

**Sister Cities Lawrence**  
**Draft Minutes Annual meeting**  
**13 December 2023**

SCL Governing Board Chair Bill Keel called the meeting to order at 7:03; 21 members were in attendance either in person or virtually.

**Announcements:** Keel announced that the Sister Cities Lawrence exhibit on the second floor of the Watkins opened the day of the Old Fashioned Christmas Parade and will be open until April. Shankel sent photos of the Hiratsuka section to Hiratsuka. Members were invited to visit the exhibit at the meeting's conclusion.

**2022 Annual Meeting Minutes.** Keel summarized the main actions from the meeting: Jan Miller and Kathleen Hodge were elected as At-Large members. Schumm was elected as chair of Friends of Iniades. Schumm moved and Albrecht seconded approval of the report. Passed unanimously.

**Financial report for 2023**—Treasurer Sheri Hamilton reported the following account information: Intrust Checking--\$19,869.46; Intrust Savings--\$46,376.92; Scholarship--\$30,237.88; Trip Fund--\$1869.62. Total--\$98,353.88. She thanked everyone who contributed to the scholarship fund. She explained that we started a trip fund that isolates funds for the trip chaperones. In past years they had to cover personally and then be reimbursed. This limited who might be able to chaperone. We have a credit card for the trips. Shankel asked where a general fund contribution goes; it is to the checking account.

**Website committee report**—Phyllis Farrar, website committee chair, reported that the site averages 200-400 visits per month and 500-700 page views per month. People should look at the news page. It is not set up to notify members when there is something new. The average number of news posts per year is 10.

**Membership report**—Farrar reported that there are 38 family memberships and 11 individuals for a total of 85 registered members. Until today we were paying credit card fees for online payments. The Moodys alerted us to Zeffy which is for nonprofits and the payment process does not cost us the 3.5% credit card fees. We now get the full benefit of the membership. Zeffy is a nonprofit company for nonprofits. The banking is secure through the same system, but Zeffy pays the fee. There is a question in the payment process asking if you want to contribute to Zeffy. No one has to contribute; it is voluntary. Zeffy is supported by voluntary contributions. The other button gives a zero amount. Confirmations are sent by email immediately that has a tax receipt. This will eliminate having to send them out manually at the end of the year. Zeffy will keep identity and credit card information secure. At the end of the year a letter will be sent saying that you will be automatically renewed unless you opt out. We can set up the trip payments but that has not been done yet. If an additional donation is made now, it will go to the general fund. Farrar will set it up so that it can go to separate funds.

**Fundraising Committee**—Diana Carlin reported that the trivia fundraiser is planned for April. Details to follow.

**Scholarship Committee**—Keel reported that the scholarship fund assisted 10 students and gave out \$9000 with \$1000 coming from LBOC and Noon Rotary.

**Public Relations**—Jan Miller reported that there was an excellent article on the front page of the *Journal-World* about the Eutin students in Lawrence. The reporter indicated he is open to doing more about Sister Cities. There will be updates on the website with news releases. Shipley suggested that we check with the *Lawrence Times*.

**Chaperone Committee**—Keel reported that the committee is vetting annually for repeat chaperones.

**Friends of Hiratsuka**—James Hilliard reported that there was an online meeting with Friends of Lawrence. They want an adult delegation from Lawrence in 2025 and an adult delegation to Lawrence in 2026 as part of the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Hilliard is the representative for 2024. They are working on activities to keep the youth involved. There are 9 students going in the summer of 2024 and there are two chaperones.

**Friends of Iniades**—Bob Schumm provided an update on the relationship which was inactive the past year because of a mayoral election that was merging several communities under Messolonghi. The election was held, and the new mayor is interested in strengthening the relationship and formalizing the relationship with Messolonghi as our sister city. Schumm is planning to visit in June to meet the mayor.

**Friends of Eutin**—Ken Albrecht reported that we had the student exchange with Lawrence students visiting in June and Eutin in Lawrence in October. Stephen Arbeau was the chaperone for the first time. He will chaperone in 2024. The 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration adult delegation is scheduled for the last week of June starting June 24<sup>th</sup>. Four musicians will be part of the delegation and we will participate in the opera festival reopening of the theatre. There are at least 16 interested as of now. The delegation will be closer to 20. They will send a delegation likely in October.

## **New Business**

New Sister City. The board voted tonight to recommend to the City of Lawrence that Tocopilla, Chile be our next sister city. This is due to the efforts of Sara Lechtenberg-Kasten and a newly formed Friends of Tocopilla. This relationship is based on a Department of Energy initiative that would include environmental issues as well as regular exchanges.

Bylaws revisions. Due to the potential addition of a new sister city and a decision to outsource some of our financial work, proposals were presented for the following changes:

Article 3, Section 6.1. Delete: At present, there are three such groups: Friends of Eutin, Friends of Hiratsuka, and Friends of Iniades.

Article IV, Section 4 add or virtually after members present

Article V, Section 1. Delete ten (10) members as follows. Add the following members. Delete treasurer and change to Vice Chair/Treasurer. Add Membership Chair. Delete three before Friends Groups.

Change the Vice Chair to Vice Chair/Treasurer who would provide oversight to a bookkeeper who is hired to prepare financial reports and taxes. We will create a new position of Membership Chair.

Section 4. Term of Office Delete the Exception for the 2018 election

Section 5. Election. Delete the first regular meeting following adoption of these Bylaws and thereafter, election of members of the Governing Board shall be held

Article VI Officers

Section 5.2. Change Vice Chair to Vice Chair/Treasurer

The Vice Chair/Treasurer shall assume the duties of shall also be the custodian of all funds of Sister Cities Lawrence depositing such funds in banks designated by the Governing Board

Section 5.3. Delete Treasurer

Add Section 5.4 Membership chair

Article VIII Procedure for Adopting Sister Cities—a new article (see notes)

Change Article VIII Administration to Article IX

Change Article IX Amendments to Article X

Amended December 13, 2023

Scholz moved that the proposed changes be adopted as a whole and updated as of December 13, 2023. Schumm seconded. Adopted unanimously.

## **ELECTION**

Courtney Shipley was nominated as secretary. Miller moved to elect by acclamation. Passed.

Sheri Hamilton was nominated for Membership Chair. Schumm moved to elect by acclamation. Passed.

Friends of Hiratsuka previously elected James Hilliard for a three-year term.

Lechtenberg-Kasten thanked the board for support in developing a new sister city proposal. This provides a Spanish-speaking country and expands culture and education to include sustainability as a feature and new opportunities for students. The PowerPoint about the city will be sent to everyone. Tocopilla is on the coast and is an hour from Santiago. Someone from the National Renewable Energy Lab is working with Tocopilla.

The members officially thanked Steve Nowak and the Watkins staff and graduate students for collaborating with us and preparing the exhibit.

Schumm moved and Hamilton second adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor exhibit.