



## GREATER DES MOINES SISTER CITIES COMMISSION

400 Robert D. Ray Drive  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-1891  
Phone: (515) 283-4141  
FAX: (515) 237-1300  
www.dmsistercities.org

May 11, 2021

### Regular Meeting **5:00 PM**

*Iowa Code Section 21.4 requires that each Greater Des Moines Sister Cities Commission meeting shall be held at a place reasonably accessible to the public and at a time reasonably convenient to the public, unless for good cause such a place or time is impossible or impracticable. Given Mayor Cownie's March 17, 2020 Proclamation Amendment, as amended, prohibiting indoor gatherings of 10 or more persons on public property and Section One of the Governor's April 2, 2021 Proclamation strongly encouraging vulnerable Iowans to limit participation in gatherings of any size and any purpose during the COVID-19 outbreak and further given Section One Hundred Six of the Governor's April 2, 2021 Proclamation suspending the regulatory provisions of Iowa Code §§ 21.8, 26.12, and 414.12, or any other statute imposing a requirement to hold a public meeting or hearing, the City Council has determined that a meeting at a physical place is impossible or impracticable and all Greater Des Moines Sister Cities Commission meetings for the time being will be conducted electronically with the public allowed to attend per the instructions on this agenda. Meeting minutes will continue to be provided per the City's normal course of business.*

*Greater Des Moines Sister Cities Commission Members will be participating by ZOOM meeting due to COVID-19.*

To join Zoom meeting using internet access, go to the following link:

<https://dmgov-org.zoom.us/j/86802086472?pwd=VjM5dTRkZJKd3Fib1VLejN6U1B5dz09>

Passcode: 727576

or

To join meeting by telephone without internet access, dial the following number and enter Meeting ID number listed below:

(312) 626-6799 US (Chicago), (877) 853-5257 US Toll-free

Webinar ID: 868 0208 6472

## AGENDA

**Call to Order** – Roger Nowadzky

**Roll** – Joyce Warburton

**Minutes of the April 13, 2021 Meeting** – Joyce Warburton

**Financial Report** – Joyce Warburton

**Commission Chairperson's Report** – Roger Nowadzky

**Commission Vice Chairperson's Report** – Sherill Whisenand

### Committee Reports

Stavropol

Shijiazhuang

Saint-Etienne

Pristina

Kofu

Italy

Education

**Old Business**

**New Business**

**Adjourn – Next Meeting: June 8, 2021 at 5:00 PM**



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### **NEXT MEETING MAY 11, 2021 AT 5:00 PM**

**<https://dmgov-org.zoom.us/j/86802086472?pwd=VjM5dTRkZJKd3Fib1VLejN6U1B5dz09>**

**Meeting ID: 868 0208 6472 / Passcode: 727576**

### **MINUTES April 13, 2021**

Members Present: Lyndi Buckingham-Schutt, Marcus Coenen, Joseph Cephas Davis, Doug Lewis, Brandi Miller, Roger Nowadzky, Ginny Renda, Angie Ritchie, Vidal Spaine, Sherill Whisenand, Hollie Zajicek, Eleanor Zeff, Li Zhao Mandelbaum

Members Absent: Madeline Goebel, Jake Grothoff, Todd Jacobus, Joseph Nolte

Staff Present: Joyce Warburton

On Tuesday, April 13, 2021, Chairperson Mr. Nowadzky called the meeting of the Greater Des Moines Sister Cities Commission to order at 5:06 PM via ZOOM Online Meeting.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER**

The Commission welcomed Rev. Joseph Cephas Davis who was appointed by Council Member Linda Westergaard to fill Seat 11 on the Commission at the March 8, 2021 City Council meeting.

#### **MINUTES**

Ms. Ritchie moved to approve the March 9, 2021 minutes. Ms. Renda seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Financial report for July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 was distributed indicating \$19.43 was paid for the printing of the February 9 Sister Cities Commission summary minutes in the Business Record. Mr. Coenen moved to approve the financial report. Ms. Renda seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### **COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Mr. Nowadzky shared the following written report:

It is April already. Commissioners have been steadily going about their business. They quietly have been vigorously carrying out the mission of the Commission, in connecting our community to the world, through our sister city relationships.

In the interest of brevity, I will refer you to the Vice Chairperson's April Report in its detail on Commission activity. Even after the submission of her report, the Commission's Education Committee met to discuss opportunities in working with school district teachers, in programing and matching students and schools with our sister cities counterparts. Thank you, committee members, for your teamwork and collaboration. Thanks also to Vidal Spaine, the Chair of the Education Committee, for persistence in pursuing this crucial matter. The breakthrough is a result of effort over a long period of time.

Commissioners, onward and upward through April into May.

### **COMMISSION VICE CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Ms. Whisenand shared the following written report:

Spring has sprung and so have the great ideas in a whirlwind of activity with our subcommittees at the Greater Des Moines Sister Cities Commission.

In 30 days, we have seen our Kofu efforts in the international newspapers, PPE show up at Blank Children's Hospital and more goodwill than we should be allowed. All because we came up with good ideas and persistently executed them.

We have witnessed the follow up and follow-through of our friends in Kosovo, from their Anniversary event to their planning for a trip to Kosovo, the election of a new president and all the swirling activity of a busy, robust and productive subcommittee.

For our Saint-Etienne committee members, the forward-looking group has Bastille Day and all its liveliness, frivolity and culinary delights on our July calendar.

Stavropol is always ready and willing to keep the doors open with its Iowa friends. Travel may be tough, but we know the children's artwork, among many things, will continue to grace our historic City Hall.

Additionally, the education subcommittee met to jump-start the possibilities as the Des Moines Public Schools reopen in the traditional way.

The communications committee is posting on our Facebook page and working with city officials to get out our messages in the best possible light.

Several members gave of their time to work in the store room, discerning our many honored gifts from our international counterparts, reviewing what should stay, what should go and answering the most pressing question: "What is this?"

The Chairman has met with our new members, discerning their likes/dislikes and interests as to how they can make a difference on our Commission.

We are collaborating with the Friendship Force, the Des Moines Partnership and Catch Des Moines, to produce a professional video about all the wonderful, exciting and unique benefits the metro area can provide to our friends and neighbors around the world. It is thinking outside the box during this lockdown era.

