

Hickory International Council
Thursday, March 17, 2016, 5:30pm

A regular meeting of the Hickory International Council (HIC) was held on Thursday, March 17, 2016, 5:30pm, in the Keiser Community Room at the Arts & Science Center of Catawba Valley.

Members Present: Hani Nassar, Marion Love, Joe Getlein, Cynthia Ferrell, Marc Swinnen and Ken Humphreys

Members Absent: Gretchen Oetting, Karl Wolfe, Toshiaki Satake, Jack Crawford, Claire McCrea, Becky Mich, Bella Fields, Alex Mezei and Maria Jose Daily

Guests Present: Efrain Palafox, Eric Brandon, Holly Abdelaziz, Mohamed Abdelaziz, Michael Lee and Lee White

Staff Present: Purchasing Manager Bo Weichel and Minutes Clerk Anne Starnes

A quorum was present.

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

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the previous meeting on February 18, 2016 were distributed to members in advance. No additions or corrections were stated. Ken Humphreys moved, seconded by Marion Love, to approve the February minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Introduction of Guests & Board Membership Changes: Mr. Nassar introduced the HIC's recently appointed staff liaison, Bo Weichel. He has worked for the City of Hickory for three years and is their Purchasing Manager. Guests attending introduced themselves: Eric Brandon and Holly Abdelaziz from Lenoir-Rhyne University, Mohamed Abdelaziz, Efrain Palafox, Michael Lee from St. Stephens Elementary School, and Lee White.

Old Business:

HIC Financial Statement Update – Mr. Nassar said \$3,887 currently remains in this year's City budget, and will go toward 2016 MUN expenses and books for the 2016 Great Decisions program. He said a separate budget of \$7,100, funded through local sponsorships, is on hand for expenses from the International Film Festival for Children and other events, as needed.

BSA/International Youth Council (IYC) Update – Marion Love reported for Jack Crawford, who was unable to attend the meeting. She said the IYC members had a team at Model UN, representing South Korea, and two of their members won an award. She and Mr. Crawford plan to hold a wrap-up meeting next week with IYC members who participated.

2016 MUN Summary – Dr. Love said seven of the persons present at the HIC meeting today were involved with MUN this year. It was held on March 8-9 on the LRU campus, with nearly 200 people participating. She said the core planning committee had a wrap-up meeting last night, and their members were pleased with this year's conference. She said that both LRU and BSA gave strong support to the conference. She complimented Efrain Palafox for his role as Secretary General. He said he enjoyed his role, and that a total 14 resolutions were passed by the committees.

Ken Humphreys said the Boy Scouts office had pre-packaged all materials for the schools, which helped smooth the registration process. He said there were 33 total teams, and the Greensboro students had traveled the furthest. Everyone agreed the keynote speaker was excellent.

Mr. Nassar said the next MUN would be held on March 7-8, 2017.

HIC Grants Update – At the meeting last month, Dr. Humphreys suggested changes for next year. He said one question had been asked, discussed, and resolved. He will draft a new set of criteria soon for members to discuss, well ahead of the next grant cycle in late fall of 2016.

2016 IFFC – The International Film Festival for Children (IFFC) will be held the week of April 25, 2016, Monday through Thursday, at three sites in the county. Mr. Nassar said public schools in the three local school systems are participating, along with the private schools Hickory Day School, Hickory Christian Academy, Concordia Christian School, and Montessori School at Sandy Ford. He said 321 films from 49 countries were submitted for consideration. They were narrowed down to 18 festival films, which were sent to the schools for review and approval. The poster contest selection is underway, with the 641 entries now narrowed down to 81 posters. Mr. Nassar will e-mail the final posters to members for voting and winner selections. Cash prizes of \$50, \$100, \$150 and \$200 will be awarded to 12 or 13 student winners in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades. The winners will be announced “live” at the film festival, not in advance. He said adults would receive the checks, either the teachers or parents accompanying the students.

