

Distinguished Visitors Committee

Minutes

Thursday, July 27, 2023, 7:00 PM

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

Zoom information:

Join Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://zoom.us/j/92531176258?pwd=bHFGalZ2SW8xZC9vN2xraE53SWp3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 925 3117 6258

Passcode: 864902

Dial by your location

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Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place which has been extended to March 31, 2023, this meeting will be conducted via remote and in person participation.

This meeting is being recorded.

1) Meeting called to order at 7:01 PM.

2) Old Business:

1) *Vote to approve the previous meeting minutes (6/8/23):*

i) *Moved by: Mr. Lydon*

ii) *Seconded by: Ms. Harris*

iii) *Votes for:*

- (1) Andy Loretz
- (2) Kim Savery
- (3) Margie Burgess
- (4) Len Levin
- (5) Chris Talamo
- (6) Paula Harris

iv) *Abstentions:*

- (1) Steven Lydon
- (2) Kevin Canty
- (3) Evelyn Strawn

v) *Votes against:*

- (1) None

vi) *Result: passes*

- 2) Review of meeting procedures and protocols
- 3) Reminder to submit any and all required forms/documents to the Town Clerk (conflict of interest and open meeting law sign-offs)
- 4) Account update:
 - i) Incoming funds:
 - (1) Deposit money from student ambassadors visiting Shichigahama this summer are being made. The final installment (initially due Saturday 7/15, but actually moved to Monday, 7/17) for student ambassadors was reduced to \$396.15. The total balance due was adjusted to \$2,876.15 due to reductions in cost made by the travel agent, and by the \$100 reduction made by this committee at our previous meeting.
 - (2) Now that it is the new fiscal year, funds from the three contributing boards should be incoming (School Committee, Visitors Services Board, Select Board). Each board contributes \$5,000 for a total of \$15,000.
 - ii) Expenses:
 - (1) Official Town Gifts:
 - (a) Cost of the Town Flag: \$282
 - (b) Mayflower Bell: \$250
 - (c) Mayflower Bell additional plaque: \$58.90
 - (2) Remaining cost for flights after the initial deposit (\$3,200): \$47,618.40
 - (3) Round trip charter bus: Tokyo-Narita airport to Kokusaimura, Shichigahama: \$4,870
 - (4) Group travel insurance (cancellation and medical): \$2,488
 - (5) Expenses to be voted on during new business:
 - (a) Reimbursement for group t-shirts: \$246.85
 - (b) Reimbursement for ice cream/supplies: \$54.25
 - (c) Reimbursement for framing letter: \$34.99
- 5) Update on the student ambassador delegation and teacher chaperones going to Shichigahama (summer 2023):
 - i) The virtual connection over Zoom between the host families in Shichigahama and the Plymouth delegation on Saturday, June 24th at 7:30 PM EST went well. Families from Plymouth and Shichigahama were able to introduce themselves and begin the process of getting to know one another. Families were provided with host families' email addresses to enable further contact prior to the delegation visit.

