



Minutes

International & Multicultural Advisory Committee (IMAC) Meeting

January 6, 2016 @ New CA Headquarters in Room 2002

In Attendance

IMAC Members: Larry Bachman, Leslie Barnett, Tya Bolton, Paulomi and Priyanka Desai, Sue DiPaula, Pat Fisher, Marcy Gitt, Valerie Montague, Alice Pham, Linda Potsiadlo, Arna Rubman, Jean Salkeld, Larry Schoen

CA Staff: Leslie Barnett, Laura Smit, Ava Larson (HCPSS GT Intern)

CA Board: Chao Wu (RH), Janet Evans (LR)

China Sister City Committee Presenters: Hui Dong, Jun Han, Chao Wu, Andrew Qiang, plus 22 guests supporting the China Sister City Planning Committee in its presentation.

1. Valerie Montague welcomed Janet Evans, the Columbia Association (CA) Board member from Long Reach, Chao Wu, the CA Board member from River Hill, and Leslie Barnett, CA Assistant Director of Community Services. Members of IMAC introduced themselves, stating their name and village.
2. Chair's Report
 - a. Valerie welcomed everyone, hoped we had a wonderful holiday season and were ready to get back to IMAC work.
 - b. On 10 December 2015, the Haiti Sister City Planning Committee made its presentation to a sub-committee of the CA Board, which approved it to go forward to the entire CA Board for a vote on 14 January.
 - c. The World Languages Café took place at Wegmans for the last time. It will now be located at the 50+ Center of the East Columbia Library. The next scheduled dates are 26 January, 23 February and 22 March from 7:00-9:00 p.m.
3. Program Manager's Report
 - a. Laura Smit will be leading a Columbia delegation to Ghana from 6-18 February. There are 10 people going. They will spend 5 days in Tema, and explore Kumasi and Cape Coast to get to know the country, its culture and people.
 - b. She is promoting the Sister Cities European High School Exchange with 2 information sessions in January. Applications are due February 19. The students should be in Level 2 - 3 in French or Spanish at the high school level to participate.
 - c. Students from Ghana will be here in July at the time that the European students are here.
4. Minutes from the November, 2015 IMAC meeting were approved as presented.
5. Reports from Sister Cities Subcommittees
 - a. Tres Cantos, Spain Sister City Committee – Pat Fisher reported the committee had not met but will meet this month.
 - b. Cergy-Pontoise, France Sister City Committee

- (1) Chair Debra Paper was sick and unable to attend the meeting.
 - (2) Laura reported that the proposed dates for an art, architecture and culture exchange have changed from 22-28 April to 14-21 May. More host families are needed.
 - (3) We will know more about French participants after the CAJA meets on 22 January.
 - (4) Debra will schedule a meeting for later this month.
 - c. Tema, Ghana Sister City Committee
 - (1) A Columbia delegation will visit Ghana from 6-18 February.
 - (2) Ghana high school students will come here during July 2016.
 - d. Cap-Haitien, Haiti Sister City Planning Committee
 - (1) Bob Anantua reported that the presentation to the CA Board on 10 December 2015 went well.
 - (2) Once the CA Board approves, the committee will begin to plan exchange programs.
 - (3) There have been 3 trips to Haiti with the Global Leadership Program, with 10-12 high school students. Glenelg Country School is the sponsor. They want to open up the program to all Howard County schools.
6. Proposal for Chinese sister city for Columbia - Liyang, Jiangsu Province, China
- a. Dr. Hui Dong, a member of the planning committee and senior engineer at Mesco Scale Discovery, began the presentation, which was continued by Jun Han, Director of the Liyang Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the U.S.
 - b. Liyang was selected from 8 proposed Chinese cities. Reasons Liyang was selected:
 - (1) Similarity in levels of government between Liyang and Columbia
 - (2) Location and geography
 - (3) Modern transportation system
 - (4) Quality education
 - (5) Environment protection
 - (6) Human value centered
 - (7) Open-minded for globalization
 Liyang reportedly has 5 sister cities – 1 in Japan, 1 in Canada, 1 in Europe and 2 in the U.S. (California and Virginia)
 - c. It was pointed out that the time frame for Liyang to become a sister city in 2016 was not realistic. All the pieces were not yet in place to move that quickly.
7. IMAC members, Larry Schoen, Alice Pham, Marcy Gitt and Linda Potsiadlo (who are interested or have experience in China) volunteered to join the China Sister City Planning Committee and ask pertinent, clarifying questions, then report back to the IMAC, which will recommend to the CA staff if the proposal should go to the CA Board.
8. Multicultural Events
- a. Ghana Fest 2, 8 November 2015 – Tya Bolton reported it was a beautiful event with a great turnout. It included a County Council resolution by Councilman Calvin Ball and a video message from the mayor of Tema, Hon. Isaac Odamtten.
 - b. Eastern Europe and Russia Culture Fest, 10 April 2016 from 1:30-4:30 p.m. at the Miller Library
 - (1) Laura needs volunteers to man tables and to find performers (musicians and dancers) and exhibitors

- (2) She will share the flier and press release with IMAC members when ready (3) Pat Fisher, Arna Rubman, Priyanka and Paulomi Desai and Linda Potsiadlo volunteered to help.
8. Ongoing Multicultural Programs
- a. World Food Passport Program – this will be put on the agenda for the March 2 meeting to brainstorm on how to proceed. The World Food Passport year ends March 31. Hardly anyone is participating and no more passports will be printed. Laura has 80 gift certificates from the participating restaurants that need to be either donated or returned to the restaurants.
 - b. World Languages Café – going well, see 2c. above.
 - c. International Book Club – going well. Next meetings on 13 January, book is Waiting by Ha Jin, and 10 February for Yellow Eyes of Crocodiles.
9. There were no action items to be reviewed.
10. The next scheduled IMAC meetings are 2 March, 4 May and 6 July.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue DiPaula, IMAC secretary