

Partner City Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes – April 3, 2019

Harmon Conference Room, 1101 Poyntz Avenue, Manhattan, Kansas

Attendance: Vern Wirka, Liz Beikmann, Dolly Anderson, Ed Klimek, Jan Janasek, Ron Janasek, Mary Ann Buhler, Mila Valenta, and Karen Wirka. Staff: Gary Fees.

At 12:00 p.m., Chair Vern Wirka called the meeting to order.

Chair Wirka welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made with our Partner City representatives in Dobřichovice. Joining the meeting via Zoom were Mayor Petr Hampl, former Mayor Vaclav Kratochvil, and community and business leader Jan Miksatka. Wirka thanked Hampl, Kratochvil and Miksatka for joining the Committee members and friends. He provided an update on the Partner City Committee.

Ed Klimek provided an update on the Manhattan community and discussed the Flag Plaza in City Park that former mayor Kratochvil participated in the dedication. He also discussed various activities and events that Kratochvil and his wife attended as well as others that were visiting from the Czech Republic.

Liz Beikmann provided information on the exchange between Kansas State University and several universities in Prague. She stated that there were 17 students attending Kansas State from the Czech Republic last year.

Kratochvil, Miksatka and Hampl provided background information on their professional careers as well as current and past positions held with the City of Dobřichovice. They also provided updates on their community and highlighted local restaurants and a new school for children. Kratochvil said that he was very pleased to be part of the celebration in Manhattan and enjoyed his time visiting old friends and meeting people in Manhattan. Miksatka stated that he is a resident of Dobřichovice, discussed his business in the Czech Republic and said that he travels to Kansas City on business. He stated that he is a graduate of Kansas State University and lived in Jardine in 2004-05 when he was living in Manhattan. Hampl said that he has been the Mayor of Dobřichovice since 2014 and was an administrator of the City prior to that for 16 years. He said they are hosting a wine festival the last weekend of August and provided background information and updates on their community. He also stated that Dobřichovice also has a Partner City relationship with Villieu-Loyes-Mollon, France and well as Manhattan. Hampl, Miksatka and Kratochvil invited everyone in Manhattan to visit them and to plan a trip to see them, the sites and great views of Dobřichovice and Prague.

Mary Ann Buhler said the Flint Hills Masterworks Chorale performed in Dobřichovice in 2009. She said that she and her husband visited Vaclav in Dobřichovice in 2012 and had a great time and enjoyed a wonderful tour of the city.

Mila Valenta discussed her travel plans to visit the Czech Republic, speaking in the Czech language.

Committee members and those present shared with representatives from Dobřichovice that they were considering hosting a Czech festival in late September or October in 2020. Wirka provided

additional information and stated that a festival was in the discussion phase at this point, but asked for input and suggestions. The Committee and Partner City representatives discussed possible venues including entertainment and music groups that could include children theater groups, talked about the history of the Kansas Czech Queens, discussed businesses that may participate, mentioned a class to share the Czech language, and of course, Czech food. There was also discussion about the Czech band, Trehusk, which traveled to Manhattan with Kratochvil and the potential to invite the band members to Manhattan for a Czech festival. After further discussion, the consensus was to continue the dialog of a Czech festival and to coordinate ideas, timeframe and information between the two communities. Representatives voiced their appreciation for the relationship that has been established between the two communities and encouraged further exchanges and future visits.

Buhler announced the Spring Concert for the Flint Hills Masterworks Chorale would be at 7:30 p.m., May 8, at the First United Methodist Church.

Wirka provided an update on festival dates scheduled in Wilson, Kan. and Wilbur, Neb. He also discussed reaching out to the Chamber and Convention and Visitors Bureau to discuss ideas for a festival event.

Wirka announced that the next Partner City meeting would be at 4:00 p.m., May 1, 2019, in the Harmon Conference Room at City Hall.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.