



SISTER CITIES PROGRAM

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

11:00am – City Hall

I. Welcome

a. Roll Call:

- i. Present: Betty Ruleman, Anna Barrios, Becky Simpson, Joe Barnett and Lindsey Ferguson
- ii. Absent: Larry Eaton, Donna Ballew, Bridget Roberts and Austin Fesmire
- iii. Guests: Victoria White and Simon Rhodes

II. Approval of Minutes

- a. Motion was made by Joe Barnett, seconded by Betty Ruleman, for the approval of the May 5, 2026 minutes.
Motion carried

III. New Business

- a. Annual Meeting and Election of New Officers – The Board quickly discussed and chose to keep the same people in the same positions.
Motion was made by Joe Barnett, seconded by Betty Ruleman, to elect Larry Eaton as Chair.
Motion carried
Motion was made by Betty Ruleman, seconded by Joe Barnett, to elect the City Manager position as the Vice Chair.
Motion carried
Motion was made by Joe Barnett, seconded by Lindsey Ferguson, to elect Becky Simpson as Treasurer.
Motion carried
Motion was made by Ana Barrios, seconded by Lindsey Ferguson, to elect Betty Ruleman as Secretary.
Motion carried
- b. Term Expiration – Becky Simpson and Donna Ballew – The Board was informed that even though Donna Ballew just joined, she was only fulfilling the vacant position term and needed to be voted on again.
Motion was made by Lindsey Ferguson, seconded by Joe Barnett, to approve Becky Simpson

to continue as the Local Schools representative.

Motion carried

Motion was made by Lindsey Ferguson, seconded by Betty Ruleman, to approve Donna Ballew as the Industry representative.

Motion carried

- c. Planning for 2026 Chinzei Gakuin Visit and Fundraising – Board discussed the planned activities and funds still needed for the students visit. Anna discussed some of the schedule changes and the cancellation of the Dollywood trip, and the visit to City Hall. Joe is still working on the pizza dinner donation.
- d. Planning for 2026 Isahaya City Officials Visit (October 18-22) – Victoria White joined the meeting and is assisting with visit. There will be 10-15 people and they wish to stay at a hotel instead of the mansion. Transportation has been requested by City of Athens. They will tour City Hall on October 19th and more information will be available soon.
- e. International Sister Cities – The minutes of the September 2018 meeting and Board discussion was given to the members and explained that it is not beneficial to an established program.
- f. New Business – Main Street Interim Director will be Amy Sullins and has been given a new email address.

IV. The meeting adjourned (Next meeting set for Wednesday, July 8, 2026)

Approved:

Betty Ruleman, Secretary
Betty Ruleman, Secretary

Date 7/8/26