HIC Sub-committees Update – Dr. Love said many HIC decisions are made through sub-committees, such as viewing the 641 film entries, which the entire Council could not possibly view. She announced new members added to the Community Connections/Liaisons and Community Grant/Information Sub-committees. New members are welcome to join additional sub-committees by contacting her. Mr. Nassar said Clise Plant, Chair of the City of Hickory’s Community Relations Council (CRC), spoke with him recently about the success of the CRC spring and fall grant cycles, and she might be able to offer help with the HIC’s grant process in the future.

HIC Work Plan Summary – Mr. Nassar presented the FY 2016-17 Work Plan to Hickory City Council last month, and requested a budget of \$13,500. This represents an increase of \$500 for next year, which would allow the HIC to either increase the two annual community grants from \$500 to \$750, or award three grants of \$500. The 2016-17 Work Plan and Budget will not be approved by City Council until late spring or early summer.

HIC Business Cards – Mr. Nassar shared business card details; Joe Getlein, Cynthia Ferrell and Gretchen Oetting all need to supply the details for their new cards. It was suggested the new cards be made from a matte paper, not slick paper, so that members can easily write on them.

Hickory Day School Request Letter – Mr. Nassar asked if any members had contacted Hickory Day School teacher Nisreen Kothari. Her letter from a few months ago had invited any interested HIC members to visit her class, and talk with students about the culture and celebrations held in their native countries. Ms. Oetting had planned to contact her. Mr. Nassar will e-mail a reminder and Ms. Kothari’s letter.

Strategic Planning Meeting – Mr. Nassar said the Hickory International Council has operated since 2002. They have conducted many of the same activities and events over the years, while adding new ones and continuing to grow. He said holding a Strategic Planning Meeting would provide an opportunity to discuss where the Council has been, where it is now, and where members want the Council to be in the future. He said a 3-4 hour meeting, held on a Saturday, has been suggested. Members discussed holding the meeting in May or June, between the HIC’s spring and summer events. Since the new budget year begins on July 1, sometime during June was preferred. Mr. Nassar will send an e-mail asking for preferred dates in June.

New Business:

SALT Block Auditorium – A reception announcing the re-naming of the SALT Block Auditorium in honor of Frank Drendel, Chairman of Comm-Scope, will be held later today.

Other – Dr. Humphreys said a 19-year old International Boy Scout from Brazil has been assigned to attend Boy Scout Camp this summer. His name is Matheus Semiao, and part of his compensation will come from a prior grant BSA received from the HIC. While attending summer camp, Mr. Semiao will work as a counselor in Citizenship in the World.

Dr. Humphreys said the BSA Executive Board met last night, including business executives, educators, government officials and others from across the 11-county area. BSA regional official Lamar Perry attended, and presented the local scout council with the Gold Award, which is the highest recognition given to councils. Much of the meeting was spent discussing the recent Model UN. Dr. Humphreys said Executive Board members from the 11-county area were all exposed to the success of MUN, with the objective of encouraging other areas to start Model UN programs, with the local one as their example.

Dr. Humphreys said if funds remain after paying expenses, additional international flags would be purchased. He said the flags currently displayed in the Patrick Beaver Memorial Library atrium represent home countries of the original HIC members. He asked members to let him know if their country's flag is not represented.

Eric Brandon said eight LRU students served as committee chairs at Model UN; they were well prepared after attending the three training sessions, and did a great job at the conference. He invited LRU student Holly Abdelaziz to participate in 2017.

Efrain Palafox attended a CVCC Multicultural Affairs Committee meeting yesterday. They requested the HIC participate in the CVCC International Celebration of Nations on Saturday, April 9, 10:00am to 2:00pm, on the CVCC front lawn. Mr. Palafox volunteered to represent the HIC, with a tented table and HIC brochures/event information. Dr. Humphreys will provide his international table flags for the event.

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

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:25pm.

Hani Nassar, Chair
Hickory International Council

Anne Starnes, Minutes Clerk
City of Hickory