

**Village of Hoffman Estates
Sister Cities Commission Minutes
April 15, 2026**

Members in Attendance

Lillian Mosier, Chair
Robin Jacobi
Jeff Howard
Katie Jorkon
Jill Wood-Naatz
Melissa Marscin
David Chameli
Marcia Frank.
Fanja Raelijaona-Michel
Diana Murray
Mimi Wise
Terri Lamberti
Lisa Christie
Nick Jorkon
Susie Whipple
Vanya Castle

Members Absent

Anita Flanigan

Staff Liaison

Debbie Schoop

Guests

Ana Grecu
Malek Bounab
Nour Housseini

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Lillian Mosier called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Two minor corrections to March minutes:

Section B 2. Comics - date correction to March 23-31 and Section 6 A 1. Culinary- Jill met with 5 host families.

Motion by Robin Jacobi, seconded by Marcia Frank, to approve the corrected minutes of March 18, 2026 meeting with changes. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Malek and Nour each spoke of their runner's exchange experience from their trip to Angoulême. They both stated they were well received by their host families. Nour enjoyed the pasta party the night before the run that included all runners from five countries. She also enjoyed the cultural outing to the castle. Malek enjoyed being in a new region of France and was happy to get to know Mathieu and his family better. He will host them this summer when they come to Hoffman Estates for our run in June.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Lillian shared that Danielle in Angoulême was asking for additional information on those going to France this summer for the 30th anniversary of our Sister Cities. She distributed an information sheet to be completed by those participating in the trip. Lillian will send back to Danielle.

5. **STAFF LIAISON'S REPORT**

Debbie Schoop showed a picture of the statue ordered for Mayor McLeod to give to Mayor Bonnefont in Angoulême in honor of the 30th anniversary of the Sister Cities. The statue has an eagle and the American flag and will be engraved with the names and logos of both cities and 30th Anniversary. Debbie is also looking at leather journals that will be personalized for Christine and Danielle. An ornament of the State of Illinois was also passed around as possible gifts for Etienne, Morgane, and Andre for 2027.

6. **CURRENT SUB-GROUP REPORTS**

A. **Signature Exchanges**

1) **Culinary/Bon Appétit**

Jill Wood -Naatz thanked everyone for their help with the culinary exchange. She reported that the students' favorite activities were the trip to Chicago and the visit to the high school. Jill read a message from the owner of the Chicago Culinary Kitchen stating he wished he could've spent more time with the French students and commission members during their lunch visit. She shared that he brought out a bountiful variety of smoked meats and sides, plus drinks for them. He also graciously did not charge Jill for their meal. He hoped to get a great review on FB and offered to post pictures of the group on his FB page. Jill thanked the drivers and Robin and Ed Jacobi for hosting the farewell potluck. Lillian thanked Jill and her committee for all their hard work.

Discussion was also held regarding the kids cooking class. A total of 13 young people participated and learned how to make a galette Charentaise. Ana Grecu asked why the cooking experience was limited in number. It was explained that there is only one oven and that restricts the amount of space that can be used to cook/bake things.

2) **Runners Exchange**

Lisa Christie reported that she and Mimi Wise are finalizing the itinerary for the two runners coming in June. Malek Bounab will host Mathieu and his son, Valentin. Valentin will complete an internship with the Village during this visit. He will be with different departments each morning Monday-Thursday that week and his supervisors will have forms to sign showing his completion of his time with them. Afternoon activities will be planned. One possible trip is the Anderson Japanese Gardens in Rockford.

The exchange for the Stars and Stripes event will be June 21-June 29 with race on Saturday, June 27th. Jim Cornelison will be singing the National Anthem. Lisa and her committee will be getting flyers out to the public in hopes of increasing the race registrations and participation. The Rogans will host the potluck at 4pm on June 27th.

