



SISTER CITIES PROGRAM

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thursday, April 9, 2026

11:00am – City Hall

- I. Welcome
 - a. Roll Call:
 - i. Present: Betty Ruleman, Randy Dowling, Anna Barrios, Larry Eaton, Becky Simpson, Joe Barnett and Lindsey Ferguson
 - ii. Absent: Austin Fesmire
- II. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Motion was made by Joe Barnett, seconded by Randy Dowling, for the approval of the March 19, 2026 minutes.
Motion carried
- III. New Business
 - a. Planning for 2026 Chinzei Gakuin Visit – The Board discussed funding a day at Dollywood and would need approximately \$1500 for the visit at the last meeting. Donations will be sought by Larry to fund the event to be held on July 19th. The City Hall visit will be on Wednesday, July 22nd from 10am-1pm and then lunch would be provided from 1-2pm (sandwiches and chips). The Asian Culture Lecture series will host a Japanese traditional dance at the Museum on July 15th. Sponsors for a pizza dinner night will be sought by Joe, but no date has been set yet.
 - b. Lecture Series from the Asian Culture Center – The sushi making class is scheduled for April 30th at the McMinn County Senior Center, with Betty, Lindsey and possibly Joe volunteering. The bento box class is scheduled for May 18th at The Food Hub, with Lindsey, Randy, Simon and possibly Joe volunteering. The Japanese traditional dance is scheduled for July 15 at the McMinn County Heritage Museum, volunteers needed. The Japanese Tea Ceremony is scheduled for October 6th at the Event Space at White Street Market, volunteers needed.
 - c. Board Member Vacancies – Lindsey informed the Board that she has attempted to contact Donna Ballew at Mayfield for the Industry vacancy but has not heard back from her yet. The Main Street Director position has not been filled yet, so the Main Street Director position will remain vacant until the Main Street Board fills their position.
 - d. New Business – Larry informed the Board that he was given notice that Japanese officials will

be visiting Athens sometime this Summer/Fall. When more details are released, he will inform the Board.

IV. The meeting adjourned at 11:47am. (Next meeting set for Tuesday, May 5, 2026)

Approved:

Betty Ruleman.
Betty Ruleman, Secretary

Date May 5, 2026