



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* (immigrants and citizens), 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 February 3, 2025.

Alvaro Betancourt, Director
Community & Economic Development Department



Wednesday, January 15, 2025

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: Ascencio, Macias Arellano, Tirado, Lopez, Perez

ABSENT: None

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The pledge of allegiance was led by Vice Chairperson Tirado.

PUBLIC HEARING(S): None

NON-AGENDA ITEMS PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

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

1. November 13, 2025

Vice Chairperson Tirado clarified that her use of the term "undocumented" in reference to the *Hijos Ausentes* was unintentional. She further emphasized that they are immigrants and citizens originating from Chapala.

Vice Chairperson Tirado motioned to approve the minutes with the changes requested, and Commissioner Aldo-Macias seconded the motion.

SISTER CITY COMMISSION REPORTS:

Commissioner Ascencio was contacted by an individual from San Luis Potosí requesting the contact information of the Sister City Commissioners and City Council members. She requested the Commission's consent to share this information.

Chairperson Perez recommended that the San Luis Potosi representative send a formal email or letter requesting the information so that there is no miscommunication or misunderstanding.

The Commission expressed agreement in sharing their email addresses.

Vice Chairperson Perez stated that the city should determine if releasing contact information was permitted.

Deputy Director Gonzalez responded that if the Commission agrees then it is permissible.

Chairperson Perez provided a report on Sister Cities International regarding the upcoming Youth Trilateral Leadership Summit. The summit focuses on youth leadership and is open to all interested participants. Chairperson Perez will forward the relevant information to the city.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2025 Sister City Program Ideas (Commission Discussion)

Chairperson Perez asked if the Commission had any event ideas.

Deputy Director Gonzalez stated that Commissioner Macias Arellano suggested including an article in the profile. In response, she provided the submission deadlines and shared an old article as a sample. She also noted that the open house would need to be planned before making any amendments to the article.

Vice Chairperson Tirado requested the Calendar of Events for the City.

Deputy Director Gonzalez stated she would email them that information by the next day and that the calendar is a general timeline and dates tend to change.

Commissioner Ascencio asked if the city would provide them with Sister City banners.

Deputy Director Gonzalez stated that while there is no Sister City Commission budget, the banner request appears to be minimal and could likely be completed in-house. However, the Commission would need to hold a vote to place a request for approval.

Deputy Director Gonzalez stated that it would be best for the Commission to provide specific details for the banner before making a request.

Director Betancourt added that the Commission prioritize obtaining business cards. Once the Commission creates their own calendar of events, they can then discuss any additional needs.

Chairperson Perez expressed agreement with this.

2. Sister City Commissioners to attend January 28th, 2025, City Council Meeting – Commissioner Macias Arellano

Chairperson Perez stated that Commissioner Macias Arellano is scheduled to attend the meeting.

Commissioner Macias Arellano expressed agreement.

3. Commissioners to Attend City Council Meetings for 2025 Schedule (attached)

The Commission was provided with a printed schedule of the Commissioners to Attend the City Council meetings in 2025.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Profile article/sample:

Chairperson Perez asked if Sister City Commission Meeting dates will be added to the profile in the future.

Director Betancourt responded that the Sister City Commission meetings are not always held as scheduled due to lack of agenda items so it would be best for the community to rely on the website for accurate meeting dates.

2. Calendar of Events: Previously discussed.

3. Business Cards: Previously discussed.

4. Sister City Contact Information:

Deputy Director Gonzalez stated that during the last Sister City Commission meeting, the Commission requested staff to provide phone numbers for partner Sister Cities. However, she was unable to locate them as the staff who had the information is no longer with the city. She added that she reached out to Elena Galvez from Sister Cities International, who has offered to assist.

Chairperson Perez asked if Ray Chavez left any information.

Deputy Director Gonzalez responded that they could not locate any information.

Commissioner Ascencio asked if, in the future, they wish to host an event, whether they would need to notify the city if money is collected.

Deputy Director Gonzalez responded that the Finance Department approved the Commission to fundraise. The Commission would collect and keep track of the funds collected. She suggested that the Commission vote for a treasurer. Once a treasurer is selected, the Commission could keep track of the funds and then provide it to city staff, and it would be kept in a separate account.

Chairperson Perez requested this topic be placed on the next agenda.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

2025 Sister City Meeting Schedule:

Chairperson Perez asked if the Commission had reviewed the schedule and whether everyone agreed with it.

Director Betancourt clarified that although the Municipal Code specifies holding one meeting per month, the Commission is not obliged to meet if there is no agenda. If the Commission decides to meet every other month or quarterly, city staff would support those meetings.

Commissioner Macias Arellano asked when the deadline is to let city staff know that they would not hold a meeting.

Deputy Director Gonzalez responded that a one-week notice is required for agenda postings or cancellation notices.

Director Betancourt clarified that the meeting schedule was created to inform the City Clerk, so that if members of the public ask to attend, they can be provided with a date and the room can be reserved. However, if there are no agenda items to discuss, he advises the Commission to reach out to the Chairperson, who should then inform city staff to cancel the meeting.

Vice Chairperson Tirado emphasized that due to the reorganization and election of a treasurer she would like to keep the February 12, 2025, meeting as scheduled.

Chairperson Perez stated he would reach out to city staff one week prior if there are no agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Chairperson Perez adjourned the Sister City Commission meeting at 6:34 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 January 15, 2025 and approved by the Sister City Commission on February 12, 2025.

Alvaro Betancourt, Director
Community & Economic Development Department