

## **Partner City Advisory Board**

Meeting Minutes – **March 4, 2026**

City Commission Room, 1101 Poyntz Avenue, Manhattan, Kansas

**Attendance:** Vern Wirka, Liz Beikmann, Dantia MacDonald, Alexandria Zakrzewski, and Ed Klimek.

**Absent:** Mary Cassibry.

**Students attending:** None

**Staff:** Recreation Superintendent - Sydney De Hart, Recreation Supervisor - TJ Micheals.

1. Call to Order – Vern called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.
2. Public Comment – No public comments.
3. Board Member Comments
  - a. Vern: Attended online I-70 Czech round table. Opportunities regarding grant programs, information is online and available and able to share as needed. Artwork at the Nelson Atkins museum in Kansas City –Timeless Mucha – April 18<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>. Czech Republic offers summer courses for language emersion, at Charles University and several other locations in Czech Republic. Czech Republic is soliciting photos and artwork to show work between them and the United States.
  - b. Ed: Could funds be applicable for grant applications. Vern says yes.
4. Consent Agenda
  - a. Approval of Minutes – January 7, 2026 – Liz motions to approve, Dantia seconds. No discussion – motion passes 5-0.
5. General Agenda
  - a. Discussion: Fiscal Sponsorship with Greater Manhattan Community Foundation – Ed – account is approved, opening balance is active. Goal is to participate in Grow Green Match day. Ed and Dantia, as part of that GMCF board, could reach out and participate. Looking for ways to generate funds. Jeff Sackrider with WTC will serve on the board – he has worked on murals in the community.  
Dantia – Grant for Diehl fund – deadline March 30<sup>th</sup>. Looking for the angle that helps establish the grant guidelines. Vern recommended to view the Partner City purpose. Looking back to previous minutes from initiation of the board to assist with the grant writing. Recommended to look into the history of Joe Martin as a talking point, he was a professor at K-State who donated money.
  - b. Discussion: Art Exchange – Dantia – currently on hold. Alexandria is happy to help assist moving forward if needed.
  - c. Discussion: School Exchange – Liz – nothing new to report.
  - d. Discussion: Mural – Reference in previous discussion. Ed mentioned next step is fundraising and artist, and get sketches and costs.

e. Discussion – Members Serving on a Foundation Board – decided, Ed and Liz will serve.

f. New Business

Ed: Curious about flag plaza, upgrading and keeping it looking good. More identity, identifying our sister city more prominently. Currently doesn't say much about our relationship with Czech Republic. Curious if we can place something on the flag poles where the symbol. – Sydni will connect with Parks staff to see what could be placed on there for additional information.

- Parades for awareness of group. St. Patrick's Parade on March 21<sup>st</sup> in Aggieville. Stay in Wilson Parade and Christmas Parade. Mentioned in the event we'd like to participate in the future. Vern mentioned anything that promotes our efforts, and it's something we can consider. Wilson event is the last full weekend in July. Vern will get entered into the parade. Apples from the Little Apple.
- Reminder to mention quorum and open meeting.
- Vern – promoting what the board is, does, and connection to K-State, how we can connect with them. Connections at K-State. How we can better provide information.
- K-State orchestra did an event with Czech music. Municipal band could put the word out.

6. Next Meeting – Wednesday April 1<sup>st</sup>, City Commission Room.

7. Adjournment – Liz motioned to adjourn, Vern seconds, 5-0.