



CITY OF PORTSMOUTH NH

Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Sister Cities

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

MEETING MINUTES

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

1. Portsmouth UK Holiday Greetings

- The Committee participated in a Zoom with the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth UK and three of their other "Twin Cities" – Duisburg, Germany; Halifax, Nova Scotia and Portsmouth RI.
- Portsmouth UK will launch its 100th City Anniversary celebration on April 21, 2026 and will install a new Lord Mayor on May 18, 2026.
- Portsmouth UK invited Portsmouth NH to participate in a virtual schools choral concert and will supply more details on the shared song "On Shining Waters." The Committee will share with the Portsmouth High School Music Department/chorus.

2. New Business

- The Committee discussed the idea of initiating a Friendship City agreement with Halifax, Nova Scotia due to maritime and historical parallels.
- Robert Conard suggested that the Committee explore opportunities for lodging partners when the City welcomes Sister City delegations.

3. Old Business:

- Update on Sister City Fund – Bob Sullivan has briefed the Legal Department on the needed documents including a donor letter to set up the Fund to accept donations. Donations to this account would be tax deductible and the allocation of funds would be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Committee.
- Minutes – On a motion by Robert Conard, seconded by Bob Sullivan the committee voted unanimously to accept the minutes as presented.
- Chair Blalock will investigate the idea of making the Sister City Committee a permanent rather than Blue Ribbon Committee, to assure continuity.

4. Public Comment – none.

Next meeting January 15.

Adjourned 9:58 am on a motion by Robert Conard, seconded by Christine Friese.