

Distinguished Visitors Committee

Thursday, April 13, 2023, 7:00 PM

Ropewalk Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Plymouth Town Hall
26 Court Street, Plymouth, MA 02360

1) Roll Call: Anticipated Attendance

- 1) Andy Loretz (at-large), chair
- 2) Steven Lydon (Visitors Services Board designee), vice chair
- 3) Harry Helm (Select Board designee)
- 4) Kim Savery (School Committee designee)
- 5) Matt Tavares (Town Meeting Member designee)
- 6) Sandra Almaguer (at-large)
- 7) Margie Burgess (at-large)
- 8) Len Levin (at-large)
- 9) Chris Talamo (at-large)
- 10) Absent (with advance notice):
 - i) Paula Harris (Chamber of Commerce designee)
 - ii) Evelyn Strawn (See Plymouth designee)
 - iii) Scott Coogan (at-large), clerk

2) Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM

3) Old Business:

1) *Vote to approve the previous meeting minutes (3/9/23):*

- i) Moved by: Mr. Lydon***
- ii) Seconded by: Mr. Tavares***
- iii) Result: the motion passed unanimously***

2) Establishing meeting procedures and protocols

- i) Effective and efficient meeting guidelines were established based on mutual respect and cooperation, including speaking one at a time through recognition and approval by the chair.

3) Account update:

- i) The first deposit to IACE Travel of \$3,200 for the flights (approved at the previous meeting) was made and processed.
- ii) Deposit money from student ambassadors visiting Shichigahama this summer are being made. Their payment schedule is as follows:
 - (1) Second installment of \$660 by April 15, 2023
 - (2) Third installment of \$660 by May 15, 2023
 - (3) Fourth installment of \$660 by June 15, 2023
 - (4) Fifth installment of \$675 by July 15, 2023
- iii) Cost of the Town Flag being made and sent to Shichigahama will be covered (see later agenda item).

4) Update on the student ambassador delegation and teacher chaperones going to Shichigahama (summer 2023):

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- i) The first Orientation meeting occurred on Monday, March 13, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the School Department Central Office in the Mayflower Room. Families signed appropriate forms and are in the process of providing pertinent travel information
 - ii) Families of student ambassadors have begun fundraising:
 - (1) They used an app in which they could sell popcorn online.
 - (2) This was very successful for individual students and families.
- 5) Update on the elected/town official delegation going to Shichigahama (summer 2023):
- i) Dick Quintal was selected as the Select Board member who will attend this summer's delegation visit.
 - ii) Derek Brindisi informed the chair that there may be a possibility that he will be unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts with his training/service through the Reserves.
- 6) Update on the Town Flag information for Shichigahama's International Days:
- i) A company was contacted and given the information: All American Signs....Plus from Plymouth. We are working on having them manufacture a flag and shipping it to Shichigahama, hopefully in time for their International Days celebration.
 - ii) The price for making the flag was \$282, since it is a custom flag. Shipping will be an additional cost. The committee will be notified at our next meeting of the total cost. The committee already voted unanimously to approve these expenses at our previous meeting (3/9/23) due to the time-pressure of this request.
- 7) Update from Matt Tavares on the cherry tree in Brewster Gardens provided as a gift/commemoration to Mayor Abe from Shichigahama.
- i) Mr. Tavares informed the committee that he will be in contact with the Parks department to ensure it is being maintained and looked after, especially in time for a visit from a delegation from Shichigahama next summer (2024).
- 8) Update from Kim Savery on whether Jannet Young will be presenting a funding request to this committee.
- i) Nothing to report.
- 4) New Business:**
- 1) Expenses:

