

**Hickory International Council**  
**Thursday, February 16, 2017, 5:30 pm**

A regular meeting of the Hickory International Council (HIC) was held on Thursday, February 16, 2017, 5:30 pm, in the Moretz Board Room at the Arts & Science Center of Catawba Valley.

**Members Present:** Hani Nassar, Ken Humphreys, Joe Getlein, Bella Fields, Gretchen Oetting, Toshiaki Satake, Justin Davis, Karl Wolfe, and Ibiyemi Carrol

**Members Absent:** Jack Crawford, Ira Roberts, Aaron Kohrs, Claire McCrea, Marion Love, Marc Swinnen, Eric Brandon, and Becky Mich

**Guests Present:** Efrain “Fez” Palafox, David Campbell, David Paist, and Bill Carroll

**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 5:40 pm and thanked everyone for attending.

**Approval of January 19, 2017 Minutes:** Minutes from the previous meeting were distributed to members in advance. Ken Humphreys moved, seconded by Joe Getlein, to approve the January 19, 2017 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**Introduction of Guests/Board Changes:** Mr. Nassar introduced the guests attending.

**HIC Member Oath of Office:** Two additional members took the oath of office and signed their form.

**Old Business:**

**HIC Monthly Financial Statement** – Mr. Nassar said \$10,263.30 remains in the City budget through June 30, 2017, and \$8,459.95 remains in the SpringFest budget.

**HIC Grants Update** – Bo Weichel said the approved HIC Community Grants would go to Hickory City Council for approval at their next meeting. Dr. Humphreys would like to present checks to the grant recipients at the March HIC meeting.

**Model UN Update** – Dr. Humphreys said the final planning meeting for the PANGEA Model United Nations Conference was held last night, prior to the 2-day event on Tuesday, March 7 and Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at LRU. Currently, 167 students from 12 schools are registered to participate, a total 37 teams. He said each team represents a country during the event. The keynote speaker, Keith Humphreys, a full professor at Stanford, has a campus conflict on the event dates, so his address will be webcast to LRU from California.

**Children’s International Film Festival Update** – The film festival for students in grades 4-6 will be held Monday, April 24 through Thursday, April 27, 2017 at three sites in the county. Mr. Nassar said that over 500 short film submissions, from approximately 50 countries, were received for the festival, exceeding the 321 the HIC received last year. The cut off date was yesterday, and members of the sub-committee are

currently viewing the films. He has advised the schools that, following the March HIC meeting, a list of approximately 20 films would be provided to them, and they will then choose the films their students will view. Mr. Nassar said the student poster competition for this year is currently underway, and HIC members will serve as the judges. He expects around 600 poster submissions from the students in grades 4-6, and said there would be four contest winners in each grade, with all 12 winners receiving a cash prize during the festival.

Folkmoot USA – Folkmoot will be held in Drendel Auditorium on Sunday, July 23, 2017. The 3:00 pm performance will be for the public, with a private performance for the sponsors at 6:00 pm.

Great Decisions Discussions – Mr. Nassar received the books for Great Decisions 2017. The program will be held on Tuesday nights, September 5 through October 24, 2017. Twenty-five (25) people are currently registered, with a maximum of 31 participants. He said that one guest speaker is confirmed, and the speaker fees of \$100 would again come from the HIC budget. Information on the weekly topics is available on the HIC website.

HIC Website Update – The new HIC website was put on the screen for viewing and Mr. Nassar asked if the slider is too large and/or takes up too much space. He requested that members use their own technology to view the website, following the meeting, and let him know next week if changes should be made.

HIC Brochure Update – The most recent draft of the brochure was shared with members. Gretchen Oetting reported for their sub-committee, which includes Ms. Oetting, Bella Fields, Karl Wolfe, Marion Love, Eric Brandon and Efrain “Fez” Palafox. They met over a period of 5 weeks and made various changes to the original brochure, including creating a new front panel for the 3-panel brochure; changing from b/w to a full-color brochure; adding color photos; replacing the application form with the HIC website address and QR code; and, adding information on various HIC programs and events. The application form should be available on the website, but Mr. Nassar will check to be certain; if it is not, it will be added.

Ms. Oetting said the sub-committee’s goal is to take suggestions for any changes from the full Council, and bring a final draft back for approval at the April HIC meeting. She asked members to e-mail her with any questions. Mr. Nassar asked if they would like the final draft e-mailed to all members for review, prior to the April meeting. She will ask the other sub-committee members at their meeting next week.

HIC & Footcandle Film Society (FFS) – Mr. Nassar has not spoken with Alan Jackson, but said that he expects the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter FFS foreign film during March will be the winning foreign film from the Academy Awards in February.

International Seminars & Activities – Mr. Nassar said Aaron Kohrs had provided a summary from the two “community conversations” that were held recently. Family International Night was held January 23, with refreshments provided by Chick-fil-A, and a Brexit Seminar was held February 6, with good coverage provided by the *Hickory Daily Record*. Both events were successful, and he said these would be continued as other opportunities develop.

Women’s International Day – Dr. Marion Love will be one of the award recipients recognized during Women’s International Day on Wednesday, March 8, 2017, 6:00 to 7:00 pm at Hickory Museum of Art. Mr. Nassar asked members to plan to attend and, if possible, participate by bringing an international dessert to share.

FY 2017-18 Work Plan Discussion – Next year’s work plan will be submitted to the City tomorrow, following discussion and approval by members. The seven (7) objectives were each discussed by the

members, with minor changes made and recorded by Mr. Nassar. A budget increase of \$2,000 is being requested.

Ken Humphreys moved, seconded by Karl Wolfe, to approve the FY 2017-18 Work Plan as presented, with the changes discussed. There was no further discussion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Nassar will make the approved changes, and present the FY 2017-18 Work Plan to City Council on Tuesday, March 7, 7:00 pm, in Council Chambers.

**New Business:**

**Presentation on Economic Growth** – David Paist shared a PowerPoint presentation he created on “The Role of Diversity in Local Economic Growth.” He discussed the local demographic problem, saying there is a growing population gap in Hickory/Catawba County, which must be addressed. He said that jobs would not appear without there being qualified local employees available, and that major growth areas should include both jobs and people. Rather than the HIC having an objective for Hickory to be an international city, he said a better objective would be to become an internationally-minded city. He made the point that growth is imperative, and another 30,000 residents are needed in Hickory/Catawba County over the next 15-years; local residents need to be retained, but diverse populations also need to move here.

Mr. Paist said there are various strategies to address the situation and discussions are on-going by the local governments and Chamber of Commerce, but that there is no one single coherent plan to bring about actual change. In the end, he said local governments cannot solve the problem, but the community can, and a new mindset is needed to find a solution. Mr. Paist said that defining the exact problem to be solved should be done first, and then specific solutions could be developed to bring about effective changes. He said he hoped his presentation would make HIC members think about the topic, and Mr. Nassar thanked him for sharing the presentation.

**Other Business:** none

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 16, 2017, 5:30 pm, in the Moretz Board Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Arts & Science Center.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

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Hani Nassar, Chair  
Hickory International Council

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Anne Starnes, Minutes Clerk  
City of Hickory