



Wednesday, November 13, 2024

A Regular Meeting of the Sister City Commission was held in the Council Chambers, 6615 Passons Boulevard, Pico Rivera, California.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Perez called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Arellano, Perez, Ascencio, Tirado

ABSENT: Lopez

STAFF PRESENT: Julia Gonzalez, Deputy Director of Community & Economic Development

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The pledge of allegiance was led by Commissioner Arellano.

PUBLIC HEARING(S): None

NON-AGENDA ITEMS PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

CONSENT CALENDAR: Approval of Minutes of the Sister City Commission meeting of:

1. January 31, 2024

Commissioner Tirado motioned to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Arellano seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of the Sister City Commission meeting of:

2. April 10, 2024

Chairperson Perez asked for clarification regarding Councilmember Camacho stating that the city entered into a Friendship City with an Armenian city.

Deputy Director Gonzalez responded that it was Karvachar, Republic of Artsakh and was entered into a Friendship City in 2019.

Chairperson Perez added that the goal for Sister City is to be connected to multiple countries and asked if there was the opportunity to reconnect with them.

Deputy Director Gonzalez responded that this was a Friendship City established through a former councilmember, and it may be a bit challenging to contact. Chairperson Perez

responded that the city has an Armenian school and suggested reaching out to them to reconnect.

Commissioner Ascencio asked for clarification regarding the difference between Sister City and Friendship City.

Chairperson Perez responded that a Friendship City is a less formal relationship between two cities compared to a Sister City.

Commissioner Arellano motioned to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Tirado seconded his motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of the Sister City Commission meeting of:

3. June 12, 2024

Commissioner Tirado motioned to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Arellano seconded his motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

SISTER CITY COMMISSION REPORTS:

1. Commissioners Reports:

Chairperson Perez provided an update on the Sister City International Conference, which took place on October 15–17, 2024, in Long Beach. One of the events was held at the Conrad Hotel in Downtown Los Angeles (DTLA). He also shared that the next conference would be held in Japan in September, coinciding with the World's Fair. Information has been shared with the city and will also be distributed to the Commissioners.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Staff Request:

- a. Staff is requesting the Commissioners state their names before speaking for minute-recording purposes.
- b. Staff will be emailing the agenda one week prior to the meeting.

Commissioner Arellano asked if they could suggest topics to be included into the agendas.

Deputy Director Gonzalez recommended that requests be made during the Sister City meetings.

Chairperson Perez clarified that only items listed on the agenda may be discussed or voted upon.

2. Goals/Projects – Irma Tirado:

Commissioner Tirado requested that the Commission come together to plan fundraising events and other projects. She suggested ideas such as the *Estudiantina de Guadalupe* from San Luis Potosí, the *Hijos Ausentes* (an informal group of undocumented immigrants), and local library expositions.

Commissioner Arellano expressed support for collaborating on the planning of fundraising events and projects. He also encouraged community outreach and inquired about the resources the city could offer.

Commissioner Ascencio asked about the process for accounting for the funds.

Chairperson Perez responded that there are challenges for the Commission in initiating these events, primarily because most people are not aware of the Sister City Commission. He encouraged the Commissioners to make a list of events they would like to prioritize.

Commissioner Ascencio asked if the city could provide banners for these events.

Chairperson Perez stated that, as the Commission is still in its establishment phase, they cannot demand items from the city.

Deputy Director Gonzalez clarified that city staff's role in the Sister City Commission is to facilitate meetings and record minutes. She emphasized that it is the Commission's responsibility to engage with other Sister Cities or organize events. However, specific requests can be submitted through the chain of command, and staff will await further direction. Regarding fundraising, she stated that the appropriate protocol must be confirmed before any fundraising begins.

Commissioner Tirado suggested that their first event should be a Sister City exposition at the local library, park, or a city-sponsored event to promote community outreach.

Commissioner Arellano expressed support for collaborating on an exposition. Commissioner Ascencio stated that, at a minimum, a banner could be requested from the city.

Commissioner Arellano responded that the first step should be agreeing on a community outreach event, after which a request could be made.

Commissioner Ascencio also asked if the city could provide flyers.

Deputy Director Gonzalez explained that since there is no Sister City budget, a request for such resources would need to be made through a formal motion.

Commissioner Arellano suggested collaborating with an existing city event, which would not require additional city resources.

Chairperson Perez noted that the city indirectly supports the Commission by providing city facilities for their fundraising events. He mentioned the *El Grito* event, pointing out

that the Commission is rarely informed about it despite its potential as a significant opportunity to raise awareness.

Deputy Director Gonzalez offered to provide the Commission with the 2025 Calendar of Events to keep them informed. If the Commission wishes to participate in any events, she could either connect them with Parks & Recreation staff for further discussion or handle the discussions on their behalf.

Commissioner Arellano suggested that the Commission could also make a motion to request that the City Council provide a list of dates for Sister City visitors in addition to the Calendar of Events.

Deputy Director Gonzalez agreed to make that request and wait for further direction.

Chairperson Perez expressed a desire to build a stronger relationship with the City Council and the community, emphasizing the importance of unity and collaboration.

Chairperson Perez asked how the Sister City Commission could get an article in the *Profile*.

Deputy Director Gonzalez responded that she could prepare a summary of the Sister City Commission, and if approved, staff could request its inclusion in the *Profile*.

Commissioner Arellano suggested creating a social media post to educate residents about Sister Cities.

Commissioner Ascencio inquired whether all these ideas were on hold until Deputy Director Gonzalez received clarification.

Deputy Director Gonzalez stated that she must obtain confirmation before proceeding with anything financial, which would require a formal motion. However, she foresaw no issues with using a facility or setting up a table for an event. She added that the Commission should solidify their ideas by making a motion with specific dates for execution.

Commissioner Tirado asked Chairperson Perez if he was aware of a Sister City Week event organized by Sister City International.

Chairperson Perez stated that he was not aware of such an event but noted that some cities do hold similar events. He added that the *Cinco de Mayo* event would be a great opportunity for showcasing the Commission's efforts.

Commissioner Tirado reiterated that the *Hijos Ausentes* group could be an excellent starting point for community outreach.

Chairperson Perez clarified that the group must address the Commission directly, as commissioners are not permitted to speak on behalf of the Association. He suggested that the Commissioners create a list of the events they would like to prioritize.

Chairperson Perez then made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Deputy Director Julia Gonzalez asked if January 15th, 2025, would work for the commission as the next commission date.

All the commissioners agreed.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Chairperson Perez adjourned the Sister City Commission meeting, seconded by Commissioner Tirado at 7:00 p.m. There being no objection, it was so ordered.

Bob Perez, Chairperson

ATTEST:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct report of the proceedings of the Sister City Commission Regular Meeting on November 13, 2024, and approved by the Sister City Commission on January 15, 2025.

Alvaro Betancourt, Director
Community & Economic Development Department