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- i) Vote to pay IACE Travel by or before May 31, 2023 for the remaining balance of \$47,280 for the Shichigahama 2023 delegation's flights:*
 - (1) Moved by: Mrs. Burgess*
 - (2) Seconded by: Mr. Lydon*
 - (3) Result: the motion passed unanimously*
 - ii) Vote to pay for the cost of the charter bus transportation from Tokyo to Shichigahama for the Shichigahama 2023 delegation, estimated at \$5,000, from Distinguished Visitor Committee funds.*
 - (1) Moved by: Mr. Lydon*
 - (2) Seconded by: Mr. Levin*
 - (3) Result: the motion passed unanimously*
- 2) Facilitating and supporting family/student-arranged fundraising efforts
- i) Audience with the Rotary Club:
 - (1) Ms. Savery gave an update on the effort to have the student delegation send letters requesting donations from the Rotary Club. Those letters will be due to Mr. Loretz via Google Classroom on April 26. After the letters are received, Ms. Savery will work with Jeff Cohen of the Rotary Club to have the students present to the Rotary regarding asking for a donation.
 - ii) Getting out info to local businesses and organizations:
 - (1) The following ideas were brainstormed for getting the word out regarding making further donations to the student delegation:
 - (a) PAC TV can do free PSAs
 - (b) School Channel
 - (c) GoFundMe (with a limit of how much)
 - (d) Comedy Fundraiser through company
 - (e) Have a small group speak to the Select Board sometime in early June - not to seek further funding from the Select Board itself, but rather to publicize fundraising efforts.
 - (f) The Chamber of Commerce could push out the word to local businesses.

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- iii) A parent from the student ambassador delegation asked about whether See Plymouth can collaborate on fundraising:
 - (1) The committee came to the understanding that such fundraising efforts would likely not go through See Plymouth, since that board focuses mostly on supporting local tourism to Plymouth.
- 3) Update on the travel arrangements from the travel agent:
 - i) An update was given that expenses acquired through the travel agent will be due by May 31, 2023.
 - ii) The travel agent is still securing the coach bus from Tokyo-Narita airport to Shichigahama.
 - iii) The travel agent informed us that she can only give us a quote on insurance once she has all passport/ticketing information. We are still waiting on some of the delegation members' passports to be processed. Once we have this information, we will pass it on to the agent and travel insurance will be secured. This will be discussed at May's meeting.
- 4) Begin planning the official gift(s) to Shichigahama to send with the delegation traveling this summer
 - i) A sub-committee to work specifically on the official gift was established:
 - (1) Mr. Levin
 - (2) Mrs. Burgess
 - (3) Mr. Lydon
 - ii) Mr. Levin proposed the idea of using left over wood from the Mayflower restoration to create a plaque.
 - iii) It was discussed that Bill Keohane might know what other items might be in storage at the "Water Barn" on Long Pond Road that could be suitable for a gift, or used as part of the gift.
 - iv) Mr. Loretz will ask the translators at the Kokusaimura about what gifts are already there.
 - v) Ms. Savery asked Dr. Campbell (superintendent of schools) to get copies of a poetry book created by Plymouth students to bring when she visits as part of the delegation.
 - vi) Ms. Savery also mentioned that in the future she would like to create a sort of "yearbook" made of quotes and thoughts from

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people who have been part of the exchanges over the past 32 years.

- 5) Updating this committee's Charter
 - i) Proposed by Mr. Levin at last month's meeting.
 - ii) Mr. Levin will look at the charter and propose updates in the coming meetings.
- 6) Items not reasonably anticipated by the chair
 - i) Mr. Lydon reminded members of the committee about completing the Massachusetts state conflict of interest test and submitting all required paperwork.
 - ii) Mr. Levin reminded the committee about the upcoming vote regarding the proposed new Town Charter, emphasizing that, if passed, it could impact how all town committees function.
 - iii) Mr. Helm suggested that this committee discuss and define payment mechanisms and the role of this committee in helping future student delegations raise funds.
- 5) **Next meeting date:** Thursday, May 11th at 7:00 PM at Town Hall in the Ropewalk Conference Room
- 6) **Meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM**
 - 1) **Moved by: Mr. Lydon**
 - 2) **Seconded by: Mr. Tavares**
 - 3) **Result: the motion passed unanimously**