being used, we may not want to renew.
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None
6. **REVIEW CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2020:** Calendar reviewed and approved. Brian Slattery adds that Dingle has a movie screening on January 29 at Hillside House.
7. **REPORT OF REGIONAL MEETING IN SANTA BARBARA FOR SOCAL -** Pat Fallin reports that this meeting was successful with approximately 50 people in attendance. The Master of Ceremonies Geoff Green did a great job and held a successful meet and greet of the larger SoCal network. A highlight was a twenty-thousand-dollar check presented to the Puerto Vallarta Training Association. Pat Fallin thanks Gil Garcia, Marti Garcia, Margaret Saavedra and Linda Gunther. Gil Garcia praised the breakout sessions that allowed smaller groups to go into more detail.
8. **REPORT ON SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL (SCI)** Pat Fallin reports the United States/Mexico Mayor Summit will be held February 26-28, 2020, in El Paso, Texas. This is the third mayor summit SCI has organized.
9. **REPORT ON SCI'S SOCAL REGIONAL MEETING** Margaret Saavedra reports there will be a joint NorCal and SoCal meeting in Paso Robles on March 28, 2020. Margaret hopes that all can attend.

10. **YOUNG ARTISTS AND AUTHORS SHOWCASE (YAAS) DATE AND THEME FOR 2020 –** Margaret Saavedra reports that she is working to connect with teachers in schools, and is considering ads in local or student newspapers. The date and location of the reception is to be determined but the winning pieces must be to SCI by April 1, 2020. Linda Matthews requests to receive earlier notice about the showcase in future years. Gil Garcia suggests a dedicated team should work with schools and we could learn from the YAAS programs in Santa Clarita or Culver City. Pat Fallin will contact the Santa Clarita Sister City Board since they work with the school district on their YAAS showcase. George Lilly suggests a 1-3 person sub-committee to spend time and energy solely on this. Albe Dumlao highlights the artwork they received last year from the Philippines. Gil Garcia suggests working with the Arts Commission and the Children’s Art Project.
11. **REPORT FROM COMMITTEE ON REQUEST FOR NEW SISTER CITY - MIRAFLORES, LIMA, PERU** Whitney Rush reports on sub-committee's meeting with Miguel Arana with Miraflores, Lima, Peru. Gil Garcia requests a formal letter from the mayor of Miraflores and an invitation to attend their board’s meeting and events. Once the letter has been received the sub-committee will set-up another meeting.
14. **REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:** (Limit 3 minutes each)

Kotor, Montenegro: George Lilly, Representative, reported on the following and provided a handout.

Classical Music – The Santa Barbara/Kotor Sister City Committee is excited to announce the Kotor Art Concert happening at the UCSB Music Department on January 31, 2020, and another performance on February 2, 2020. The musicians include Katrina Agate, Sara Bayshore, Andrija Jovovic and Nastasja Vojinovic. George Lilly invites all the Sister City Board members and is happy to comp one ticket if they email him directly.

Regent Hotel - On Kotor’s coastline, a new resort 15 minutes from the city center is making an impact with their deaf chef exchange. A new program with Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) will accept 5-6 students to work and be paid for three months in June - August 2020.

Patras, Greece: Georgia Gastounitis, Representative, reported that Greek Independence Day will be celebrated March 21, 2020, at the Greek Orthodox Church in Santa Barbara. Food and entertainment will be provided. They are starting to set up a student exchange for the summer of 2020. Their next membership meeting is March 30th at Gil Garcia’s house at 6:30pm.

Puerto Vallarta, Mexico: Gil Garcia, Representative, reported on the following.

The I Madonnari festival in Puerto Vallarta was a success and the Committee sponsored food booths at the event.

A successful posadas party was held in December.

In mid-November there was a fire fighting training between the two cities for about 70 people.

A delegation trip is being planned for January 14-23, 2020. One person recently cancelled, and space is available for the ten-day trip.

Members will be presenting at the Migrant Days in March and meet with fellow interested cities and mayors.

San Juan, Philippines. Albe Dumlao, Representative, reports that San Juan's political landscape has changed with a new mayor for the first time in 50 years. A group will be visiting Santa Barbara in April and will meet with Santa Barbara's mayor. The Committee is planning a possible visit in 2021 during the Water Festival. Currently eight activities are planned for 2020 including a Valentine's Day Party on the Saturday before Valentine's Day.

Toba, Japan: Linda Matthews, Representative, reports that the New Year's dinner or Shinnenkai will be at the Unitarian Society on January 19, 2020, with catered sushi and sake as well as a library docent presentation on the history of manga and anime. All are invited, please RSVP by January 12, 2020. The student exchange will take place in July/August 2020 and any interested junior high students should contact the Toba Committee. Applications are due by March 1st and interviews will be concluded by April 1st. They also need a chaperone for the trip if any middle school or special education teachers may be interested.

Weihai, China: Peter Haslund, Representative, reports the New Year's dinner is scheduled for Saturday, February 1, 2020. On January 29th, the Confucius Institute of UCSB will host 'Will China Save the Planet' at Bren Hall from 5 - 6:30pm. It will be a discussion on China's role in the environmental sector. Weihai will also reach out to artists within their Committee for the Young Artists and Authors Showcase.

Dingle, Ireland: Brian Slattery, Representative, reported on the following:

A Statement From Santa Barbara Dingle Sister City Committee to the Santa Barbara Sister City Board: January 8, 2020.

“The Committee voted last night to recommend to Council and Mayor to dissolve the Santa Barbara Dingle Sister City relationship. We have requested numerous times in the past year to bring it in to compliance with the new guidelines adopted in 2019. They have resisted expanding to the larger County of Kerry and we are still dealing with basically one couple with no Committee. They have also recently established a new Sister City relationship with West Springfield, Massachusetts which they are quite excited about as it better meets their commercial interests as they exhibit their jewelry at the Big E Exposition each September. The immigration pattern to Western Massachusetts is well established going all the way back to the mid to late 1800’s from the Blasket Islands. Due to the disparity in population between Santa and Dingle, if we tried to establish this now it would probably not be accepted as per the guidelines. Our delegation that visited in 2018 did not feel all that welcome. Many of the people they spoke with weren’t even aware of Santa Barbara and Dingle being Sister Cities. We are looking to other towns in Ireland as a potential new Sister City and the Committee intends to stay intact throughout this process.”

Gil Garcia suggests maintaining Dingle as a Friendship City if they do not meet the guidelines.

Brian Slattery reports that the local committee remains intact and is seeking a different Irish Sister City.

Pat Fallin reports that the resolution will be presented to Council in the first part of February.

On a motion duly made by Gil Garcia and seconded by Brian Slattery, the board agrees to a special meeting to vote on the dissolution of Dingle to be held on January 29, 2020 at 12pm.

15. **ADJOURNMENT**: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Whitney Rush, Secretary