

**Village of Hoffman Estates
Sister Cities Commission Minutes
July 29, 2026**

<u>Members in Attendance</u>	<u>Members Absent</u>
Lillian Mosier, Chair	Anita Flanagan
Jill Wood-Naatz, Vice Chair	Susie Whipple
Robin Jacobi	Jeff Howard
Vanya Castle	Nick Jorkon
David Chameli	
Mimi Wise	<u>Staff Liaison</u>
Terri Lamberti	Debbie Schoop
Lisa Christie	
Diana Murray	
Marcia Frank	
Katie Jorkon	
Melissa Marscin	
Fanja Raoelijaona-Michel	

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Lillian Mosier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the June 17, 2026, meeting were presented. Corrections to various sections were discussed and agreed upon, after which the following action was taken:

Motion by Marcia Frank, seconded by Mimi Wise, to approve the June 17, 2026, minutes as corrected. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Lillian provided an update regarding the recent trip to Angoulême by several members of the Commission, including Hoffman Estates Mayor Bill McLeod, Trustee Pilafas, Trustee Stanton and his wife, Rita. Although fires in Spain and France affected airport operations and other parts of Europe, the group's travel was largely unaffected.

Lillian discussed challenges involving accommodations in Angoulême, event planning, and local transportation, noting the need for improved coordination for future visits. The twinning agreement was signed at a venue generally reserved for special occasions. Gifts were exchanged, with Hoffman Estates presenting Angoulême with an American eagle bearing a commemorative engraving.

It was also noted that Angoulême has been designated a UNESCO Creative City, and the possibility of Hoffman Estates pursuing similar recognition was discussed. The event was featured in the local newspaper, including a photograph of the two mayors shaking hands and an article highlighting the 30-year relationship between the municipalities. Lillian read an English translation of the article aloud, and a copy was provided to the Hoffman Estates Board of Trustees. The Mayor and Board thanked the Sister Cities Commission for its work in planning the overseas event and anniversary celebration.

Lillian distributed summaries of the discussions concerning events planned for 2026 and 2027 for review by the respective committees. Once approved by each committee, the summaries will be provided to Danielle. Lillian also highlighted several items for the Commission's attention. A new possible date for travel from Angoulême to Hoffman Estates would be June 23 – 29, 2027

A teacher in Angoulême contacted Danielle after reading about the twinning agreement and expressed interest in establishing a student correspondence program between students in Hoffman Estates and Angoulême. The Commission discussed whether such a program would align with its objectives. Lillian emailed Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Hoffman Estates to determine whether someone would be interested in participating.

Finally, Lillian informed the Commission that the Harper College contacts include Dr. Jay Ratliff, Dean of Career and Technical Programs, and Heather Johnson, Program Coordinator for the Hospitality Program.

5. STAFF LIAISON'S REPORT

Debbie had nothing new to report.

6. SUB-GROUP REPORTS

1) Culinary:

Jill met with the committee and confirmed October 17 through 25 for the culinary student exchange. She discussed several proposed changes to the event. Instead of a farewell potluck, the committee considered holding a welcome potluck on Sunday. If approved, a host will be needed. An all-day visit to Starved Rock is planned for October 24. A guided boat tour and a visit to FlyOver Chicago at Navy Pier were also proposed. Jill advised the Commission that David, the Rogan's, and Jeff will host the exchange students.

The Commission discussed organizing an adult cooking class which will take place on Monday, October 19th at Village Hall.

Jeff will contact Sylvain regarding the proposed menu. Jeff will also visit the Hideaway Brew Garden to determine whether it is suitable for using their kitchen for next years Bon Appétit. A new location is necessary because Tate & Lyle, following its acquisition, will no longer host the class.

“Bon Appétit” is tentatively scheduled for April 15, 2027. A chef's coat and bobblehead will also need to be ordered. Lillian will contact Harper College regarding a possible cupcake competition.

2) **Runners**

Lisa reported that the running event was successful, with approximately 2,000 runners participating, an increase from approximately 1,800 the previous year. Approximately 12 individuals participated with the Sister Cities group, including two visitors from Angoulême. The Sister Cities Commission hosted a tent at the event, and Mayor McLeod attended. The visitors from Angoulême were invited to return for next year's event. Cheryl and David hosted a potluck gathering.

3) **Biking**

The Commission discussed a possible bicycle exchange involving members of a cycling club in the Charente region. The club's name and Vanya's reference to "VTT" will be confirmed by Vanya with Olivia and Frederic.

Vanya posted an inquiry on Facebook seeking interest in a bicycle exchange. Vanya stopped at the bicycle shop to provide an update and discuss the club and its activities. Club members meet to select the distance and route for each ride.

