

Hickory International Council
Thursday, November 19, 2015, 5:30 pm

A regular meeting of the Hickory International Council (HIC) was held on Thursday, November 19, 5:30 pm, in the Moretz Board Room at the Arts & Science Center of Catawba Valley.

Members Present: Hani Nassar, Ken Humphreys, Karl Wolfe, Marion Love, Marc Swinnen, Joe Getlein, Cynthia Ferrell, Toshiaki Satake and Alex Mezei

Members Absent: Claire McCrae, Bella Fields, Jack Crawford, Becky Mich and Maria Jose Daily

Guests Present: Gretchen Oetting and Efrain Palafox

Staff Present: Minutes Clerk Anne Starnes

A quorum was present.

Call to Order: Hani Nassar, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and welcomed everyone present.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the previous meeting on October 15, 2015 were distributed to members in advance. No additions or corrections were stated. Ken Humphreys moved, seconded by Joe Getlein, to approve the October minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Introduction of Guests & Board Membership Changes: Mr. Nassar said the guests present attend often, so introductions were not necessary. There were no membership changes to report.

Old Business:

HIC Financial Statement Update – There was no change to the financial statement since the October meeting. Mr. Nassar said a balance of \$7,000 remains in the City budget for the HIC, available through June 30, 2016. He discussed a separate account, funds the HIC has raised through various efforts over the years, with a total of \$7,154.27 to be used as needed at any time.

BSA-IYC (International Youth Council) Update – Jack Crawford was not present to update members on the BSA-IYC, but Marion Love reported they are beginning to discuss their participation in MUN 2016. It was noted that each fall, high school students are surveyed to measure their interest in the BSA-IYC. Dr. Love said Mr. Crawford sent her the results of the fall 2015 survey. A new principal is now at Hickory High School, and the IYC effort needs to be re-established there.

Steve McCurry Photography Exhibit – Steve McCurry’s photography exhibit is currently at the Hickory Museum of Art (HMA), through May 2016. Dr. Love noted that HIC donated funds for photography workshops, as a sponsor of the McCurry exhibit. One workshop was held in October, with a second one cancelled due to low attendance. Ginny Zellmer plans to reschedule the second workshop later. Mr. Nassar said Steve McCurry would discuss his photography during an HMA reception in the next few months, and encouraged HIC members to attend. Dr. Love has learned that Mr. McCurry was inside the stadium in Paris when bombs exploded recently, and he was interviewed by the media afterwards. She said it would be interesting to hear his comments on the Paris event when he speaks at HMA.

Christmas Dinner Update – There will be no regular meeting held in December. Marc Swinnen reported the HIC’s Christmas dinner is set for members and guests, a dinner buffet at Thai Lotus in Viewmont, on

Thursday, December 3, 5:30 pm. He reviewed the buffet menu, \$20 per person, including tax and tip. Members interested in participating in “Dirty Santa” should bring a \$10-15 gift to exchange.

Romanian Baptist Church Christmas Concert – The Christmas Concert will be held in the SALT Block Auditorium on Saturday, December 5, 6:30 pm, and the HIC is a sponsor. An additional 40-member choir from Wesleyan College in Tennessee will participate this year, and the concert will be streamed worldwide, live on the internet. Dr. Love suggested the City of Hickory send a media release on the event. Mr. Nassar said information is on the HIC website and Facebook page. Karl Wolfe has sent a paragraph to local churches for their bulletins and choir directors. Mr. Nassar said that bringing in the additional choir this year increases the church’s expenses, and he suggested the HIC provide more than the usual \$500 donation toward the post-concert refreshments. A donation of \$1,000 was suggested. Mr. Nassar reviewed remaining HIC program expenses during the fiscal year, and said that \$2,000 should remain in the budget after these programs are completed. Choir risers for 80 people will be needed, and various members volunteered to help find some to borrow.

Ken Humphreys moved, seconded by Marion Love, for the Hickory International Council to provide a maximum of \$1,000 for expenses for the 2016 Romanian Baptist Church Christmas Concert. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wolfe said Catawba Science Center staff members have requested concert flyers to post on the SALT block for publicity, which Mr. Nassar will provide.