We are on the cusp of something greater because everyone is pushing forward and working together. We are Des Moines. We are the Sister Cities. Put it all together and we really are The GREATER Des Moines Sister Cities.

Thank you for all your hard work!

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### ***Stavropol Committee***

Mr. Spaine shared the following written report:

I do not have a detailed report on Stavropol this cycle because of ongoing issues with the delivery of emails from Stavropol to my inbox. Joyce provided me with a secure email address from the City Information Technology Department, but that has not solved the problem. Stavropol can receive my emails, which is a good thing, and the only other line of communication right now is by telephone.

### ***Shijiazhuang Committee***

Ms. Zhao Mandelbaum shared the following written report:

We are in the processing of scheduling a zoom introduction meeting. I was supposed to take part in a sister state/IDEA and Hebei meeting last Tuesday, but it was rescheduled to a later date.

Took part in the Education Committee meeting, and our committee is really looking forward to establishing new sister school relationship(s).

Ms. Zhao Mandelbaum stated her Committee is waiting for Shijiazhuang's Director of Foreign Affairs to get acclimated into her new position but are looking at scheduling a meeting in May to talk about exchanges and activities. Shijiazhuang wanted to wait until COVID travel restrictions are clearer so they know what type of project(s) could be done on-line/virtually and what potential project(s) could be done off-line/in person this year.

### ***Saint-Etienne Committee***

Dr. Zeff shared the following written report:

Since our last report, we have heard from the Saint-Etienne Sister City delegation on the part of Mayor of Saint-Etienne. Sadly, they have confirmed that although they greatly value the long-term relations they have had with Des Moines and the Des Moines Sister Cities Commission, they are not able, at this time, to continue active relations between the cities. They will continue to support the existing relations, but for the time being, they will not be able to start any new connections or receive official Des Moines delegations. I have informed Roger of this situation, as well as my committee.

There have been a few suggestions as to how we should proceed from my sub-committee, but I am waiting to meet with Roger to discuss the matter further. We have a few options, which include, trying to find a new sister city in France, continuing on an inactive basis with Saint-Etienne or finding a new sister city, perhaps in Mexico, where we have had previous relations and where the need for fruitful exchanges is great. Of course, it would be wonderful to be able to continue with a city in France as we have had such success in the past.

Dr. Zeff stated she was unaware of the condition of the independent school exchanges that were developed many years ago. The student exchanges for 2020 and 2021 ended up being cancelled due to COVID, but the connections are still ongoing. In addition, the chef exchange was able to take place virtually this year.

Ms. Renda shared that she believes the metropolitan areas in Mexico probably have as many sister cities as Saint-Etienne and that we likely would not get very much going with them either. She suggested we possibly look for another city within France that doesn't have as many sister city relationships as Saint Etienne so that we are able to get more interaction. Friendship Force International might be able to provide advice regarding a different relationship.

Ms. Miller inquired as to how and why it was decided that a particular city or region of the world is selected to be a sister city. Mr. Nowadzky shared that the goal is to find an area of the world that has some type of actual connection with the Des Moines metro area. Mr. Nowadzky indicated that information

is being sent to new members Ms. Miller and Rev. Davis related to the criteria to be used when selecting a sister city. Further discussion was tabled at this time.

### ***Pristina Committee***

The following written report was shared on behalf of Mr. Jacobus:

1. The Pristina Committee's significant accomplishment during the last month is that we now have a point of contact in Mayor Shpend Ahmeti's office in Pristina. We received this name from Ms. Arbrie Shabani, First Secretary to the Chief of Mission in Des Moines, Artan Duraku. Our point of contact in Mayor Ahmeti's office is **Ms. Merita Maliqi**, [merita.maliqi@rks-gov.net](mailto:merita.maliqi@rks-gov.net). We will look forward to initiating contact with Ms. Maliqi and will keep the Commission informed of our work.
2. The Iowa National Guard's Best Warrior Competition took place on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, March 12-14, 2021. Three (3) soldiers from the Kosovo Security Force participated in this competition: Sergeant Major Shukri Abdullahu, who is assigned to Headquarters; Sergeant Arjan Zabeli, who is assigned to Civil Affairs; and, Corporal Alban Fetahu, who is assigned to 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment Land Forces Command.
  - a. As a result of airline changes, these three (3) soldiers remained in Des Moines an extra few days, and the Pristina Committee was contacted to sponsor a day of their layover.
  - b. Todd Jacobus picked them up at Camp Dodge on Wednesday, March 17, at 8:30 am, took them to breakfast at the Machine Shed Restaurant in Urbandale, then to Jordan Creek Mall in West Des Moines, and then provided them with a driving tour of Des Moines.
  - c. The last stop on this tour was at the State Capitol, where we were met by State Representative Martin L. Graber of Fort Madison, who is the State Representative for District 83. Representative Graber retired from the Iowa Army National Guard as a Brigadier General and graciously spent three (3) hours of his day providing an overview of our State Government to our Kosovar friends, provided an outstanding tour of our Capitol, and introduced them to many fellow Representatives and Staffers. A few of the Representatives who spent time with our Kosovar soldiers were Representative Charlie McClintock (Cedar Rapids/District 95), Representative Ross Wilborn (Ames/District 46), Representative Brooke Boden (Indianola/District 26), Representative Dennis Cohoon (Burlington/District 87), and Representative Steve Bradley (Cascade/District 58).
3. During the February 2021 Commission meeting, we shared that there would be a delegation from Iowa traveling to Kosovo on May 16-22, 2021, AND on September 26-October 2, 2021. The COVID-19 vaccination process in Kosovo has not proceeded as hoped, and as a result the May 2021 trip is cancelled. However, the plan at this time is to have the trip in September-October 2021. Those interested in participating in this trip should reach out to Kim Heidemann at the Kosovo Consulate at [kim.heidemann@rks-gov.net](mailto:kim.heidemann@rks-gov.net), and provide the following information:
  - a. Your name
  - b. The organization you represent
  - c. Dates you want to go
  - d. Have you been to Kosovo before?
  - e. Goals you would like to accomplish while there
4. During the last meeting, the Pristina Committee mentioned that there had been three (3) meetings since September 2020 involving the Kosovo Consulate, the Pristina Rotary, and the

Des Moines Rotary regarding an effort to connect Rotaries in Des Moines and Pristina through the “**Hearts of Europe Global Grants Program**” (<https://my.rotary.org/en/hearts-europe-global-grants>).

