

Kitakata Sister City Advisory Board Meeting Action Minutes
March 31, 2021

Advisory Board Members Present:

Jason Jones
Lois Reimer- emeritus
Aaron Reyna- Vice Chair
Cathy Rice
Tracy Sailors
Dave Schalk
Bev Schalk - emeritus
Seiji Shiratori
Adrienne Scritsmier
Ashleigh Sumerlin- Chair
Bob Yokoyama

Staff Present:

Erica Behler – Recreation Coordinator

Members of the Public Present:

Shinobu Chrisman- WHS Japanese teacher

AGENDA ITEM	ACTIONS
CALLED TO ORDER	6:01 p.m.
<u>Minutes</u>	A. February 24, 21 minutes approved- no changes. Seiji Shiratori approved the minutes, Dave Schalk seconded. All were in favor.
<u>Public Comment</u>	A. None
<u>Introduction of Shinobu Chrisman</u> A. Bob Y.	<p>A. Bob Yokoyama introduced Shinobu Chrisman, a current Wilsonville High School (WHS) Japanese teacher. Bob explained that Shinobu has taught Japanese at WHS for the last 4 years, and previously tutored at Mt. Hood Community College. She has coordinator the WHS delegations twice now, which entails setting up the trip itinerary, establishing costs, chaperone costs, etc... Shinobu also personally chaperones the students on the trips during her summer vacations. Bob invited her to the meeting so that new board members could meet Shinobu and that the group could hear from her personally about where they may be able to assist her in future projects...</p> <p>B. Shinobu: Shinobu resides in Gresham, so she commutes to Wilsonville each day when school is in person- currently it is a hybrid. This is her fourth year at WHS. Her first trip to Japan with WHS students was in 2018 and she took eight students. First, they went to Tokyo and then visited Kitakata for about 10 days to visit the schools, partake in city activities, and summer festival. Host families had students stay with them. Shinobu said the trips are very worthwhile, as she gets to see the kids growing and learning Japanese. Shinobu also helps coordinator the in-person school activities when students from Kitakata visit Wilsonville. She usually tries to coordinate some hands on activities that do not need a ton of interpretation. Shinobu was supposed to take another trip to Japan with students last summer in 2020, but it was unfortunately cancelled due to the pandemic. Shinobu explained that the trips usually take place every other year, so the next opportunity to go will be in the summer of 2022. Shinobu explained that because they were not able to make the trip in 2020, she began thinking of other ways to connect- she then explained the Christmas card project that she had her students work on. They exchanged homemade cards with students in Kitakata.</p> <p>C. Follow up questions: Were students able to collect refunds from the cancelled trip in 2020? Shinobu replied that they did. Bob asked Shinobu how the board could best support her. Shinobu replied that she thought that during the 50th anniversary, when there were various activities like the tree planting and ceremonial dinner, that it would be beneficial to invite the high school</p>