Participants would be responsible for their own travel expenses, while Hoffman Estates would provide local support and arrangements. The bicycle shop will need a proposed date, but scheduling discussions will resume after the August 23 race. June and any dates associated with the Mayor's visit should be avoided.

4) **Football Exchange**

The Commission discussed planning for the football exchange, which is expected to involve three participants. A Zoom meeting with David Pendergast is tentatively planned for one week from Friday to answer questions and discuss arrangements.

Topics will include clothing and equipment sizes, dietary needs, whether children reside in the host homes, and the activities planned for the participants during their visit.

5) **Comic Book**

Terry reported that despite lower attendance this year due to issues with the Comic Festival's promoters, participating artists worked together to ensure that the event remained successful. Angoulême remains committed to next year's show, although the date may change. Also, local comic book artist Tyrell Cannon has expressed interest in participating as an artist. A meeting will be scheduled to begin discussing plans for 2028.

Landis plans to visit Angoulême and remain for approximately seven months. The Commission discussed a possible funding opportunity connected with work Landis may publish during his stay; the applicable requirements and additional details need to be confirmed.

The Commission also discussed Will Eisner, creator of The Spirit, and recognition he received in France. A possible project honoring Eisner and strengthening the connection

between the two communities was mentioned. The possibility of contributing funds toward the creation of a Will Eisner statue was raised informally, but no action was taken.

7. SPECIAL PROJECTS

- 1) Marcia reported that the “Bubbles and Popcorn” event is scheduled for September 19, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Village Hall. The event flyer has been prepared, and information will also appear in the *Citizen*. The room will be set up in advance, and a certified bartender will be needed. Marcia is currently coordinating the event on her own. Terri, Jill, Diana, Mimi, Lisa, Vanya, and Lillian were identified as possible volunteers or participants. The featured film will be *Delicious*, and a guest will attend to discuss the movie. A contact from the Schaumburg Township District Library has expressed interest in contributing \$500 toward the program.
- 2) The French Evening event is scheduled for October 23. Deb has prepared a save the date flyer as well as a registration flyer. Registration begins on September 8th, Deb will send email notices to the entire email list. The Commission currently has more than one case of wine on hand. The inventory will be cataloged and replenished as necessary. Only individuals with BASSET certification will serve wine at the event. Lillian will speak with Jeff regarding food preparation. The caterer will provide a reduced scope of services, which is expected to lower the cost. The registration fee will remain \$85 per person.

8. BUDGET

Debbie distributed the proposed 2027 budget. Lillian reviewed the proposed amounts and discussed the following additions and revisions:

- Runner exchange: \$1,200
- Cultural exchange: \$2,500
- Music exchange: \$1,800
- 30th anniversary celebration: \$15,000
- Bicycle exchange: \$1,000
- Exchanges from Angoulême (including culinary, runners, and biking): \$18,500
- Exchanges to Angoulême (including runner, music, and comic-book exchanges): \$3,600
- French Evening: \$9,000
- International dues: \$80
- Hoffman Estates “Bon Appétit” event: \$1,750
- Exchange gifts to and from Angoulême: \$1,000
- Special projects: \$1,700
- Publishing: \$400

The proposed \$15,000 budget for the 30th anniversary celebration included approximately \$3,600 for visiting participants and host-family expenses, \$2,000 for food, \$5,000 for a formal dinner, \$1,500 for admission fees, and \$2,900 for other expenses.

The proposed total budget was stated as \$36,840. Debbie will create a separate budget line for the 30th anniversary celebration. The individual amounts and category totals will be reconciled before the budget is finalized.

After the edits were discussed, the following action was taken:

Motion by Terri Lamberti, seconded by Marcia Frank to approve the 2027 budget in the amount of \$36,840. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Lillian distributed a planning map for the 30th anniversary celebration. Debbie suggested that we share the 30th anniversary calendar with the Village Board at a GAP meeting in January.

Regarding the proposed music exchange, Danielle was unable to make a commitment at this time. Robin presented the proposal to the Minister of Culture, who indicated that he would respond to Robin. Under the proposal, participating musicians would collaborate on musical selections and provide their own instruments. The Commission also discussed coordinating the exchange with France's annual nationwide music celebration held on June 21 in conjunction with the summer solstice.

Regarding the October meeting of the Commission, the following action was taken:

Motion by Fanja Raoelijaona-Michel, seconded by Vanya Castle to reschedule the meeting from October 21, 2026, to October 28, 2026. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Lisa Christie, seconded by Robin Jacobi to adjourn the meeting by 8:35 p.m. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by David Chameli.

The next meeting of the Sister Cities Commission will be at 6:30 p.m. on September 16, 2026, in the Frank Alexa Room at the Village Hall.