

Hickory International Council
Thursday, April 21, 2016, 5:30pm

A regular meeting of the Hickory International Council (HIC) was held on Thursday, April 21, 2016, 5:30pm, in the Keiser Community Room at the Arts & Science Center of Catawba Valley.

Members Present: Hani Nassar, Marion Love, Toshiaki Satake, Cynthia Ferrell, Marc Swinnen and Ken Humphreys

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

Guests Present: Clise Plant, Eric Brandon, Holly Abdelaziz, Kannu Thorpe, Stephanie Huitron, and Joaquim Koerner

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 March Meeting Minutes: Minutes of the previous meeting on March 17, 2016 were distributed to members in advance. No additions or corrections were stated. Ken Humphreys moved, seconded by Marion Love, to approve the March minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Introduction of Guests & Board Membership Changes: Guests were introduced, including Eric Brandon, Holly Abdelaziz, Kannu Thorpe and Stephanie Huitron from Lenoir-Rhyne University; Joaquim Koerner, an educator and director of the Western Piedmont Sister Cities; and, Clise Plant, Chair of the City's Community Relations Council. Mr. Nassar said the Community Relations Council awards numerous community grants each year, spring and fall, and that he had invited Ms. Plant to attend today and see what the HIC does, and offer input on expanding the application process in the future.

At last night's Hickory City Council meeting, Ira Roberts III was appointed as a new member of the HIC.

Old Business:

HIC Financial Statement Update – Mr. Nassar said \$1,800 currently remains in this year's City budget through the end of June, and the Council is in good financial shape. Mr. Weichel said the HIC Work Plan/Budget for next year would be approved in June.

BSA/International Youth Council (IYC) Update – no report

HIC Grants Update – Dr. Humphreys distributed a list of the Previous HIC Grant Rules & Criteria and the Revised HIC Grant Rules & Criteria. Two months ago, he distributed a list of suggested revisions to the rules, and requested additional ideas from HIC members. He said all suggestions received were discussed by sub-committee members. The revised rules and criteria presented were approved unanimously by their members, and are proposed for use beginning next year. Regarding particular revisions, Dr. Humphreys said many organizations do not have \$500 available for the current matching requirement, so the new rules state they may request, and match, up to \$500. Also, the sub-committee proposes that half of the organization's "match" may be made in the form of either a financial or an in-kind match. He said many more grants could likely be awarded in the future, but in smaller amounts, under the new rules.

Mr. Nassar asked Ms. Plant for comments. She said sometimes the most important aspect is simply getting the word out that the grants are available. The Community Relations Council (CRC) awards their grants in both the spring and fall, up to a maximum \$1,500 grant. She said their total annual grants budget is approximately \$12,000 of their total \$17,000 budget, and there is no matching requirement. Dr. Love noted that the most recent CRC grant awards were announced with a photo, in the *City Snippets* publication, enclosed monthly with City water bills. The CRC's staff liaison (Deputy Chief of Police Thurman Whisnant) works with the City's communications department staff to have the CRC's press releases prepared and distributed, and that department also prepares/publishes the monthly *City Snippets*.

Dr. Humphreys said the feedback coming back to him, especially from schools, regarded lowering the amount of the financial match requirement.

Ken Humphreys moved, seconded by Marion Love, for the Hickory International Council to formally adopt the sub-committee's recommended "Revised HIC Grant Rules and Criteria" for the next fiscal year, and to then revisit them and evaluate the impact. There was no further discussion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Nassar will put the revised guidelines on the HIC website.

IFFC 2016 – Mr. Nassar said The International Film Festival for Children (IFFC) would be held the week of April 25, 2016, Monday through Thursday, at three sites in the county, along with Hickory Christian Academy, which has chosen to use their own auditorium for their students. The HIC budget will pay for all bus expenses to transport students to and from the festival sites, and only free films will be shown this year.

- Film selection update – Mr. Nassar reviewed the process of scaling down the 321 films, of 20-minutes or less, received from 49 countries, to the final sets of 15 films being used for the festival. The total viewing time will be 80-90 minutes.

- Poster selection update – A total 641 poster entries were received from school students, and have been scaled down to 30 posters. At the end of the meeting today, members will select the top three posters for each grade level, 4th, 5th and 6th. Contest winners will be announced during the festival, with the unaware student recipients in the audience. Their teachers will be advised in advance.

- Volunteer schedule – Members volunteered to help at the three sites, which Mr. Nassar recorded. He will send volunteers all information they need to help at the sites and lead short discussions with the students after the films.

HIC Sub-committees – Dr. Love said the MUN planning committee has not finished their wrap-up discussion. They have sent an evaluation form to all of the teachers involved, and received 40% back so far.

HIC Business Cards – Mr. Nassar will order HIC business cards soon, and he issued a last call to members needing them. He will distribute them at the next meeting.

Strategic Planning Meeting – Mr. Nassar said he would work on setting a date for the planning meeting, and suggested inviting Hickory City Council members to attend. He asked members to let him know of any others they suggest inviting.

New Business:

Folkmoot USA – The Folkmoot performance will be held on Sunday, July 24, 2016, at 3:00 and 6:00 pm, in the Drendel Auditorium on the SALT Block. Mr. Nassar said that John Teeter, an executive with Pepsi-Cola Bottling in Hickory, plans to seek sponsorships from the local Rotary Clubs, with free tickets given for the later show. Mr. Nassar said the HIC's designated performance would be the 3:00 pm show. Four groups will perform this year.

Foreign Film Schedule – Mr. Nassar said the film “Son of Saul” from Germany won an Oscar at the Academy Awards this year, and would be shown in May to Footcandle Society members as the quarterly foreign film selection. Also, one of the short films from the IFFC will be shown to them in July.

Other Business:

Atrium Flags at Patrick Beaver Memorial Library – Dr. Humphreys said the international flags at the library would be updated, with new ones purchased for members’ home countries that are not currently represented. He circulated a sheet and asked each member to list their name and home country of origin, and to state yes-or-no whether their home country’s flag is currently hanging in the library atrium.

Sister Cities Organization – Mr. Nassar noted that Altenburg, Germany is Hickory’s Sister City and thanked Joaquim Koerner for attending. He thanked Joaquim Koerner for attending. Mr. Koerner represents the Western Piedmont Sister Cities, and their members include the City of Hickory, City of Morganton, and Alexander County. He said they are preparing for a weekend visit by a delegation from Altenburg, over May 26-30, the Memorial Day weekend. He discussed the group of delegates, which includes three award-winning student musicians. A group of five musicians, including the three youth, will present a free public concert on Saturday, May 28, 5:00 – 6:30 pm, in the Grace Chapel on the Lenoir-Rhyne University (LRU) campus, and followed by a reception.

Mr. Koerner said the youth musicians would like to meet other youth musicians while they are here, and he is in the process of contacting John Gordon Ross from the Western Piedmont Symphony. He asked for ideas to publicize the concert locally, and members offered suggestions, including enlisting the help of Dr. John Cheek at LRU, the Hickory Choral Society, and asking local churches for a mention in their church bulletins. He also plans to ask for a mention in the next *City Snippets* publication.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 19, 2016, 5:30pm, in the Moretz Board Room on 2nd floor of the Arts & Science Center.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:35pm, and judging the IFFC posters followed.

Hani Nassar, Chair
Hickory International Council

Anne Starnes, Minutes Clerk
City of Hickory