

**Red Wing Sister Cities Commission  
Workshop  
Community Development Building  
August 27, 2025**

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**Members Present:** Commissioners Ingrid Hokanson, Renee Kreye, Shawn Niebeling, Maura Curry, and Danielle S DeWitt; Student Advisory Member Nisha Y Catarino Santiago

**Members Absent:** Chair Austin Knott; Commissioners Tammy Jaynes, Tao Peng, Kim Clancy, Sheena Whitlock, and Ashlyn Werner

**Others Present:** Lisa Acker, Staff Liaison; Vicki Jo Lambert, Council Liaison

**1. Roll Call**

The workshop was convened by Staff Liaison Acker at 5:17 p.m. She noted that the absences of Commissioners Peng, Clancy, Werner, and Whitlock were excused.

**2. Public Comment**

**A. Welcome to New Commission Members.**

Staff Liaison Acker welcomed Student Advisory Member Nisha Y Catarino Santiago.

**3. Workshop Items**

**A. April Finance Report.**

Staff Liaison Acker reviewed the Finance Report. She detailed recent expenses related to the Ikata student exchange. She reported that more funds were raised by the students than were needed for the trip. She stated that she will propose refunding the \$250 deposits back to the families during the next Sister Cities Commission meeting. She provided a Sister Cities Commission budget update.

**B. Ikata Student Exchange Committee Report.**

The tree planting activity was discussed. Committee members discussed the Ikata delegation visit to Red Wing. Challenges related to Ikata chaperone expenses and activities were discussed. The Sister Cities gift display at the Historical Society was discussed. Student Advisory Member Catarino Santiago described her experiences as an Ikata student exchange participant. Suggestions for potential activities during next year's exchange were offered.

Staff Liaison Acker suggested compiling a list of donors to thank. Ikata exchange student presentations to community organizations were discussed. Council Liaison Lambert indicated that she will ask Council President Janie Farrar about a presentation to the City Council.

Planning and recruiting activities for next year's Ikata student exchange were discussed. The chaperone application and selection process was detailed.

Potential changes to the trip duration and tour stops in Japan were discussed.

It was suggested to explore the possibility of procuring garden stakes listing the year that each tree was planted.

**C. YAAS Committee Report.**

Staff Liaison Acker reported that the 2026 theme has not yet been announced. She suggested connecting with Red Wing teacher Kristin Bray regarding her involvement in the program. Student age groups, eligibility, and the YAAS categories were discussed. It was suggested that the committee explore ways to engage more students and improve the quality of entries. The judging process and monetary awards were discussed. Council Liaison Lambert provided suggestions in terms of nontraditional approaches to engage students.

**D. Adult Delegation/Friendship Exchange Committee.**

Past adult delegations were discussed. Staff Liaison provided a 2026 adult delegation update. She stated that Commissioner Peng has offered to continue to serve on the committee as a community volunteer. She noted that the Sister Cities Commission cannot participate in fundraising activities. Potential adult delegation participants were discussed.

**E. Committee Assignments and/or Adjustments.**

Staff Liaison Acker discussed committee membership and referenced quorum considerations. It was noted that Student Advisory Member Catarino Santiago can serve on committees and that this will not count toward the quorum. Communication between committee members was clarified.

Commission members expressed their committee assignment preferences.

Council Liaison Lambert commented regarding the important mission and work of the Sister Cities Commission.

**4. Adjournment**

The workshop adjourned at 6:30 p.m.