

**MINUTES of the Morgantown Sister Cities Commission (MSCC) Meeting  
May 21, 2013** (prepared by Betsy Pyle)

**ATTENDANCE:** Commissioners Present: Roz Becker, Betsy Pyle, Bill Byrne, Liz Finklea, George Lies, Rich Fleisher. Commissioners Excused/Absent: John Gaddis, Peggy Myers-Smith, Helene Friedberg, Bethany Sypolt.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting called to order at 4:12 PM by Bill Byrne, Vice Chair.

**MINUTES:** Minutes from the regular April meeting were distributed via email in advance of the meeting.

Motion by Mr. Lies, second by Mr. Fleisher, to approve April minutes of the Morgantown Sister Cities Commission. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**New Commission Members:** Ms. Sypolt distributed appointment letters to commission members outlining their terms on the commission. Ms. Becker and Ms. Myers-Smith are in continuing terms so they did not need to be appointed this year. Ms. Myers-Smith has not attended a meeting in some time due to family commitments and her work schedule, so Mr. Lies offered to contact her to see if she plans to continue as an active commission member. At last month's meeting Mr. Gaddis informed the group that due to work commitments he was unable to serve out the last year of his appointment. Therefore, his term will end in June and we will need to fill his vacant seat for a one-year commitment. Potential people to keep in mind for open seats included Jeff Ryan (who attended last month's meeting and has traveled to China), Zhengjun Wang (President of Chinese Student Association at WVU), and Brett Clark (who spent a month in Xuzhou). A city council member will be appointed to fill the seat on the commission that has been held by Mr. Byrne for the past few years. At the next meeting we will take up the matter of appointing officers because the key leadership roles will need to be filled. Commissioners were encouraged to think about who would be willing to take on leadership of the commission.

**Friends of Guanajuato Social Gathering and WVU-U of G'to Exchange:** We plan to hold a self-host social event for Friends of Guanajuato at Mariachi Loco on Sunday August 4<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM. Ms. Becker offered to contact the restaurant to inform them of our intention to host a group dinner there. Ms. Finklea said she would set up an Evite announcement to "Save the Date" for the Friends of G'to email list. Mr. Lies reminded us that the 6 faculty members from U of G'to would still be in Morgantown studying in the WV U Intensive English Program and could be invited to attend and introduced to the group. He plans to host a reception to welcome them on or about July 2<sup>nd</sup> at Black Bear Restaurant downtown. He also stated that three people plan to go to G'to for the language exchange this summer: Claudia Gully who is an MHS counselor, Semoa De Souza Brown who is the outgoing study abroad coordinator for the OIP on campus, and Tim Warner who is a WVU Geology and Geography Professor. Mr. Lies also has a list

of all former outgoing G'to language exchange participants and we can be sure to invite them.

**Community Outreach:** We need to continue to think of ways to reach out to the community to educate them about Morgantown's existing relationships with cities in other countries. Ms. Pyle suggested that we use the basic presentation that was used at the Village at Heritage Point and the OLLI class to create a set presentation that any commission member could use to give a public presentation to a community group. It could consist of a power point presentation with lots of pictures and a script that could be used as an accompanying narrative to it. With a few practice runs through it, any commissioner would be prepared to deliver it to a civic group, scout troop, middle school class, church group, or any other local organization. We need to be sure that the presentation addresses some key questions such as WHY it is important to know other places (e.g., they are our trading partners, there are positive things happening there that can be considered even while press often highlights the negative problems other countries are facing).

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Xuzhou Delegation in Morgantown:** Mr. Lies informed the Commission that a group of 21 Xuzhou faculty and their entourage would visit Morgantown and other locations in West Virginia from July 17 – 21. Dr. Sun and Dr. Jerry Fletcher, two WVU faculty members, are making the arrangements. They are here for energy related work and to understand how higher education functions in the USA. Mr. Lies will meet with them to be a liaison between WVU OIP, Morgantown Sister Cities Commission, and the work of these two WVU professors.

**Upcoming Issues to Be Addressed:** At the next meeting, we need to discuss what should be part of the "ready on the shelf" presentation that can be used to educate the community about our programs, hear an update on the Xuzhou delegation coming to Morgantown, learn who the new City Council representative to Sister Cities Commission will be, get updates on the Friends of G'to social event planned for August, and elect officers. The latter is especially important in that Bill Byrne will be rotating off the Commission and City Council and that we have lost Pam Hodge and all the energy she brought to our commission. Please consider what additional things you can take on to keep the positive energy needed to move the commission and its goals forward.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be held on **TUESDAY, June 18th, 2013 at 4:00 PM** in the **CONFERENCE ROOM** of the **Public Safety Building**. (Meeting room has been confirmed.) Additions or corrections? Please email them to Betsy at [betsypyle@comcast.net](mailto:betsypyle@comcast.net)