

Partner City Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes – June 7, 2017

City Commission Room, 1101 Poyntz Avenue, Manhattan, Kansas

Attendance: Ed Klimek, Glen Lojka, Liz Beikmann, Vern Wirka, Jan Janasek, Ron Janasek, Barry Michie, and Martha Seaton. Staff: Gary Fees.

At 4:05 p.m., Chair Ed Klimek called the meeting to order.

Klimek welcomed everyone to the meeting.

After discussion, Wirka moved to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2017, meeting. Beikmann seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Klimek provided an update on several of the Czech students and their summer travel plans. He distributed a brochure on the “Rural Roots and Dusty Boot,” Wilson After Harvest Czech Festival, to be held July 28 and 29, in Wilson, Kansas. He stated that Christy Dowling and her family have worked hard on planning the Festival this year and have invited us to attend.

Lojka provided additional background information on the Czech Festival and an update on Christy Dowling and her family. He and Wirka provided a recap on the Czech Festival held in Cuba, Kansas and highlighted the Czech band and Czech language class that was taught by a professor from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. Lojka stated that Sara Vytlačil, Kansas Czech Queen, former member of the Partner City Advisory Committee and graduate of K-State, would be at the Republic County Fair on Thursday, August 3, 2017. He also provided an update on the National Czech Festival held in Wilbur, Nebraska the first weekend in August.

Lojka presented today’s program and provided information about his family history and his grandfather, who was a stone carver and mason. He talked about his stone and woodcarvings that he has completed and presented a hand-made carving of a bison created from a single piece of wood. He also provided information on his carvings in Cuba, Kansas. The committee and those present thanked Lojka for an outstanding presentation and for sharing his talent.

Wirka shared an article that was published several years ago in the Kansas State Collegian about the relationship between Manhattan and the Czech Republic. The article focused on the initial discussions that occurred between former Mayor Ed Klimek and former professor at Kansas State University, Dr. Joe Barton-Dobenim, in developing and selecting our Partner City Dobřichovice. The article also featured the Flag Plaza, with representatives from our Partner City in the Czech Republic, the City of Manhattan, and many community members attending the event. He also stated that Joe Spellerberg, who hosted a polka show for almost 60 years on KHUB in Fremont, Nebraska, had died.

Klimek and the committee discussed re-starting an elementary exchange program with a USD 383 elementary school and an elementary school with our Partner City, similar to the program with Amanda Arnold several years ago.

After discussion, the committee decided to not meet in July.

Klimek thanked everyone for attending. He announced that the next Partner City meeting would be at 4:00 p.m., on August 2, 2017.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.