B. Other Exchanges

1) Sports

Updated information was sent to Angoulême regarding the mountain bike exchange in 2027. No dates at this time. Ed Jacobi spoke with Dave Rogan regarding the proposed Music Exchange in June of 2027. Both proposals will be presented this summer during the Commission's visit to Angouleme. Questions will be asked/answered. This is a work in progress,

Lillian received word from Danielle regarding an American Football exchange for September 22-29, 2026. Roland, a member of the Marauders, met with Danielle. The exchange would involve 2-3 American coaches - Dave Pendergast. Ken Campbell is helping to organize the exchange; he is not a coach; Training camps, QB and Wide Receiver focused, and a football game would be taught. They also expressed learning about flag football. The Marauders will host the coaches and their wives.

Motion by Marcia Frank, seconded by Mimi Wise, to pay \$600 per coach for a portion of their airfare. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

2) Comic

Terri Lamberti stated that due to unforeseen circumstances, only one comic artist participated in this year's exchange. David and Kathy Chameli hosted Etienne. It was shared that Etienne made a number of great connections at the C2E2 event. Lillian, Etienne, and David also met with Tyrell at his studio. Tyrell expressed interest in going to Angoulême in the future.

The learning experience led by Etienne for two 6th grade classes at Lincoln Elementary on Thursday, March 26, 2026 went very well. Students were attentive and enjoyed his presentation. Students were each given a comic book. Many asked for his autograph.

The potluck was held on March 29, 2026 at the Yarwood's. Lillian reported that they would love to host again next year.

Mogane informed Lillian that Landis Blair was selected for a comic artist residency for 7 months in 2028. More to come in the future.

C. Special Projects

A presentation "Monet Lives" by Jim Parks will be held on Saturday, May 2, at 11 a.m. This will be followed by a luncheon. As of this date, there are 74 registered attendees. Presenter Jim Parks gave approval to have the presentation recorded and will be aired on the local TV station. Commission members will help Jeff in the kitchen on Friday, May 1 from 11am-3pm, while others will work with Marcia getting things ready for set-up on Saturday. Saturday, May 2nd, volunteers will arrive at 8:30 am to help Jeff with final lunch prep and others will set up the event space. Marcia has a list of volunteers.

Saturday, September 19th, will be our "Bubbles & Popcorn" movie day. The event will be from 1pm-3pm at Village Hall. Marcia is working with the library on the film selection. Sparkling wine will be purchased from Aldi in advance.

D. French Evening

Jeff Howard and Chef Sylvain met with Greg at Catering Made Simple to discuss details for the “Bonnes Fêtes” to be held on October 23, 2026. Greg will help order food and provide transportation of the food to Village Hall the day of the event. Chef Sylvain and Jeff finalized the menu which will include Salade Landaise, roasted turkey breast and a starch, Beef Bourguignons, Fromage and bread, plus two desserts - Bûche de Noël and mini profiteroles (cream puffs), and wine.

Chef Sylvain will be bringing 5 students with him in October. Dates will be flexible to allow for the best travel options. Activities will include visits to Chiago and Police and Fire Departments. An additional outing to Starved Rock State Park was discussed. Lillian reported the need for at least 5 servers to help with the event. Nick agreed to “train” them. Servers will be paid for their work. Lillian suggested \$125/student for the evening. Additional servers may be needed. A minimum age of 18 years old is required to serve.

Discussion was held regarding gifts for Chef Sylvain. A personalized bobble-head and a chef’s coat with the names of both Sister Cities were two items commission members agreed would be fantastic gifts. Jeff will look into the chef’s coat. David has the information for the personalized bobble-head.

The baskets will be set up in the corridor with security provided by the Village due to early voting at Village Hall during that time and voting machines set up in the Lam Room.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Lillian will follow up with Harper College regarding the cupcake exchange. Several questions and concerns to be addressed to ensure good relations moving forward.

The July Commission meeting date was moved from July 15 to July 29 to accommodate the many members that are going to France in July.

Lillian asked Diana Murray if she would be able to attend a meeting with Mary Jane Garvey regarding resources on Dementia. Diana is not available. More discussion to be had in the future.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Fanja Raoelijaona-Michel, seconded by Terri Lamberti, to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

*We celebrated Debbie Schoop’s birthday and thanked her for all the dedicated work she does for the commission.

Respectfully submitted by Susie Whipple.

*The next meeting of the Sister Cities Commission will be
6:30pm on May 20, 2026 in the Frank Alexa Room at the Village Hall*