

Sister Cities of Durham Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, July 11, 2024 via zoom

Called to order 7:04

Attendance:

Guests: Brady Surles, Wenning Qi, James Long, Longen Chen

Board Members: Tom Harris, Gwenn Bookman, Mark Goodwillie, Randy Griffith, Eve Marion, Patricia Sheppard, Ronda Pierce, Yuki Temma, Elsa Jimenez, Nancy Cox

Absent: Chris Boyer, Mitch Scrutu, Melissa Perez, Bob Ashley, Susanna Ochala, Min Shu, Lusia Li,

Review of Agenda and Opening Remarks:

President Harris made the following changes to the agenda:

- We will postpone the vote to elect Zenani Fogg as a new Board member since we were not able to confirm her availability to attend the meeting.
- The vote to **approve changing** Kunshan **to** a Sister City will be delayed until our next meeting so the New Cities Committee can make a recommendation to the Board.

Noting that the New Cities Committee lacked a chair, President Harris nominated himself as chair and asked for the Board's approval.

Mark Goodwillie moved to approve Tom Harris the Chair.

Nancy Cox seconded.

Motion unanimously approved.

Mark Goodwillie shared a few comments about the work of the Kunshan committee over the last year. He has made connections with staff at Duke associated with the campus in Kunshan. He is negotiating the partnership around the November visit of the Mayor of Kunshan to Durham and Duke. Kunshan participated in the Sister Cities of Durham Mayor's roundtable held in Spring 2024. A program featuring a Feng Shui instructor is on hold until her availability. A tea tasting program at the Duke Gardens Tea house is also on hold as there is constriction at the Tea House. Currently the Main Branch Library has materials featuring Kunshan on display.

Approval of June 6, 2024 Minutes

Mark Goodwillie moved to approve the Minutes.

Patricia Shepperd seconded.

Motion unanimously approved.

Committee Reports:

- **Update on Durham Central Park Peace Grove** - Brady Surles, Chair, shared information from a meeting with Durham Central Park. Signage about Sister Cities and our hand in creating the grove will be added soon. The pole with the city names needs to be replaced as the wood is rotting. The signage and new poll are both going through the Design Committee of Central Park. A team of volunteers are taking turns watering the trees during the summer.

- 35th Anniversary - Ronda Pierce, Chair, presented information from the committee's first meeting. The event will be held on Friday, October 11th at the Durham Arts Council from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. The current plan is to combine the social event with the annual meeting. The purpose of the event is to build awareness, attract possible new members, engage with groups with whom we have past relationships, and intentionally invite friends and acquaintances who are likely to be interested in SCD. The tentative schedule is about 45 minutes of social time with drinks and small bites representing our sister cities; welcome from President Harris and Mayor Williams; cutting a celebratory cake; and moving into the Annual Meeting of the Members to conduct business including electing new board members. The committee is discussing whether to charge a fee but will definitely ask people to register in advance; during the registration process, people are asked if they would like to subscribe to the newsletter -this is a tactic to build our email distribution list so we can share out the great work of SCD with more people.
Nancy Cox, a member of the committee will be sending out an assignment to Board members to identify specific people to whom we will send an invitation, for example, past host families, past partners, people who have visited a Sister City.
- Eve Marion, Co-Chair Durham, England, presented information about the Two Durhams Beer Festival which was held in June at Durham Central Park. She believes that approximately 1000 people attended. The breweries were very pleased with the turnout and some gave an additional gift to their fee for participating. She and the committee expressed appreciation for all of the volunteers. The co Chairs have not yet debriefed but are planning to hold a social hour to debrief in the near future. Financially, the Festival will most likely break even!
- Ronda Pierce, co-Chair Arusha, shared an update from the Arusha committee on the selection of Justin James, a member of the Arusha Committee and a student from DSA, who was nominated and selected to attend the SCI Youth Leadership Summit being held in Washington, DC in August. Ms. Pierce noted that this year there is a strong collaboration with the State Department. The committee sent a fundraising letter to the SCD listserv introducing them to Justin, explaining the features and benefits of the Summit and asking for donations to fund his travel expenses in the amount of \$1795. Using the analytics feature in our email program, she shared that of the approximately 400 people on the email distribution list, this appeal letter was opened by 230, 6 people clicked the Paypal link and we will soon know how many then made a contribution through Paypal. Ms. Pierce noted that donations have come in through other avenues including a donation by the Kavalal Committee of \$100.

Ms. Pierce encouraged the Board to think about amping up our outreach to attract more nominees for next year's conference and shared that student to student sharing of information has proven effective.

Old Business:

- Review, discussion and decision on the proposed FY 2024-25 SCD Budget
Mark Goodwillie, in the absence of Treasurer Min Shu, presented the proposed 2024/25 budget. Some discussion ensued regarding proposed changes as Mr. Goodwillie led us through each line under income and expenses. The main point of discussion was that the proposed budget is a deficit budget. Mark Goodwillie clarified that we have funds in our general operating funds to cover our expenses; we can pay our bills. President Harris emphasized that we are committed to additional fundraising to make up the shortfall.

President Harris explained that since this is a recommendation from a committee, a motion is not needed and called for the vote.

The budget was adopted unanimously.

- Mark Goodwillie presented information on David Rowson and moved to approve a 6 month contract with Mr. Rowson as our new Book Keeper. During this trial period, SCD can determine if Mr. Rowson is a good fit and Mr. Rowson can determine if the scope of work is in line with his payment for services.

Mark Goodwillie moved to approve the 6 month contract.

Patricia Sheppard seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

- President Harris explained that SCD is able to vote for the Board members of SCI. In previous years, Brady Surles has cast the vote. President Harris will propose, at a future meeting, that the President of SCD will cast the vote after sharing information with the full Board about the candidates. This year, Brady Surles, in his capacity as a past President, will cast the vote; President Harris noted that there are exactly the number of candidates running as there are seats.
- Ronda Pierce, Lusia Li and Vivian Wan are attending the Sister Cities International Summer Leadership and Annual Meeting being held in Tacoma, Washington. Ms. Pierce noted that the planning committee for this year's meeting modeled much of the agenda and activities on the 2023 Meeting which was held here in Durham and coordinated by SCD, "They are all still talking about how wonderful the meeting was; Durham set a high bar."

Announcements: Next Meeting on September 5, 2024

8:30 :Adjournment

2024 Retreat and Meeting dates:

January 27 (Planning Retreat)	March 7	May 2	June 6	July 11
September 5	October 18 (Annual Meeting)	November 7		