	<p>students. Bob expressed that he would stay connected with Shinobu to keep in touch about any future projects/collaborations... Erica asked about the lead-time to let Shinobu know about projects with the students- Shinobu said about a month or so should work.</p>
<p><u>Future Etiquette Training</u> A. Adrienne S.</p>	<p>A. Adrienne brought up the topic of the group receiving an etiquette training. She expressed that this may be good for the board to all be on the same page, as some members have traveled extensively to Japan and others have not. She thought a training of this sort would be a good idea so that we do not accidentally offend any of our counterparts in Japan. Adrienne said she thought we would get someone to present this material, perhaps an experienced board member or volunteer. Aaron mentioned creating a quick tips sheet for future board members. Dave and Cathy said that there is already a document that exists that the previous association had created. Erica will contact Bev for this document.</p>
<p><u>Japanese Culture Share</u> A. Erica B.</p>	<p>A. Erica gave a brief presentation on the Japanese idea of Shinrin-Yoku or forest bathing (presentation in packet). Erica explained that she thought each board member at various meetings could give cultural share presentations like this one. She thought it could be a good way for our group to learn a little bit about a piece of Japanese culture at each meeting.</p> <p>After the presentation, Tracy brought it to the group's attention that there have been forest-bathing classes at Washington Park in Portland. Erica mentioned she had seen some class offerings through Leach Botanical Gardens as well. The conversation continued and evolved into the conversation of a possible forest bathing class in Wilsonville as a type of fundraiser or social event. Tracy shared that the forest bathing class that she took was completely guided and had the idea that a tea ceremony might work well in conjunction with it.</p> <p>Erica mentioned a forest therapy trail she read about in Washington State. Erica brought up the idea that Wilsonville could potentially install a forest-therapy trail somewhere in a local park with descriptive signage. The board seemed to really support this idea was vocal approval from Cathy, Seiji, Aaron, Jason, and Ashleigh.</p> <p>Other ideas from the board that developed organically from the presentation:</p> <p>Seiji- Cultural presentations with Kitakata. We send topics from Japanese culture we want to know more about, and they send topics from American culture they want to know more about and we share.</p> <p>Aaron- Get students involved with creating/translating/painting/installing signage on the forest therapy trail. Exploring a video series with prompted questions to people who have gone to visit so that we can digitally share experience- what did Kitakata mean to you? Or, "What was something unique you experience while in Kitakata" The board could use these video clips to raise awareness about the sister city relationship- could even be short Instagram videos. Something short for people's attention spans.</p> <p>Jason- Use new trails by dog park/memorial park area. Less trafficked and nicely forested- would offer nice time for reflection. Jason used the poetry trail while it was set up through Parks and Rec and said he enjoyed it.</p> <p>Cathy- Classes like forest therapy and tea ceremony would be great offerings through Parks and Recreation.</p> <p>Erica- create a handout about the Sister City Relationship to give out during classes</p>

	<p>Dave- promoting positive aspects around Japanese culture is very important right now considering the state of Asian hate crimes in this country.</p> <p>Bob- Presentation about Kitakata from those who have been there for board members who haven't yet bet. (Could also organize this with Kitakata to get the presentation from them)</p>
<p><u>Sister City Outreach Assignment</u> A. Erica B.</p>	<p>See google doc: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O-3mSkbxcaMDbXdIPwLK3irxBwmNwJFPfNg7MzyNQ4Y/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>This assignment was for each board member to reach out to Oregon sisters city organization to see how they operate financially. A google doc was created with talking points and questions.</p>
<p><u>Local Business Outreach Assignment</u> A. Erica B.</p>	<p>See google doc: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rtNkn5u5ePL5cFJrh9W6MTrJMCcDNueCFn9wrMOT6zE/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>This assignment was for each board member to reach out to a local area business to see if they would be interested in giving a virtual tour of their business/organization to members of our sister city. A google doc was created with talking points and questions.</p>
<p><u>Board Comments</u> A. Adrienne S. B. Bob Y.</p>	<p>A. Bob had a clarification question about the title of the board- Erica confirmed that it was the Kitakata Sister City Advisory Board. There were suggestions about changing it to the Wilsonville Sister City Advisory Board instead- needs further discussion.</p> <p>B. Asian Hate Crimes- Erica, at the request of several board members, brought up the topic of acknowledging the recent Asian American and Pacific Islander hate crimes in our country. The group suggested that we put out a statement of solidarity. There is now a statement on the board webpage, it reads:</p> <p>STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY WITH AAPI COMMUNITIES</p> <p>As Wilsonville's Kitakata Sister City Advisory Board, we promote understanding, friendship, and cooperation with sister cities and sister countries all over the world. As we mourn with our communities the deaths of eight shooting victims in Atlanta, six of Asian descent, and the ongoing rising violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI), we stand in solidarity with our AAPI community and condemn acts of violence, racism and hate.</p> <p>The City of Wilsonville and Wilsonville Kitakata Sister City Board is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion and will continue to promote peace, respect and mutual understanding within our local communities and sister cities around the world. As global citizens, we must speak up for inclusive, supportive, and</p>

equitable communities and speak out against acts of hate, discrimination, and racism.

We believe in people to people relationships and working together everyday to support and uplift the individuals and the diversity that make our communities beautiful.

In solidarity,

WILSONVILLE KITAKATA SISTER CITY BOARD

ADJOURN

7:33 p.m.