

Sister Cities of Durham Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 8, 2026

Location: Zoom (meeting held virtually due to anticipated protests in Durham)

Presiding President: Nancy Cox

Recording Secretary: John Felheim

Call to Order: 7:11 PM

Attendance

Quorum confirmed. [Attendance record found here.](#)

Board members and committee representatives present included:

- Nancy Cox
- John Felheim
- Chris Boyer
- Di Qin
- Mark Goodwillie
- Patricia Sheppard
- Susanna Ochola
- Lusia Li
- Carolina Vera
- Gwendolyn Bookman
- Violet Evans
- Leslie Fischer
- James Long (non-voting co-chair)
- Zenani Fogg

Guests:

- Oser Black (Stanford School of Public Policy – Governance Committee)
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Agenda Review and Changes

Board President Nancy invited additions/changes to the agenda. No changes were proposed.

Motion: Approve January 8 meeting agenda
Moved: James Long
Second: Patricia Sheppard
Vote: Passed

Approval of Minutes

November 2025 Meeting Minutes

Clarifications requested:

- Attendance details
- Description of President's workload and use of pre-recorded updates
- End-of-year campaign not related to Youth Campaign
- Privilege of membership to vote on at-large members

Edits were made and incorporated into the November minutes.

Motion: Approve November 2025 meeting minutes
Approval of November minutes was voted unanimously.
Vote: Passed

September 2025 Meeting Minutes

The Board President, Nancy, said the minutes not ready for a vote or for a discussion,

President's Report

The President's Remarks were sent prior to the meeting. Meeting attendees were asked to view the presentation before this Board meeting.

No discussion was held regarding the President's Remarks presentation.

Governance Committee Updates

Board members asked to update personal contact information and review term-start documentation.

Board Meeting Schedule

Discussion held regarding meeting frequency.

Decisions:

- Board meetings will be held monthly, except in **July** and **December**.
 - Annual meeting timing to be reviewed for potential move to **May or June** to better align with budget approval and officer elections.
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Board Retreat Planning

Discussion topics:

- Purpose of retreat (strategic planning, orientation for new members, committee roundtables)
- Timing relative to budget cycle and annual meeting

Key points:

- January retreat postponed.
- Retreat should focus on planning and relationship-building, not formal governance actions such as budget approval.

Action: Retreat planning to begin prior to budget approval.

President's Remarks

Highlights:

- Overview of current city committee activities and programming
 - Emphasis on improving onboarding and orientation for new board members
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Financial Report

- Reviewed annual fundraising goal of **\$4,000**. Additional fundraising efforts may be required to meet annual financial expectations.

Report received for information; no voting or action needed at this time.

City Committee & Program Updates

- **Women's History Month Event**
March 7 – featuring author Abigail Leonard
 - **Taiko Drummers Performance**
January 20 – Durham County Main Library
 - **Arusha Delegation Visit**
Informal gathering planned at Afrikikos restaurant for Cosmos and his wife
 - **Youth Leadership Summit**
Promotion encouraged; application deadline February 1
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Old Business

- **Board Size Vote:** Item postponed from this meeting; to be addressed at a later meeting.
 - Editing and additions to the handbook
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New Business

No formal new business items brought forward.

Action Items

Outreach & Engagement Committee

- Schedule an Outreach and Engagement Committee meeting
Responsible: John Felheim

Governance / Administration

- Obtain and share Oser Black bio/profile
Responsible: Nancy Cox
Deadline: Not specified
- Investigate attaching PowerPoint presentations to meeting minutes on website
Responsible: Nancy Cox
Deadline: Not specified
- Update personal contact information in shared form
Responsible: All board members
Deadline: Not specified

Planning

- Begin board retreat planning (date prior to budget approval; provisional June)
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Adjournment

Meeting adjourned: 8:31pm