The Des Moines Rotary will not partner with the Pristina Rotary on this grant; Cedar Rapids will partner with them.

5. Todd Jacobus and Lyndi Buckingham-Schutt participated in the GDMSCC Education Committee meeting on April 7, 2021 at 5:00 pm. Thanks to Vidal Spaine for organizing this video teleconference. The Kosovo Committee is willing to work with contacts in Pristina to connect students in both Central Iowa and Pristina.
6. The Pristina Committee will continue to focus on these, and perhaps other, objectives:
  - a. Recruit a committee, including individuals outside the Commission, who are enthusiastic about expanding the relationship between Pristina and Des Moines, and who represent a wide range of interests and backgrounds.
  - b. Continue establishing point of contact in the Pristina Mayor's Office with whom we can communicate and exchange information.
  - c. Identify sectors of society in Des Moines which we should work to connect with counterparts in Pristina.
  - d. Re-engage the relationship with the Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) to connect education and youth development opportunities for DMPS students.

#### **Vushtrri, Kosovo**

Ms. Zajicek reported the City of Norwalk is working on a large building project called Norwalk Central. It is a 77+ acre development that will have recreation, entertainment, hotel, dining, etc. Proposed to be within that development is a tribute park honoring military and first responders who have gone above and beyond, as well as celebrities and professional athletes from Norwalk. The tribute park would also contain an area that would honor Vushtrri's military and first responder heroes and any professional athletes or celebrities that have come from Norwalk's sister city in Kosovo.

Norwalk will also be kicking off a fundraising campaign to build, in that same area, a replica of Vushtrri's ancient stone bridge that has been there since the Roman era. Norwalk is hoping to obtain a piece of stone that could be made part of the cornerstone of this bridge as a cultural tribute to our sister city.

#### **Kofu Committee**

Mr. Spaine shared that he has submitted the list of National holidays that are celebrated in Japan to Kofu City Chair Mr. Nolte. Mr. Spaine is now in the process of determining which would be considered the most important holidays to Kofu.

#### **Italy Committee**

Ms. Renda shared the following written report:

Italy is currently experiencing a surge in COVID-19 activity and they are back in lockdown. COVID cases are growing exponentially. The pandemic has resulted in dramatic consequences for the Italian economy. Most cities in Italy are not currently in a position to work on developing a Sister City Relationship. Their concerns are with health, safety, and bringing back their economy.

It will be several months or more before we can connect with an Italian Sister City, but in the meantime, we can organize all of the information that we need for Sister Cities International. We are still lacking letters from community organizations to support our desire for an Italian pairing. If we can get those letters, we will be able to submit The City Connection Marketplace-Debrief to Sister Cities International. *(Added Note: Ms. Zajicek has provided a letter of support on behalf of the City of Norwalk and Ms. Whisenand wrote a letter to the CEOs of the Greater Des Moines Partnership and Catch Des Moines asking if they would provide a letter of support as well.)*

### **Education Committee**

Mr. Spaine shared the following written report:

The education Committee met via Zoom on Wednesday, April 7 at 5:00 PM. I had reached out to the administrators of the ten schools within Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) with an active International Baccalaureate (IB) Program asking them to consider reactivating a school partnership program with our sister cities. I received responses from the Principal at Merrill Middle School and Moore Elementary School expressing interest in such a relationship. The education committee met to discuss measures to be taken in ensuring the success of such a partnership and to be better prepared to have this discussion when we eventually meet with the principals at Moore and Merrill. Moore Elementary School principal expressed interest in a school partnership with Kofu, Japan and Shijiazhuang, China.

Li did mention in the meeting that there are IB Schools in Shijiazhuang who might be a good fit for what we want to accomplish but was unsure of the proficiency levels of the elementary school-age children. In Stavropol, school administrators are particularly interested in partnering with middle and high school students only. They have always pointed out to the success of their English Language immersion programs at the middle and high school levels and praise for the students' high level of English Language proficiency. The students in Stavropol, as I mentioned in the meeting, have a strong desire to engage with our American students to hopefully advance their English language skills and in the process make long-lasting friendships. In Kofu, the idea is to reach out to the current FET's to help us make direct connections in their home schools and identify teachers and students willing to engage our DMPS students in conversations using various forms of social media platforms. Also, from my experience living and teaching in Kofu, I know that a lot of elementary and high school age students enroll in after school private tutoring for English and other subject areas. In Japan, English is not offered until students are in middle school. So, FET's can also help identify those students willing to engage with our DMPS students. Roger mentioned of an upcoming meeting between Mayor Cownie and the Mayor of Kofu, and to use that opportunity to garner support for our proposed school partnership programs.

Also mentioned in the meeting was the idea that the ultimate success of any school program lies on a deliberate commitment from a dedicate teacher here at home and in our sister cities to ensure that planned activities are carried out and delivered over a prolonged period of time. Another idea brought on by Ginny was to assign students to take pictures of important landmarks within their cities and then use that as a conversation piece when they eventually are able to get together via Zoom, Teams or other platforms. The committee came to an agreement to invite Moore and Merrill Principals to a Zoom meeting to take place on Wednesday, April 14 at 5:00 PM.

Mr. Spaine reported he had also received an email from the Principal at Stowe Elementary School who indicated interest in their school participating in a school partnership with schools in our sister cities. Mr. Spaine has sent an invitation to the contact person in charge of the IB program at Stowe Elementary to participate in the April 14th Education Committee meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

***Friendship Force of Greater Des Moines - Virtual Tour of Des Moines***

Ms. Renda reported the Greater Des Moines Partnership and Catch Des Moines have now given permission for the Commission and Friendship Force to use their videos and photos. Ms. Renda is envisioning using at least some of their aerial videos at the beginning of the virtual tour. Ms. Renda indicated she will likely be requesting monetary support to assist with finalizing this project.

