



**Richmond-Zhoushan Friendship Commission Meeting
MINUTES**

March 11, 2020

4:00pm to 5:00pm

Shimada Room, Richmond City Council Chamber

I. Welcome and Roll Call

Present - Commissioners Matt Lewis, Joseph Kong, Stanley Li, Eric Peterson, Leonard Berry and Sara Zhao

Councilmember Martinez, Port Director Jim Matzorkis, Lucy Zhou and Trina Jackson

II. Review and approve minutes from previous meeting(s).

Upon review of minutes, Matt Lewis made a motion to approve the minutes, a second was made by Stanley Li and the motion passed unanimously.

III. Treasurer's Report

a. Committee raised funds - \$288.71

b. City allocated funds - \$1,000

Report given by Trina Jackson

IV. Reports from subcommittees

a. Education

- ***Eric reported that the two trips planned for April have been postponed due to Corvid-19; the February trip was also cancelled, as well as the summer programs. Currently working on a credentialed teacher exchange program. He expressed the need for additional teachers for the Mandarin immersion classes. Together with Joseph Kong, he is also working on a trip to Africa for students in the African American Student Achievement Program. They are trying to expand to other countries until travel bans are lifted in China.***

- *The Mandarin school is battling the perception that their school is more dangerous than other schools because of their relation to China due to bias. To counter this thought pattern, he is thinking of holding a restorative justice program once the ban of meetings over 50 has lifted.*
- *Martinez - Inquired about the impact to the teachers that were here. Answer: It has been an emotional response from the teachers. Teachers are staying home to be with their families.*
- *Eric has heard that the Chinese exchange students at Contra Costa College are preparing to go home.*

b. Economic Development

Jim reported that Corvid-19 is a huge setback for our exchanges. Stanley reported that he doesn't believe business is being conducted since the only focus is Coronavirus related business products. If there are facilities in Richmond that could manufacture such products or products related health care that could be applied to efforts, the commission could possibly assist. Imports have been stopped from other countries. No other businesses are being entertained at this point.

c. Tourism

- *Matt reported that tourism is taking a major hit. Industry concerns began at the beginning of the year when travel groups started cancelling. SF is expecting hotel occupancy to be at 20% starting next week.*
- *He received a call from the boat show organizers that they are considering cancelling.*
- *Linkedin is encouraging groups to continue to travel and hold events.*
- *If the current status continues, hotels will start closing and there will be job loss. Stanley reported that the same percentage is in Hong Kong.*
- *Matt - information is changing by the day and additional events may be forced to cancel.*
- *Leonard - SF mandated that all events over 1,000 to be cancelled.*

V. Pending Old Business

- a. Letter to Zhoushan - *Positive comments and gratitude expressed by members of the commission.*

b. Letter from Zhoushan – Reported that there have only been 10 confirmed cases in Zhoushan and they all have been cured and released from the hospital. The Foreign Affairs Office expressed gratitude for Richmond’s kind letter of concern.

VI. New Business

a. Jim reiterates that we’re in a holding pattern due to the current situation with the virus. Discussion ensued and included comments about the racism that is being reported. Is there anything the commission can do to counter the racism and paranoia toward Chinese people?

Jim shared an idea of communicating with local residents to include the response letter in the city manager’s weekly report to share the good news from our sister city in Zhoushan, China and to include the letters or something similar.

b. Stanley reported that airlines are negatively impacted and further stated that businesses doesn’t want to make decisions until the third quarter.

c. Eduardo inquired about an annual report to include information from the three sister city groups to increase community knowledge of the sister city program activities. It would also let the residents know the economic impact of tourism and other industries

VII. Other matters of interest – **no additional matters**

VIII. Schedule the next meeting - Discuss regular meeting schedule and decide if monthly or bimonthly meetings are best.

The commission decided to keep the meetings on the second Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for April 8th at 4pm.

IX. Adjourn