MUN 2016 Update – Mr. Nassar said the PANGEA Model United Nations Conference would be held March 8-9, 2016 on the LRU campus. Dr. Love reported that numerous HIC members are serving on the planning committee, and the process is moving along well this year. She said the website looks good, and three groups have already registered, with 40-45 total participants to-date. She and Mr. Crawford plan a visit to Burke County, with hopes they will participate this year. Mr. Nassar discussed the keynote speaker, a local cardiologist who is from Syria. He will likely discuss how ISIS recruits members using social media and the internet during his keynote address at the Opening Ceremony, 6:00-7:00 pm on Tuesday, March 8, at LRU.

HIC Grants Update – Dr. Humphreys recently mailed a press release and grant application to area civic organizations, the local consulate, churches, etc. He plans to send information again in a few weeks. The grant deadline is December 16, and recipients will be selected in January.

Update on HIC Sub-committees – Mr. Nassar asked if there were other sub-committee updates not included on the agenda. Karl Wolfe discussed the Website Update, saying many updates were made to the webpage since the October meeting. Dr. Love noted the Footcandle Film Society’s website does not include information more than 2-3 months into the future, and asked how the Footcandle foreign films selected by the HIC are promoted. Mr. Nassar said Allen Finley has selected a foreign film for the fall, and the HIC should create a list of films soon to propose for the coming year. The film “Before the Rain” was proposed back in August, and Oscar nominated films are typically considered for viewing in February.

New Business:

IFFC 2016 Update – Mr. Nassar said the next International Film Festival for Children (IFFC) would be held during the week of April 25, 2016. The three local school systems and Hickory Day School have agreed to participate. He is waiting to hear from Concordia and the other private schools; Ms. Oetting volunteered to help contact them.

Mr. Nassar discussed the “Logo Contest” and \$900 total in cash prizes given last year. He suggested either increasing the cash prize amounts or the number of cash prizes awarded. Dr. Humphreys suggested calling

it a “Poster Contest” instead, since the children are actually designing a poster. Members liked the idea of increasing the number of cash prizes, possibly adding numerous Honorable Mention prizes of \$25 or \$50 this year. Prizes of two movie tickets for the Carmike and/or Carolina Theater were also discussed.

Ken Humphreys moved, seconded by Joe Getlein, to increase the Poster Contest prize budget for the 2016 International Film Festival for Children, awarding up to \$1,500 and including additional prizes this year. The motion carried unanimously.

Bond Commission Update – Mr. Nassar is currently serving as the HIC’s representative to the Bond Commission. He said each member serves on a sub-committee, and he serves on the Riverwalk Sub-committee. He discussed their efforts. In February, the HIC representative needs to be re-appointed or replaced for the coming year. The maximum length for all boards and commissions is three years in one-year increments. He asked members to consider if they would be interested in serving, and the appointment will be discussed again at the January meeting.

HIC Attendance Record – Mr. Nassar reviewed the City’s attendance policy, which states that any member absent from three consecutive meetings effectively forfeits their membership. He said the policy is part of Hickory City Code, and is printed on each HIC monthly meeting agenda.

Other Business:

Mr. Nassar and Dr. Love attended a 100 Word Film Festival in Charlotte recently, and each movie had exactly 100 words in it, no more and no less. He said they watched 18 films, and each one was created specifically for the event. They described a few of the student films, which might be appropriate for the IFFC event in the spring.

Efrain Palafox noted that in October Mr. Nassar had discussed that Folkmoot performers from Bangladesh and the Philippines were unable to come to the US in July 2015, due to visa problems, and the Folkmoot USA organization was interested in bringing them to North Carolina for one week in November 2015 to perform for local public schools. Mr. Nassar said it could not be arranged, but may be a future opportunity. Members then discussed the time of day that Hickory’s annual Folkmoot performance is held, and suggested a matinee would be much better for families with children, older attendees, and persons traveling from nearby cities. It might be to Folkmoot’s advantage to move Hickory to a matinee performance, which would allow the performers to arrive back in Asheville earlier that night. Mr. Nassar said it might be necessary to switch from Sunday to another day. He will contact Folkmoot and inquire if it is possible.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on Thursday, January 21, 2016, 5:30 pm in the Moretz Board Room at the Arts & Science Center.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Hani Nassar, Chair
Hickory International Council

Anne Starnes, Minutes Clerk
City of Hickory