Dr. Zeff indicated she has been working on a PowerPoint that she intended to send to Saint-Etienne which she will forward to Ms. Renda in case she finds it useful in putting together this virtual tour.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No New Business was discussed at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Ritchie and seconded by Dr. Zeff. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be **May 11, 2021 at 5:00 PM.**

DRAFT



**Greater Des Moines Sister Cities Commission  
Financial Report  
July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021**

			General Exp.	Travel Exp.	General Fund TOTAL
<b>Budget Beginning Balance</b>			<b>\$5,361.00</b>	<b>\$10,600.00</b>	<b>\$15,961.00</b>
Month	ID Source	Description	General Exp.	Travel Exp.	General Fund TOTAL
July	Miscellaneous	Payment on July 9 for storage costs for PPEs from Shijiazhuang, China while held in customs at the Des Moines International Airport.	(\$1,461.84)		(\$1,461.84)
July	MONTH TOTAL ACTIVITY		(\$1,461.84)	\$0.00	(\$1,461.84)
<b>July</b>	<b>REMAINING BALANCE</b>		<b>\$3,899.16</b>	<b>\$10,600.00</b>	<b>\$14,499.16</b>
August	Dues & Memberships	Sister Cities International - Membership dues for July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	(\$1,030.00)		(\$1,030.00)
August	Advertising	Business Publications Corporation - Cost for printing SCC June 11 Summary Minutes in the Business Record	(\$18.76)		(\$18.76)
August	MONTH TOTAL ACTIVITY		(\$1,048.76)	\$0.00	(\$1,048.76)
<b>August</b>	<b>REMAINING BALANCE</b>		<b>\$2,850.40</b>	<b>\$10,600.00</b>	<b>\$13,450.40</b>
Sept.	Advertising	Business Publications Corporation - Cost for printing SCC July 14 Summary Minutes in the Business Record	(\$22.78)		(\$22.78)
Sept.	Miscellaneous	Reimbursed Roger Nowadzky for purchase of 2 gift cards as prizes for July 19, 2020 Bastille Day Facebook Live Trivia Event	(\$50.00)		(\$50.00)
Sept.	MONTH TOTAL ACTIVITY		(\$72.78)	\$0.00	(\$72.78)
<b>Sept.</b>	<b>REMAINING BALANCE</b>		<b>\$2,777.62</b>	<b>\$10,600.00</b>	<b>\$13,377.62</b>
2021 Feb.	Advertising	Business Publications Corporation - Cost for printing SCC October 13 (\$29), November 10 (\$25), and December 8 (\$30) Summary Minutes in the Business Record	(\$84.00)		(\$84.00)
Feb.	Postage	Reimbursed Joe Nolte for cost of shipping 60 stocking hats (provided by Iowa Corn Growers Association), 60 toy pigs (provided by Iowa Pork Producers), and copies of Sweet Corn and Sushi (provided by Iowa Sister States) to Kofu in honor of the 60th anniversary of the Iowa Japan Hog Lift.	(\$197.95)		(\$197.95)
Feb.	Miscellaneous	China Iowa Group LLC - Purchase of PPEs from manufacturer in Shijiazhuang for City of Shijiazhuang as return gesture for PPEs previously sent to Des Moines.	(\$500.00)		(\$500.00)
Feb.	MONTH TOTAL ACTIVITY		(\$781.95)	\$0.00	(\$781.95)
<b>Feb.</b>	<b>REMAINING BALANCE</b>		<b>\$1,995.67</b>	<b>\$10,600.00</b>	<b>\$12,595.67</b>

<b>Month</b>	<b>ID Source</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>General Exp.</b>	<b>Travel Exp.</b>	<b>General Fund TOTAL</b>
March	Advertising	Business Publications Corporation - Cost for printing SCC February 9 Summary Minutes in the Business Record	(\$19.43)		(\$19.43)
March	MONTH TOTAL ACTIVITY		(\$19.43)	\$0.00	(\$19.43)
<b>March</b>	<b>REMAINING BALANCE</b>		<b>\$1,976.24</b>	<b>\$10,600.00</b>	<b>\$12,576.24</b>
April	Advertising	Business Publications Corporation - Cost for printing SCC March 9 Summary Minutes in the Business Record	(\$15.41)		(\$15.41)
April	MONTH TOTAL ACTIVITY		(\$15.41)	\$0.00	(\$15.41)
<b>April</b>	<b>REMAINING BALANCE</b>		<b>\$1,960.83</b>	<b>\$10,600.00</b>	<b>\$12,560.83</b>

**To: The Greater Des Moines Sister Cities Commission**  
**From: Roger Nowadzky**  
**Date: May 1, 2021**  
**Re: Commission Chairperson May 2021 Report**

Happy May everyone. I was just thinking back to a year ago at this time. The Commission was in the process of transitioning to a pandemic world with international relations face-to-face but on a computer screen. I don't know about you, but the first thing I did after getting my COVID vaccination shots, was to make an appointment with my eye doctor. A year of eye strain from all those Zoom meetings took its toll. Other collateral damage was cancellation of our annual Bastille Day celebration, co-sponsored with Alliance Française of Central Iowa, and some exciting activities including bringing Baconfest to Shijiazhuang China for our 35<sup>th</sup> Des Moines - Shijiazhuang Sister City anniversary celebration. It was sad but necessary.

In this regard, I would like to praise the Commission, and to thank each of the Commissioners for your best efforts in maintaining, and in some cases building upon, our sister city relationships in these difficult times. A celebration of our Shijiazhuang anniversary took place in a less grand fashion, but with greater participation allowed by greater access, courtesy of the digital world. Two separate upcoming Mayor-to-Mayor meetings with Mayor Cownie and the mayors of Stavropol, Russia and Kofu, Japan will take place soon. These accomplishments were the result of the Commission's pivoting and creative thinking and coordinating with state and community partners. We are hopeful that in September we will be able to send a small delegation to Kosovo with the goal that will include negotiating a two-year work plan with our sister city of Pristina.

