



## MINUTES

International & Multicultural Advisory Committee (IMAC) Meeting

**April 5, 2017 \* 7:00-8:30 pm**

Board Room, CA Headquarters

**In attendance:** Bob Anantua, Magdalena Castro-Lewis, Sue DiPaula, Marcy Gitt, Alexandra Hursky, Len Lazarick (MDreporter.com), Kathie Martin, Valerie Montague, Alice Pham, Arna Rubman, Jean Salkeld, Larry Schoen

**Subcommittees:** Jun Han (China), Gabriel Pomary (Tema), Bob Anantua (Haiti)

**CA staff:** Laura Smit, Grace Chang

1. **Welcome & Introductions** – we went around the table, introducing ourselves and our village.
2. **Chair's Report** – Valerie Montague
  - a. The opening ceremony for Columbia's 50th Birthday at Columbia Mall on 19 March was fun; there were many performers.
  - b. The Multicultural Fair and FIRN International 5K at Howard Community College (HCC) on 2 April was a bit windy, but a good time was had by all.
  - c. The books we sent to Ghana are still in the port there. The new mayor of Tema was coming into office at the end of March.
3. **Program Manager's Report** – Laura Smit
  - a. Update on July Sister Cities High School Exchanges  
13 students to go to Spain; 6 students to go to France; Only 2 students wanted to go to Ghana, while 11 students from Ghana wanted to come to the U.S. Laura's supervisor said if the exchange wasn't going to be two-way, it will not happen, so no Ghana exchange this year.
  - b. Suzanne Waller fell and was hospitalized for 5 days. She is home now. Laura circulated a card for us to sign for her.
4. **Approval of Feb 1, 2017 Minutes** – Magdalena moved that the minutes be approved with a correction to Sue's last name and Sue seconded. Motion was unanimously passed.
5. **Reports from Sister City Committees**
  - a. **Cap-Haitien, Haiti** – Bob Anantua reporting for Chair Momina Malik
    - The event at HCC on 2 April showcased the Build Haiti Foundation and its Global Leadership Program (GLP) and there was much interaction with the public.
    - There will be a cultural event on 11 June at Smith Theater at HCC to benefit the Build Haiti Foundation and the Cap-Haitien Committee,
    - Haitian art will be part of the Sister Cities Art Exhibition.

- Eight U.S. students and 5 adults will be going to Haiti from 6-15 July as part of a GLP cultural exchange.
  - There will be a presentation on Haiti at Hammond High School on 4 April.
- b. **Cergy-Pontoise, France** – Laura reporting for Chair Debra Paper
- At least 4 people, some artists and some CAJA representatives, are coming from France 16-25 June.
  - Debra Paper will email Chantal Makhbous at CAJA for the list of names and wants to schedule a meeting of the French committee during the day next week since she is on spring break from school.
- c. **Tres Cantos, Spain** – No Chair
- Laura reported that some digital images for artwork has been received from an artist in Tres Cantos, and is hoping to receive more.
  - It is not known if any people from Spain will come during the art exhibition.
  - Magdalena offered to help run the committee, with assistance from former chair Pat Fisher “on the outside.”
- d. **Tema, Ghana** – Gabriel Pomary, new Chair
- He was concerned about the situation with the Ghana high school student exchange that would not happen this year. He hoped it would not discourage future participation by Ghanaian students. He believes we should express our regret to them in writing and emphasize our commitment to the exchange program.
  - Laura confirmed that CA really tried but there seems to have been little interest in going to Africa or fears about where children would be staying. There are many myths, misinformation and fear that need to be countered.
  - The two U.S. students would have been great ambassadors for the program but it was not financially viable to send 2 and receive 11 from Ghana.
  - It was suggested that the exchange could include college students. Valerie agreed that we need ambassadors and it might have to be college students. She asked the Tema committee to come up with recommendations for the next best steps to take and bring them to the next IMAC meeting.
- e. **China Planning Committee (Liyang)** – Chair Jun Han made a presentation.
- The Letter of Intent that needs to go to the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) in order to obtain approval to be eligible to conduct sister city planning with a foreign city.
  - was sent in November 2016 to Liyang for the Mayor’s signature.
  - Jun is going to China at the end of April and will file the letter with to the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC)
  - Jun wants to make their presentation for the CA Board. Valerie told her it should include a request for Laura’s and Grace’s time and assistance, what type of exchanges are envisioned (high school, college, professional), and will it add to CA’s budget (the answer should be NO). Her committee should also be prepared to show how they as volunteers will help make any exchange programs with Liyang success.
  - Laura offered to contact Sister Cities International to find out how long it typically takes to get approval from the CPAFFC.
  - Jun’s presentation included beautiful photos of Liyang landscapes, including Tianmu

Lake. Liyang is 47 minutes from Shanghai by high speed train and 4 hours from Beijing.

- Valerie suggested that Liyang officials come to Columbia during the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations and Jun noted that trips needed to be planned a year in advance.
- Laura and some IMAC members are interested in going to China in the fall or next April. Non-stop airfare to Beijing is estimated at \$800; \$600 - \$650 with one stop. Flight time is 13 hours from Dulles. Jun offered to facilitate getting visas, which are good for 10 years, by taking the paperwork to the Chinese Embassy in D.C.
- She had beautiful photos of traditional Chinese Qipao dancers at the HCC Multicultural Fair on 2 April. Laura asked Jun to send them to her.

#### **6. Oceania CultureFest: Australia, New Zealand & the Pacific Islands on 7 May**

- a. Performers and exhibitors are needed - they have at least one Hawaiian dancer.
- b. They are trying to get food trucks and shaved ice.
- c. There will be a planning meeting at the administration office near the Miller Library on 7 April at 10 am.
- d. Volunteers are needed to work the IMAC table.
- e. Grace will be running the event as Laura will be in California for her niece's wedding.
- f. Sue offered some Maori language materials and other items from Australia and New Zealand for the exhibit tables. Other committee members offered to loan other items for those tables.

[The CultureFest was cancelled and is being rescheduled for fall 2017]

#### **7. Columbia's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday - Use hashtag #ColumbiaMD50**

Facebook: Columbia MD 50th Birthday; Website: ColumbiaMD50.com

- a. The Mall Kick-off on 19 March was fun.
- b. Multicultural Fair and FIRN International 5K on 2 April
  - Magdalena offered some suggestions to make it better. Tents were needed for some shade, along with food or snacks. Activities were also needed for the children. Since the attendance was not great, more promotion was needed in the community.
  - Laura noted that there was little coordination between Together We Can and FIRN organizers. Funding for the tents and food was pulled at the last minute. CA had no direct participation but Laura tried to help. Laura suggested that we send comments to her to forward to the organizers.
- c. Updates for Sister Cities Art Exhibition, 10 June – 17 July
  - The exhibition is moving ahead. There are 6 or 7 people on the jurying committee. Digital images of artwork is still needed from Ghana.
  - Sunday, 18 June, from 4-6 pm is the Reception for the Sister Cities Art Exhibit in the Art Department Gallery at HCC.

#### **8. Important Dates**

- Next IMAC Meeting (1<sup>st</sup> Weds): 2017: 7 June
- Oceania CultureFest:– 7 May at Miller Library TBD
- World Languages Café – 4<sup>th</sup> Tues: 25 April, 23 May at 50+ Center, East Columbia
- International Book Club: 12 April, 10 May at CA
- Sister Cities 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Art Show – 10 June to 17 July at HCC

Respectfully submitted, Sue DiPaula, IMAC Secretary