

Sister City Committee
Minutes of Meeting
June 3, 2025

Public Comment

The Town's Public Comment Period shall be reserved for those citizens that have signed up to address a Board or Committee, at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting, pursuant to the Town's Public Comment Policy. Speakers are limited to three (3) minutes. Additional comments may be submitted in writing.

1. Call the Meeting to Order

Gerry called the meeting to order at 5:30p.m. The following were present:

Marc Michaelson
Shelby Sallee
Natalie Schuette
Amy Wise
Fran Dunne
Bobbie Ibarra
Gerry Short
Melody Villalobos

Not Present:

Gregory Creasey

2. Approval of May 20th, 2025 Minutes

Amy made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Fran and passed unanimously.

3. Financial Status

- The monthly reconciliation for May 2025 was reviewed with a balance of \$125,495.51

4. Zama Communications

- Marc discussed with the committee about chaperone assignments, T-shirt sizes, hotel rooms that are reserved for the first night in Japan. Currently still waiting for a response from Zama of a communication issue with one of our students.

5. Committee Reports

- Tshirts:** Fran and Shelby discussed with the committee that there will be a message sent to the Groupme of T-shirt sizes for the students. Shelby discussed with the committee about a student's parent wanting to buy the T-shirt. Discussed ordering 20 extra T-shirts for the students. Will be ordering them by mid June. There will be a message sent out on Groupme to the parents if they are wanting to order them.
- Budget:** Gerry discussed that the committee got 70k approval for the trip to Japan. Marc discussed with the committee menu options for the farewell party that the program will pay for. Marc will talk with Zama on what the cost will be.
- Training/Orientation:** Fran discussed how the training went this past Sunday. The second training will be this Sunday. Chaperones will be reaching out to students that have not attended.
- Public Relations:** Bobbie discussed the press release she sent out. She will be reaching out to PIO to get that sent out on the Town of Smyrna's website. The press release will also be sent out to the Facebook page as well. Discussed the potential of a Facebook live at the airport. Marc and Amy will be attending a radio show to discuss the upcoming trip.
- Records/Documentation:** Marc discussed with the committee what documents are needed for each student to travel this cycle. Students will come to the training session on June 8th to complete documentation. Documents that need to be completed are; Consent waiver, Medical Release, Parental Consent, Physician Statement-Travel, Student Exchange Agreement, Waiver of Liability, and Photo Release. These forms will be sent to each parent to get them completed and turned back in.
- Gifts:** Amy discussed with the committee about the board for the mayor to mayor gift. The welcome bags will have two T-shirts, town pen, pringles, town button, moon pie and goo goo. V is volunteer books came in. 21 welcome bags will be put together in Zama.
- Farewell Party:** Mary Ann discussed with the committee how the training sessions have been, the next training sessions will be June 7th, 14th, 28th. Marc discussed having 2 students give a speech. The committee recommended Graison Murray and Morgan Surratt.

6. Unfinished Business

- a. **Airline tickets:** Marc has submitted the names to the airlines, the documentation has been submitted and are currently waiting on the insurance cards to wait. Marc will then get Lisa to pay for it in upcoming days.

7. New Business

- Shelby discussed with the committee luggage tags and business cards. Shelby sent out a Groupme for getting their information for business cards, she is only missing 2 students' information. Shelby asked the committee if any members will be needing business cards. Discussed how many business cards each student will be receiving.
- Committee discussed the options of taking an extra suitcase for props and miscellaneous stuff that will go over seas. Marc will talk with the representative to see if there is a discount for adding the extra suitcase.
- Marc discussed the buddy list and what chaperone is assigned to each group. Hotel list is the same as the buddy list. Will be making a phone tree to call. Marc discussed getting a wifi router to travel that will give off wifi overseas.
- Committee discussed about having a section on the newsletter to talk about overseas data and phone plans.
- Committee discussed reaching out to students to get colored passports copy to have multiple copies while they are overseas.

8. Other

- Natalie discussed reaching out to the embassy of Japan. Lisa will discuss with Jeff Peach what his thoughts are for reaching out to the embassy. Depending on what Jeff says Melody will take this over.
- Marc discussed with the committee about getting a guide while they are at Dallas airport for their layoff.
- The next meeting will be held June 17th.

9. Adjournment

With no further business before the committee, a motion was made to adjourn by Bobbie and seconded by Fran at 6:52 p.m.