So again, thank you Commissioners for your undaunted efforts in promoting the mission of the Commission in a difficult time. We are hopeful that the pandemic situation will improve dramatically over the months to come. In any event, you have shown your flexibility and your ingenuity in navigating troubled waters. I look forward to your enthusiasm and teamwork as we enter into the new city fiscal year. In this regard, I am still waiting for City Committee Chairs to submit their proposed program and budget estimates. I am reminded that "those who fail to plan, plan to fail." Principles of Management course 101.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Nowadzky  
Chairperson of the Commission

## Commission Vice Chairperson Report – May 2021

Since we last gathered via Zoom, the Commission members have stepped up to move forward our Sister Cities' profiles around the globe. We are thankful for everyone's willingness to pivot forward even during these challenging times.

In the past month, several of us have been in our store room to examine all the treasures our Sister Cities have provided to us. Some are dusty. Some are usable. Some are...well...unique. Thank you to all who are helping to catalog, categorize and determine what to do with these gems. We appreciate that Joyce Warburton is giving us the "keys to the Castle" to examine these artifacts as we determine how to maximize their shelf life.

While we are still putting X's and O's on what to do about Saint-Etienne in France or figuring out just how to maximize the positive media attention out of Kofu, Japan, we have seen a great shift on the global horizon in our Stavropol, Russia committee progress and our gathering of the goods to get an Italian city for Des Moines.

You will see in the individual reports that we are on the move. The Des Moines Public Schools, through the persistent efforts of Vidal Spaine, are ready to take a long look at how we can partner with our Russian counterparts. Vidal deserves much credit for the effort. He has never given up. And we have Ginny Renda spearheading the Italian city possibilities by orchestrating letters from Des Moines business leaders and organizations so the information can be properly submitted to Sister Cities International and our next leg in the journey.

Mix into all of this that Todd Jacobus, Hollie Zajicek and team are diligently coordinating the upcoming fall trip to Kosovo.

As always, Li Mandelbaum has something good in the works with Shijiazhuang and all of us seem destined to rise to her level of commitment.

Tied through all of this is our Communications Team whose members spread the word of what we can do when we hunker down and pivot to our new way of doing business. The pandemic may have changed us, but looking at our continued progress, I'll mark it down as a positive change in how we do business, around the world and from our living rooms. Thank you for all you do!

Sherill Whisenand  
Commission Vice Chairperson

## Stavropol Report – May 2021

Stavropol is making progress in an attempt to formalize school partnership programs with Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS). They sent me a list of their schools interested in being a part of this program and here's the list I received from them:

1. Municipal budget educational institution Secondary school with in-depth study of English № 1 of Stavropol.

Website: [www.перваяшкола26.рф](http://www.перваяшкола26.рф), Email: [sch\\_1@stavadm.ru](mailto:sch_1@stavadm.ru)

School Principal: Ms. Irina Shatskaya, office phone number +7(8652) 23-46-62

Person in Charge: Ms. Tatiana Cherevko, cell phone number +7-903-417-24-85

2. Municipal autonomous educational institution Lyceum № 5 of Stavropol.

Website: <http://stavsch5.ru/>, Email: [sch\\_5@stavadm.ru](mailto:sch_5@stavadm.ru)

Lyceum Principal: Ms. Nataliya Cheremnykh, outer office phone number +7(8652)94-14-15

Person in Charge: Ms. Nina Grivennaya, cell phone number +7-928-012-01-43

3. Municipal autonomous educational institution gymnasium № 24 of Stavropol named after Lieutenant General of Justice M.G. Yadrov.

Website: [www.stavgymn24.ru](http://www.stavgymn24.ru), Email: [gimn24@yandex.ru](mailto:gimn24@yandex.ru)

School Principal: Ms. Alexandra Budyak, office phone number +7(8652)77-23-72

Person in Charge: Ms. Lyudmila Fedotova, phone number +7(8652)77-23-71, cell phone number +7-909-768-14-42

4. Municipal budget educational institution secondary school with in-depth study of the English language № 42 of the city of Stavropol.

Website: [www.stavschoo42.ru](http://www.stavschoo42.ru), Email: [sch\\_42@stavadm.ru](mailto:sch_42@stavadm.ru)

School Principal: Ms. Natalia Voronina, office phone number +7(8652)71-18-73

Person in Charge: Ms. Tatiana Mayorova, phone number, cell phone number +7-988-709-88-40

Stavropol is currently engaged in an aggressive attempt to vaccinate all of the residents living in the city by summer.

Students in Stavropol are all learning in-person and masks are required for all indoor activities.

I was made aware of a pending conference call between Mayor Frank Cownie and the Mayor of Stavropol and will invite Chairman Nowadzky to expand on this plan and to shed light on some details to emerge from this conference call.

Submitted,  
Vidal Spaine, Chairman  
Stavropol Committee

## **Shijiazhuang Report – May 2021**

The Shijiazhuang Des Moines sister city virtual meeting was originally scheduled last month but was postponed until further notice. I was given an online invite to participate in their annual LANGFANG conference, where the sister city meeting was held before.

On the education exchange side, we have identified a couple of schools for Moore elementary and I have been in conversations with both Vidal and Beth.

Lijuan Zhao Mandelbaum, Chair  
Shijiazhuang City Committee

**Saint-Etienne Report**  
**Greater Des Moines Sister Cities Commission**  
**May 2021**

As reported last month, the Saint-Etienne City Council is unable to actively work on new projects with the city of Des Moines at this time. We continue to be on their list of Sister Cities, but in an inactive status for the time being.

After consultation with the chair of the Des Moines Sister City Commission, the Des Moines Saint-Etienne Committee has decided that we will follow this same direction and continue to maintain our existing relations but not pursue new ones at this time.

We will reconfirm our school links between the Johnston schools and schools in Saint-Etienne, which continue to function, although have been strained by COVID issues. We also have a potential contact who can perhaps connect us (via Zoom, or other social media) with some other schools in the region, but without any financial obligations.

