



CITY OF PORTSMOUTH NH

Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Sister Cities

Thursday May 15, 2025

MEETING MINUTES

Attending: Councilor Rich Blalock, chair; Christine Friese, Atty. Bob Sullivan, Mary Carey Foley, Steve Chinosi. Stephanie Seacord. Absent: Ben Van Camp, Robert Conard.

1. Old Business:

- Update on Sister City Trust/ Next Steps – Bob Sullivan and Christine to meet again with Trustees. The goal is for the Trustees and Sister City Committee to provide a unified recommendation to the City Council that allows for funds to be available on short notice. Discussion with Trustees about the process and whether every expenditure should go through the City Council, or simply need City Manager certifies Sister City Committee requests consistent with the rules of the Trust. At the May 14 Trustees meeting the question of not commingling City and private donation funds arose. The original idea was/is that there not be any City funds allocated and that all monies in the Trust would come from private donations.
- Update on follow-up with Szolnok, Hungary – On a motion by Mary Carey seconded by Stephanie the Committee voted to authorize Christine to send the letter.

2. New Business:

- Update on most recent PHS student exchanges with Nichinan – Steve Chinosi reported their enthusiastic welcome in Nichinan on the April exchange trip. There are 8-foot banners throughout the city and on every desk at City Hall noting that this is the 120th anniversary of the Portsmouth Peace Treaty, the 170th anniversary of Baron Komura's birth and the 40th anniversary of the Sister City agreement with Portsmouth. Mayor Takeshima plans to visit for September 5th along with other adults, three Nichinan High School students and a teacher. Then the Gakuen students visit in October and Santarcangelo students the following week. Need to plan their welcome and plan for those expenses. Students who visited Nichinan expressed their pride in being global ambassadors for Portsmouth, the holders of this 120 year historic legacy sustaining the tradition and history of this unique relationship. Committee suggested a student presentation to the City Council on what the trip meant to them– possibly when the new Trust is being reviewed.

- News from Santarcangelo – Mayor has received more information on the proposed art light installation. Technical details need to be worked out.
- Portsmouth's Sister Cities make students feel their global roles as citizens, robust and connected in a rooted way. As they tell their stories now that they're home others want to know 'when can I do this?'

3. Public Comment – none.

4. Next meeting June 26.