- ii) Update from Ms. Savery regarding the July 24, 2023 Rotary Club meeting: The meeting was attended by select students of the delegation. Two students (Jonathan Bird, PSMS; and Violet Luke; PSMS) presented wonderfully to the Rotary Club. They spoke about what they were hoping to get out of the trip, and offered to present again after the delegation visit. There is some confusion regarding whether the Rotary Club will in fact be able to donate funds. Regardless, this was a great way of creating awareness about the sister-town relationship. The students and Ms. Savery were given Rotary Club flags to give to as gifts while in Shichigahama.
- iii) The fourth and final Orientation meeting for the student ambassadors and other delegation members occurred on Monday, July 24, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the School Department Central Office in the Mayflower Room. Families were informed of further travel details and final arrangements. The delegation also participated in a send-off ice cream social at the meeting, to get to better know one another.
- iv) Final travel information for the delegation:
 - (1) Depart by School Bus from Plymouth North High School at 9:00 AM on Wednesday August 2, 2023. Bus travels to Boston Logan Airport, where the delegation will be met by Suzuki from IACE Travel (the travel agency we used to book the flights and travel arrangements).
 - (2) JAL Flight 007 departs BOS at 1:30 PM, arrives in Tokyo-Narita airport at 4:15 PM on August 3, 2023 (Japan day/time).
 - (3) The delegation boards a charter bus to the Kokusaimura in Shichigahama; the anticipated arrival is 10:00-11:00 PM.
 - (4) The delegation follows the itinerary provided by the Kokusaimura.
 - (5) The delegation departs from the Kokusaimura on a charter bus on Wednesday, August 9, at 9:30 AM heading for Tokyo-Narita airport. Anticipated arrival at the airport is 2:00-3:00 PM.
 - (6) JAL flight 008 departs Tokyo-Narita airport at 6:25 PM (Japan time) on Wednesday, August 9, 2023; arrives at Boston Logan airport at 6:25 PM (EST) on Wednesday, August 9, 2023.

(7) School bus meets the delegation at BOS by 6:45 PM and brings students back to PNHS.

- 6) Update regarding updating this committee's Charter from Mr. Levin:
 - i) Tabled, until this committee can devote time to come up with and finalize a mission statement.
- 7) Discussion regarding defining payment mechanisms and the role of this committee in helping future student delegations raise funds:
 - i) Mr. Lydon gave background information regarding the reason this committee might seek to further define payment mechanisms.
 - ii) Mr. Levin asked if this committee could set up fundraising sources beyond the contributions of the Select Board, School Committee, and the Visitors Services Board.
 - iii) Ms. Savery noted that this committee seeks donations when we host a delegation from Shichigahama, as opposed to paying full-price for events, tickets, food, etc.
 - iv) Ms. Strawn noted that this discussion should derive from our committee's mission statement. It was also noted that this committee is supposed to coordinate (and fund) more than just the sister-town relationship with Shichigahama (i.e. Leyden, Netherlands; Plymouth, England; Milan, Italy; domestic distinguished visitors)
 - v) Mr. Levin again noted that this committee might seek out external sources of funding, including perhaps asking the three contributing committees for larger contributions going forward.
 - vi) Ms. Savery noted that sometimes various visitors are not known (due to being arranged through the School or other town entities that might not communicate this to this committee).
 - vii) This discussion was tabled by the Chair until after the delegation returns and once we have a finalized mission statement.

3) New Business:

- 1) Account information:
 - i) The cost of the School bus to/from Plymouth North High School was contributed by the School Department. This expense was discussed with the School Department in advance, but there was confusion about who should pay for it, due to the fact that in years past this was always covered by the School Department (under Dr. Maestas). The School Department decided to cover this cost for this year as well, but has notified us that they will not cover the cost going forward, since they deem it to be an expense that this committee should be covering. The anticipated cost for the school

bus (round trip) for this year is \$500, according to the Purchase Order secured by Janine Dailey and the School's finance department.

(1) This might be something we ask for in the future from the contributing committees.

(2) Mr. Levin noted that perhaps we could seek a donation from the Plymouth & Brockton bus company in the future.

ii) A motion was made by Ms. Harris to vote on all reimbursement payments listed under new business on the agenda as one vote (rather than three separate items), such that the vote would be to reimburse Andrew Loretz for \$246.85 spent on t-shirts for the delegation to wear during travel days, to reimburse Vicky Shay \$54.25 for funds spent on supplies for the send-off ice cream social for the delegation on July 24, 2023, and to reimburse Len Levin \$34.99 for framing the letter accompanying the "Of Plimoth Plantation" official gift.