We will also pursue some informal contacts to see if there is another French city that might be interested and be a good fit to link with Des Moines more actively. We value our connections with France and plan to keep these going as fully as possible.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eleanor Zeff  
Chair, Saint-Etienne Committee





March 3, 1998  
Police Chief William Moulder  
Des Moines Police Department  
25 East First Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Dear Chief Moulder,

Here at last is a belated thank you for the interview you granted me in your office in May, 1997. I was writing a paper on police work in France and in the European Union and needed some comparisons with policy in the United States. I delivered the paper in Omaha in October, and I am currently revising it for publication. I had some extra copies of the original paper, and I thought that you might like one. I cited you on page 14. Please excuse any typos. In the first draft of the paper, I left the question of whether or not the French police would catch the Jackal undecided. In my more recent revisions, which are more detailed, I have concluded that the Jackal would probably get away. In the final version, I will also cite you in the Bibliography.

While I was in St. Etienne, France this summer, I interviewed your counterpart, Commissaire Valezy as well as a former Commandant from the CRS, and both were very interested in promoting some kind of Sister City exchanges between law enforcement officials. I noticed in the paper that you went to Russia as part of a Sister City exchange this fall. Was it a beneficial exchange, and would you be interested in participating in other such exchanges? Again thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely yours,

Eleanor E. Zeff, Ph.D

**Greater Des Moines Sister City Commission**  
**Subject: Pristina (Kosovo) Committee Report**

**Date: May 3, 2021**

**Members: Todd Jacobus (Chairperson), Hollie Zajicek (Vushtrri), Lyndi Buckingham-Schutt**

1. The Pristina Committee met on Thursday, April 29, 2021 from 6:00-7:30 pm. Participants included Commission Chairperson Roger Nowadzky, Commission Vice Chairperson Sherill Whisenand, Commissioners Lyndi Buckingham-Schutt, Todd Jacobus, Brandi Miller, and Hollie Zajicek, and new Pristina Committee Member Todd Aarhus, who is an Iowa State Patrolman. Key points from meeting:
  - a. Des Moines has a point of contact in Pristina, Kosovo: Ms. Merita Maliqi. Roger Nowadzky shared with the group that he met Ms. Maliqi when he was in Pristina with Mayor Cownie in June 2019 and indicated that she works in Mayor Ahmeti's Office. We are grateful to Artan Duraku and the Kosovo Consulate for finding her for us.
  - b. Todd Jacobus reached out to Ms. Merita Maliqi on April 27, 2021 by email, mentioned the November 29, 2018 sister city agreement signing in Des Moines, his background and interest in Kosovo, an overview of our Committee, our interest in working with her to connect with individuals, agencies, organizations, educational institutions, facilities, committees, and teams in Pristina, our trip to Pristina on September 26-October 2, 2021, and let her know that he would reach out to her after the Pristina Committee meeting.
  - c. The Committee discussed considerations as we build-out our partnership with Pristina:
    - (1) Roger Nowadzky mentioned that we should read through our Pristina-Des Moines Sister City Agreement and develop a two-year work plan. We may also want to look at some longer-term projects.
    - (2) Roger Nowadzky suggested that we should try to go to Pristina during the September trip with a goal of signing an agreement. We should try to make this agreement as specific as possible.
  - d. Todd Jacobus asked the Committee to discuss broad areas of our community with whom we should work to partner with Kosovo. Some of these relationships have already started; we need to figure out how to broaden our reach into both communities to help make connections. Among the areas where we would like to partner are the following:
    - (1) **Law Enforcement:** Todd Jacobus reported that on Monday, April 19, 2021, the Chiefs of the Norwalk Police Department, Des Moines Police Department, Johnston Police Department, and Iowa Law Enforcement Academy met separately with Bujar Maxhuni, Kosovo Deputy Ambassador to U.S./Minister Counselor; Artan Duraku, Kosovo Chief of Mission in Iowa; Chief Greg Staples, Norwalk Police Chief; Lulzim Krasniqi, Liaison Police Officer/Kosovo Law Enforcement Attaché to U.S. Mr. Krasniqi indicated that a larger law enforcement related delegation will be

coming from Kosovo to Des Moines/Iowa soon. I am attaching a photograph of the Kosovar delegation and the DMPD leadership with the 28 Police Candidates.



- (2) **Education.** – Roger Nowadzky, Sherill Whisenand and Todd Jacobus attended a Greater Des Moines Sister City Commission (GDMSCC) Education Committee meeting, led by Vidal Spaine, on April 14, 2021. We need to consider how we as a Pristina Committee connect schools in Pristina with schools in Central Iowa.
- (a) The GDMSCC is in agreement to explore the possibility of school partnerships with our schools in the Des Moines Independent School (DMPS) District.
  - (b) Des Moines Elementary, Middle, and High schools will make connections through social media platforms to connect with our sister city schools.
  - (c) GDMSCC and DMPS enter into this agreement with the understanding that the partnership will be free from any monetary obligation.
  - (d) DMPS administrators will match our sister city committee chairs to individuals within DMPS who will work collaboratively to ensure the success of the partnership.
  - (e) Sister City committee chairs will connect DMPS teachers and administrators to educators, administrators and teachers with our sister cities.
  - (f) The idea is to partner with DMPS International Baccalaureate (IB) Schools, but potentially could include other schools in the district.
  - (g) Involve other schools in the district other than the IB Schools.
  - (h) Bottom line is that DMPS is interested in partnerships overseas, but they don't have anything specific in mind. Lyndi Buckingham-Schutt suggested that Pen-Pal/email pals would be a good first step.
- (3) **Economic/Business.** Hollie Zajicek is Kosovo's point of contact for the American Economic Zone in Gjakova, Kosovo. She indicated that all partnerships encourage business and economic initiatives, and one of the challenges discussed during previous visits to Kosovo was that there was a lack of TRAINING for Kosovars who would work in the American Economic Zone, how satellite college campuses could address training, etc.

