

**Village of Hoffman Estates
Sister Cities Commission Minutes
November 20, 2024**

Members in Attendance

Lillian Mosier, Chair
Jill Wood-Naatz, Vice Chair
Vanya Castle
Anita Flanagan
Jeff Howard
Mimi Wise
Terri Lamberti
Lisa Christie
Bob Dohn
Fanja Raoelijaona-Michel
Diana Murray
Marcia Frank
Cindy Ruzsay
Robin Jacobi
Ken Campbell (via electronic attendance)
Melissa Marscin

Members Absent

Staff Liaison

Debbie Schoop

Guests: David Chemeli
Soraina Mazzarisi

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Cindy Ruzsay, seconded by Lisa Christie, to approve the minutes of October 23, 2024 meeting. Minutes were amended. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

- 30th anniversary plans. Lillian corresponded with Danielle about the mayor from Angouleme visiting in April 2026. This will not be possible because the mayor is running for re-election at that time.

Lillian shared her preliminary plans for a commemorative gift bag celebrating the 30th anniversary of the exchange. Minuteman Press quoted a price for 100 canvas bags at \$2.60 per bag. Lillian will also get quotes from other businesses. The design used for the Runners' flyer could be used on the bag. After discussion, it was decided to keep the bags without a date so they can be used for multiple events.

Plans for a Peace Pole will be discussed later.

- Pili and David are ready to go to Gastronomades on Monday. They will be taking a cookbook and Morkes's chocolates as part of their culinary gift.

5. **STAFF LIAISON'S REPORT**

The 2025 budget is completed and will be approved at the next Village Board meeting.

CURRENT SUB-GROUP REPORTS

A. Signature Exchanges

1) Culinary/Bon Appétit

The exchange is set for April 19-26. Jill shared a tentative itinerary. Jeff Howard will host Sylvain and the Rogans will host Maryline. Jill has several new host family possibilities for the students. Melissa Marscin will organize the gift bags. The potluck, location to be determined, will follow last year's format: salads and desserts. Sylvain sent ideas of possible desserts for the Bon Appetit and the cooking class. Jeff will contact Sylvain to make the final decisions. The cooking class will probably be for adults and last 90 minutes from 7:00 – 8:30 either April 21 or 22. The price will remain the same as last year, \$15. Hoffman Estates High School's culinary classes are excited to have the French students visit their classes.

Lillian talked with Pili Rios with Harper College. Harper would like to be involved again in Bon Appetit. Jeff Howard will be the contact person with a meeting planned for January to work on the rules. Harper has suggested a Bake-Off format rather than a competition for cupcakes with a prize for the winner. In addition, Pili is teaching a classic cuisine class that semester. Her students will be able to participate and advertise the future of Harper's culinary program.

2) Runners Exchange

Lisa Christie shared the finished flyer made to advertise the race. The race in Angouleme is April 5 with the exchange from April 1-7. There are three interested runners: Jason Fong (application completed), Angela Wallace and Linda Hague. A maximum of 3 runners can be accommodated for each exchange. The Stars and Stripes Race in Hoffman Estates is June 28 with the exchange from June 24-July 1. The potluck will be on June 28. There are 2 sisters coming from Angouleme with the possibility of another runner. Lisa shared a possible itinerary. Gift bags should cost no more than \$20.

Motion by Anita Flanagan, seconded by Jeff Howard, to approve up to \$500 per runner be for airfare to France. The train fare to Angouleme and one night hotel stay in Paris will also be included. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

B. Other Exchanges

1) Sports

Bob Dohn reported that the exchange is from April 8-15. All information about the 15 students coming has been received. In addition, there will be 3 adult chaperones: Danielle, the soccer coach, and a PE teacher. The itinerary is being established. In December, there will be 4 evening meetings with the soccer club to discuss the exchange and obtain more host families. Lillian and Bob will split the meetings between them. Bob, Cindy, and Fanja met with the Sustainability Committee. They will plan a presentation for the students on what our community does. The potluck will be on April 13.

This past July, students from Harper attended the Eco Games in Angouleme. The professor has volunteered to have the French soccer students visit Harper. This will replace the trip to DePaul.

2) **Comic**

Landis Blair and David Chemeli will be in France from January 27-February 3. They will both present at a local elementary school. David's presentation is finished, approved, and ready for translation by Fanja. At the Sister Cities meeting in January, there will be a 6:00 pm viewing of his presentation. In February, Landis and David will attend our meeting for debriefing. The Commission signed a book about Marvel comics for David to take to France as a gift.

C. **Special Projects**

Marcia Frank thanked everyone who helped at the Marie Antoinette program. Reaction to the program was positive. There were 78 reservations.

It was suggested that the program for November 2025 could be presented by Lynn Brand based on the book *Wine and War*. After the presentation, a wine tasting with appetizers was discussed. There are 2 different proposals for who can direct the tasting. Friday, November 14 is being suggested as a date. Debbie will check on the availability of the Village Hall.

D. **French Evening**

Lillian suggested holding next year's French Evening at the Village Hall. Her rationale was mostly due lowering costs. Lillian explained that the Stonegate charges for tablecloths, sound system, kitchen use, piano, etc. and it drives up the cost significantly. Thoughts for hosting the event at Village Hall could include having some courses plated and some buffet style. A carving station could be added. There could be a limit on the number of guests and auction baskets could be reduced to 40-50 very nice ones. No sports memorabilia next year. The Commission already has lots of decorations from past events such as the Streets of Paris at the NOW Arena several years ago.

Motion by Cindy Ruszay, seconded by Jill Wood-Naatz, that the French Evening be held at the Village Hall in October (or September) based on availability. Voice vote. All ayes. Motion carried.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Jill Wood-Naatz, seconded by Terri Lamberti, to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Voice vote taken. All ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Robin Jacobi.

*The next meeting of the Sister Cities Commission will be
6:30pm on Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2024 in the Frank Alexa Room at the Village Hall.*