(1) Moved by: Ms. Harris

(2) Seconded: Mr. Lydon

(3) Votes for:

- (a) Andy Loretz
- (b) Kim Savery
- (c) Margie Burgess
- (d) Len Levin
- (e) Chris Talamo
- (f) Paula Harris
- (g) Steven Lydon
- (h) Kevin Canty
- (i) Evelyn Strawn

(4) Abstentions:

- (a) None

(5) Votes against:

- (a) None

(6) Result: The motion passes unanimously

iii) A VOTE was taken to reimburse Andrew Loretz for \$246.85 spent on t-shirts for the delegation to wear during travel days, to reimburse Vicky Shay \$54.25 for funds spent on supplies for the send-off ice cream social for the delegation on July 24, 2023, and to reimburse Len Levin \$34.99 for framing the letter accompanying the "Of Plimoth Plantation" official gift.

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(2) Seconded: Mr. Lydon

(3) Votes for:

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- (e) Chris Talamo
- (f) Paula Harris
- (g) Steven Lydon
- (h) Kevin Canty
- (i) Evelyn Strawn

(4) Abstentions:

- (a) None

(5) Votes against:

- (a) None

(6) Result: The motion passes unanimously

iv) Facilitating and supporting family/student-arranged fundraising efforts:

- (1) Some students will now wind up with overpayments for the trip after price adjustments were made and due to their own fundraising efforts.
- (2) Funds raised by the student ambassadors' families were put into their own collective joint account for the trip.
- (3) As far as the chair is aware, no one has reached out to contribute any donations (either due to the PAC-TV PSA or through the Chamber of Commerce).

(a) Ms. Harris noted that having a clear mission will help get more donations

v) The PAC-TV PSA to help get donations:

- (1) Ms. Savery attended a filming for a PSA on Friday, June 9, 2023. Link to view the PSA video on YouTube:
<https://youtu.be/qeUq4QsBVw0>
- (2) PAC-TV would like to do a story on this summer's delegation visit. We might need some members from this committee, current and previous delegations to be filmed discussing this process and its importance for our students and town. We are waiting to hear further details.

(a) Mr. Lydon noted that this committee should invite PAC-TV to film/photograph certain things like student presentations to this committee and/or Select Board.

- 2) Update on the official gift(s) to Shichigahama to send with the delegation traveling this summer from Mr. Levin and the members of the Gift Sub-committee.
 - i) "Of Plymouth Plantation" was donated by Plimoth-Patuxet - it is a direct transcription of Bradford's journal/history with images of the actual handwritten manuscript.
 - (1) This will be accompanied by a letter from Tom Begley, who was deeply involved with the production of the book, and also was a delegation member to Shichigahama when he was younger. This was framed and will be given with the book.
 - ii) The additional Plaque for bell was delayed due to the mail and delays on the production side. Len will hand deliver the plaque and bell to Kim early next week so Kim can bring it.
 - iii) At the previous meeting Ms. Savery reported that Poetry Books as well as the Massachusetts History textbook will be donated by the School Department. Ms. Savery is in receipt of those and will be bringing them with her.
 - iv) Mr. Canty stated that Melissa Ferretti (chairwoman of Herring Pond Wampanoag tribe) might be contributing a gift on the tribe's behalf. Mr. Canty stated that if there is a cost involved with this gift, the Select Board will cover the cost of that exclusively.
- 3) Unofficial Gift Idea of postcards from See Plymouth and the Scallop Books from the Chamber of Commerce
 - i) Mr. Loretz obtained these from Ms. Harris and distributed them to the delegation members.
- 4) Items not reasonably anticipated by the chair:
 - i) A discussion occurred regarding canceling the meeting scheduled for August 10th, 2023 due to the fact that the delegation to Shichigahama will arrive back to Plymouth just the day prior, and there will be little to discuss or vote on. It was decided collectively that this would be appropriate.
- 4) Next meeting date:** Tentatively Thursday, September 14th at 7:00 PM in the Ropewalk Conference Room on the 2nd Floor of Plymouth Town Hall.
- 5) A VOTE was taken to adjourned at 8:14 PM:**
 - 1) Moved by: Lydon**
 - 2) Seconded by: Harris**
 - 3) Result: passes unanimously**