- (4) **Museums.** We should identify a point of contact at museums here in Central Iowa, like the State Historical Building, the Iowa Gold Star Military Museum, and connecting them with Museums in Kosovo, like the “National Museum of Kosovo”. Whom do we know at either Museum here in Central Iowa that can be a point of contact for us?
  - (5) **Art Centers.** We should identify a point of contact at the Art Center here in Des Moines, like the Des Moines Art Center, and connecting them with the National Gallery of Kosovo in Pristina. Whom do we know at either Museum here in Central Iowa that can be a point of contact for us? Can Joyce Warburton connect us with a point of contact at the Art Center?
  - (6) **Music.** It would be great if we could connect the Des Moines Symphony, led by Joseph Giunta, and a similar performing arts organization in Pristina. Sherill Whisenand will reach out to the Civic Center and see if she can get a point of contact.
  - (7) **Festival Exchanges.** Roger Nowadzky mentioned that Kosovo in general is interested in connecting with Iowa Festivals, having Iowans participate in Kosovo festivals. Kosovars enjoy our farmer’s markets and fairs. We need to put together a list of our festivals in Iowa. Docufest – Pristina has an interest in plugging some of our TALENT into festivals in Kosovo. Lists may be found at:
    - (a) <https://www.traveliowa.com/calendar/>
    - (b) <https://www.catchdesmoines.com/things-to-do/>
  - (8) **This is NOT a complete list.** We will continue to develop concepts of partnerships and connections.
- e. Todd Jacobus told the Committee that there will be a large delegation from Iowa traveling to Kosovo on September 26-October 2, 2021. The Kosovo Consulate is working with Iowa Sister States to organize this delegation, which will also include delegations from many sister cities in Iowa. Roger Nowadzky mentioned that he plans on participating. Todd Jacobus will participate. Hollie Zajicek will participate. Others MAY participate. We need to make some decisions on this soon. There were some questions on how/the process for the City of Des Moines approve funding of an event.
- f. Roger Nowadzky provided a general overview of how delegate’s travel to a Sister City is paid for by the City of Des Moines. Roger indicated that this is typically covered during New Commission Orientation Training, but it has been 18+ months since we’ve done this training program. Here is an overview of the process.
- (1) First, the City which our delegation plans to visit will send a letter to the City of Des Moines, inviting a delegation from Des Moines, and outlining the general purpose of the visit (education, agriculture, visit, governance, etc.).
  - (2) Generally, the Des Moines Mayor, as senior City elected official, is invited to participate in all delegations to our Sister Cities, and the Mayor’s travel is paid for by the City of Des Moines.

- (3) The Commission Chairperson's travel is also paid for by the City of Des Moines.
  - (4) Sometimes the Sister City Committee Chairperson's travel is paid for by the City of Des Moines.
  - (5) Typically, other delegates pay their own way on trips to our Sister Cities. Generally, costs include airfare, hotel, and then incidental expenses. Many meals are provided by the Sister City during visits. The City of Des Moines pays for medical travel insurance.
  - (6) The City of Des Moines will not pay travel expenses for a Commissioner who is not a resident of the City of Des Moines; the city in which the Commissioner is a resident is obligated to pay the travel expenses in these cases.
  - (7) Our Commission needs to approve delegations. Once that request is approved, we need to fill out a travel request and submit it to the City of Des Moines so that it can be voted on by the City Council.
- g. The group discussed how we add individuals to our Committee. Roger Nowadzky informed us that the Committee Chairperson needs to be a Commissioner, but committee members definitely do not need to be Commissioners. The Committee agreed that we should encourage people to join our committee.
  - h. The group discussed how we manage the Sister Cities of Johnston (Peja) and Norwalk (Vushtrri). Do we include these two (2) other partnerships during our GDMSCC/Pristina Committee meetings and discussions? The group agreed that it might be helpful to talk about all three (3) sister cities. Kosovo is a small country and there are many connections. Residents of Peja and Vushtrri work in Pristina. We will encourage a representative from Johnston Sister City Committee to connect with our Pristina Committee.
  - i. The Committee agreed to conduct the Pristina Committee monthly on the **fourth Thursday of the month from 6:30-7:30 pm** on Zoom until further notice. Anyone interested in participating in this meeting should reach out to Todd Jacobus to get the Zoom link.
2. On April 19, 2021, Todd Jacobus participated in a meeting at the Des Moines Police Academy with the Kosovo Consulate in Iowa, Kosovo Embassy in Washington, DC, and the Des Moines Police Department (DMPD). Included in this meeting were the following: Bujar Maxhuni – Kosovo Deputy Ambassador to U.S./Minister Counselor, Artan Duraku – Kosovo Chief of Mission in Iowa, Chief Dana Wingert – Des Moines Police Chief, Lulzim Krasniqi – Liaison Police Officer / Kosovo Law Enforcement Attaché to U.S., Major Al Tunks – Des Moines Deputy Chief of Police/Commander of Operations Division DMPD, Major Steve Waymire – Commander of Investigations Division DMPD, Major Todd Dykstra – Commander of Administrative Services Division DMPD, and Captain Kirk Bagby – Director, Des Moines Police Department Academy with a goal of establishing a framework of potential partnership and cooperation in the future.
    - a. Captain Bagby provided a tour of the modest Police Academy located at 433 East Army Post Road, Des Moines, Iowa 50315. The delegation was able to observe the training/instruction of the 28 Police Officers In Training, the range and equipment.

- b. The group discussed training programs conducted at the DMPD Academy, and training programs conducted by the Kosovo Police in Vushtrri, Kosovo.
- c. Lulzim Krasniqi told the group that senior leaders from the Kosovo Police, including the General Director of the Kosovo Police, plan to visit Iowa, and we will coordinate a visit with DMPD leaders.



3. **CONGRATULATIONS!** The Millenium Foundation of Kosovo sponsored 28 women from Kosovo to attend college in the U.S. in order to study science, technology, engineering and math with a focus on making a positive impact on the Energy Sector in Kosovo. In August 2019, these Kosovar women traveled to Des Moines, and they've spent the last two (2) years studying at the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) Ankeny Campus. Twenty-six (26) of these women graduated on Saturday, May 1, 2021 and were awarded Associates in Applied Science degrees. Graduates include those listed below; I am also attaching a photograph taken before the ceremony at the DMACC FFA Enrichment Center.

- a. Elna Eshrefi, Ferizaj, Renewable Energy Technology
- b. Fjolla Fazliu, Pristina, Renewable Energy Technology
- c. Erza Gashi, Mitrovica, Cybersecurity
- d. Engjella Halili, Gjilan, Renewable Energy Technology
- e. Tringa Kastrati, Pristina, Cybersecurity
- f. Fjolla Kosumi, Pristina, Renewable Energy Technology
- g. Anda Kukaj, Prizren, Engineering Technology Electro-Mechanical
- h. Albiona Lalinovci, Ferizaj, Applied Engineering Technology, Electro-Mechanical
- i. Anita Moloku, Pristina, Renewable Energy Technology
- j. Ronita Murseli, Ferizaj, Applied Engineering Technology, Electro-Mechanical
- k. Qendrese Nasufi, Presheve, Tool & Diemaking
- l. Arbesa Nikaj, Drenas, Applied Engineering Technology, Electro-Mechanical
- m. Tringa Osmani, Fushë Kosovë, Water Environmental Technology
- n. Buna Perteshani, Gjakova, Tool & Diemaking
- o. Erza Rama, Pristina, Renewable Energy Technology
- p. Blerona Rexhaj, Istog, Applied Engineering Technology, Electro-Mechanical
- q. Arda Rugji, Prizren, Computer Information Systems
- r. Pranvere Sadiku, Lipjan, Water Environmental Technology

- s. Alketa Sahiti, Drenas, Applied Engineering Technology, Electro-Mechanical
- t. Diella Shabani, Gjilan, Renewable Energy Technology
- u. Mirela Shala, Junik, Information Technology Network Administration
- v. Doruntina Shatri, Istog, Renewable Energy Technology
- w. Vlera Shkroda, Pristina, Cybersecurity
- x. Egzona Tahiri, Gjakova, Applied Engineering Technology, Wind Turbine Technologies
- y. Vesa Xerxa, Gjakova, Renewable Energy Technology
- z. Erza Zogu, Pristina, Applied Engineering Technology, Wind Turbine Technologies



4. The Pristina Committee will continue to focus on these, and perhaps other, objectives:
  - a. Recruit a committee, including individuals outside the Commission, who are enthusiastic about expanding the relationship between Pristina and Des Moines, and who represent a wide range of interests and backgrounds.
  - b. Continue establishing point of contact in the Pristina Mayor's Office with whom we can communicate and exchange information.
  - c. Identify sectors of society in Des Moines which we should work to connect with counterparts in Pristina.
  - d. Re-engage the relationship with the DMPS to connect education and youth development opportunities for DMPS students.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd M. Jacobus  
Pristina Committee Chair

## Education Committee Report – May 2021

Please see email message below which was received from Principal Sloan in response to one sent to Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) Administrators following the Education Committee meeting held on April 14<sup>th</sup>:

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 28, 2021 4:27 PM

**Subject:** Sister Cities School Partnership

Hello Vidal,

*I am wrapping a few more schools into this conversation so that we all are clear about possible next steps.*

*Vidal is connecting all of us to Sister City education contacts in hopes that we would find ways to connect.*

*At Moore, Laura Manroe our IB Coordinator, will be helping to facilitate these connections. We aren't sure how this will evolve but we plan to start small. It might be that at the next Coordinator meeting there could be some brainstorming of possibilities. Middle school connections may also be different than elementary.*

*Principals and IB Coordinators, would you please just visit briefly about this concept of connecting to Sister City Schools in the coming months. What might that look like, sound like, feel like? What is manageable for all of us at this time of the year.*

*Laura and I may reach out now to schools in Russia but then pause while we head into summer. We haven't had much time to talk about this yet, but plan to get some energy around this with staff over the summer.*

*Please reach out to me if you have questions or even ideas.*

*Vidal, we will all keep the last email you sent with connections to Stavropol, Russia. Thank you for sending this and please communicate to your connections in Russia that our intention is to reach out in the coming weeks.*

*Beth Sloan*

*Moore Principal*

**Sent:** Thursday, April 22, 2021 3:23 PM

**Subject:** Sister Cities School Partnership

Hi Everyone,

*I have to apologize for getting back to you this late after our meeting last Wednesday, April 14, 2021. Some of the key points from our meeting are as follows, and please let me know if you find any disagreements with some of the statements:*

- *The Greater Des Moines Sister City Commission is in agreement to explore the possibility of school partnerships with our schools in the Des Moines Independent School District.*
- *Des Moines Elementary, Middle, and High schools will make connections through social media platforms to connect with our sister city schools.*
- *GDMSCC and DMPS enter into this agreement with the understanding that the partnership will be free from any monetary obligation.*



- *DMPS administrators will match our sister city committee chairs to individuals within DMPS who will work collaboratively to ensure the success of the partnership.*
- *Sister City committee chairs will connect DMPS teachers and administrators to educators, administrators and teachers with our sister cities.*
- *The idea is to partner with DMPS IB Schools, but potentially could include other schools in the district.*
- *Involve other schools in the district other than the International Baccalaureate Schools.*

*The following is the current make-up of the commission, including the committee chairs in charge of our sister city relationships. These individuals will be reaching out to you to advance conversations on plans and proposals relating to schools' partnerships. Currently, we do not have a functioning relationship with a sister city in Italy. Please reach out to me if you have any questions, and also please reach out to other administrators in the district interested in this proposed plan. Thanks so much for your attention to this issue.*

**SISTER CITIES COMMISSION CITY CHAIR EMAILS:**

- 1. Commission Chairperson: Roger Nowadzky [nomadintl@aol.com](mailto:nomadintl@aol.com)**
- 2. Commission Vice Chairperson: Sherill Whisenand [sherill.whisenand@gmail.com](mailto:sherill.whisenand@gmail.com)**
- 3. Kofu City Chair: Joseph Nolte [jtnolte22@gmail.com](mailto:jtnolte22@gmail.com)**
- 4. Pristina City Chair: Todd Jacobus [todd.jacobus@gmail.com](mailto:todd.jacobus@gmail.com)**
- 5. Saint-Etienne City Chair: Eleanor Zeff [eleanor.zeff@drake.edu](mailto:eleanor.zeff@drake.edu)**
- 6. Shijiazhuang City Chair: Li Zhao Mandelbaum [li@china-iowa.com](mailto:li@china-iowa.com)**
- 7. Stavropol City Chair: Vidal Spaine [vidal.spaine@dmschools.org](mailto:vidal.spaine@dmschools.org)**
- 8. Italy City Chair: Ginny Renda [grp\\_bears@aol.com](mailto:grp_bears@aol.com)**

Vidal Spaine, Chair  
Education Committee