



Our Vision

Red Wing thrives as a vibrant, creative river town that values its natural environment, welcomes all people, and unlocks opportunity for everyone.

Our Mission

We strive to create a sustainable, healthy, accessible, resilient, and equitable community where every person feels at home.

Meeting Announcement and Agenda Sister Cities Commission Special Meeting City Council Chambers, 315 West 4th Street, Red Wing, MN & Virtually Monday, November 17, 2025, at 5:15 PM

This meeting will be held in the City Hall Council Chambers and virtually via Webex at the same time. Members of the public can join this meeting either in person at City Hall or virtually. To join this meeting via Webex, [click this link](#). To join via telephone, please dial (415) 655-0001. Enter access code 2554 712 9799 and password 2025 when prompted.

1. Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

4. Approval of Agenda

5. Approval of Minutes

5.A. Motion and second to approve meeting minutes from October 22, 2025

6. Public Comment

We now invite anyone to share their thoughts on a topic that is not on the agenda. We welcome all opinions and ideas. We appreciate you stating your name at the lectern, and please remember that personal attacks may be ruled out of order. You will have up to three minutes to comment, and we appreciate your time in coming tonight.

7. Motions & General Business

7.A. Discuss and approve the interview committees recommendation for the 2026 Ikata Student Exchange Chaperone.

8. Communication Items

8.A. 1. The theme has been released for the 2026 Young Artist and Author Showcase. Renee will be reaching out to committee members to begin working on this. However, Renee's term ends on December 31, 2025, so we will need someone else to serve as Chair of this committee after that date. It would be great if this committee could meet and get working on this prior to the end of the year. The YAAS deadline is April 1, 2026, so our deadline will need to be prior to that, likely March 1, 2026, so winners could be announced at our

March meeting and entries submitted to the international contest in time. Will be looking for a report or update at December meeting.

2. We have received an official invite for a Mayoral delegation to visit Quzhou around the time of September 28, 2026. The Mayor and City Administrator have indicated they are in support of forming a delegation from Red Wing to visit Quzhou. We will need to begin these discussions and planning in January.

3. Staff has received an e-mail from the Goodhue County Historical Society regarding possible permanent retention of the Sister Cities gift items if the City Council and Commission are in agreement. Any agreement would formally transfer these items to them but allow us to borrow items for displays or events. Looking for consensus and we can take a formal vote at the December meeting.

4. There will be a parent/student informational meeting for the 2026 Ikata Exchange program held on Monday, December 1, 2025, at Red Wing High School. Information is on our website and Facebook page. This will provide more information for prospective students and parents applying this year. The student application window is open until Friday, December 5, 2025.

9. Adjournment

Accommodations for signing interpreter, Braille, large print, etc. can be made. Call City Hall at 385.3600 seven days prior to the need. Hearing assistance devices are available during meetings.

**Red Wing Sister Cities Commission
Special Meeting
City Council Chambers
October 22, 2025**

Members Present: Chair Austin Knott, Commissioners Tammy Jaynes, Tao Peng, Ingrid Hokanson, Renee Kreye, Ashlyn Werner, Danielle DeWitt, and Sheena Whitlock; Student Advisory Member Nisha Catarino Santiago

Members Absent: Commissioners Shawn Niebling and Kim Clancy (excused absence)

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

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Jaynes called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Knott led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Roll call was conducted. Commissioners Jaynes, Peng, Hokanson, Kreye, Knott, Werner, DeWitt, Whitlock, and Student Advisory Member Catarino Santiago were in attendance.

Commissioners Niebling and Clancy were absent and unexcused.

4. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Chair Knott, seconded by Commissioner Jaynes, to approve the agenda as drafted. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8:0.

5. Approval of Minutes

A. Approve the Minutes from the September 24, 2025, Meeting.

A motion was made by Chair Knott, seconded by Commissioner Peng, to approve the minutes as drafted. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8:0.

6. Public Comment

No one wished to address the Commission.

7. Committee Reports & General Business

A. Finance Report.

Staff Liaison Acker reviewed the October 2025 Finance Report. She stated that the 248 fund had a change because the money was returned to families in the form of a check from the excess funds raised. She noted a Sister Cities Commission budget balance of \$2,924.05.

A motion was made by Commissioner Peng, seconded by Chair Knott, to adopt the Finance Report as presented. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8:0.

B. Ikata Student Exchange Committee Updates/Report.

1. Commissioner DeWitt explained that there was one applicant to be the chaperone. She stated that after the interview, the applicant denied the proposal to go on the trip. Commissioner Jaynes added that one application came in late, but the Commission needs to decide if applications should be opened back up and to set a different deadline. Staff Liaison Acker explained several options for the Commission, but a decision on which one needs to be reached for the chaperone to sit in on student interviews in December. Chair Knott agreed that a discussion should take place, so a decision could be made tonight as to what to do. Commissioners discussed the best options for obtaining a chaperone and concluded on opening the application window back up.

Staff Liaison Acker shared some meeting options for finalizing the chaperone. Commissioners discussed what would work best. Staff Liaison stated that the meeting would be moved from November 19 to November 17, with the idea that it would be a brief meeting and then convene to a workshop if needed. Chair Knott asked about the deadline for applications if the window for applications is opened back up. Staff Liaison suggested a deadline of November 7, with room for interviews. Commissioner Jaynes added that interviews will take place on November 10, 12, and 14.

A motion was made by Chair Knott to reopen the chaperone application window from October 22 until November 7. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt, a vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 8:0.

Staff Liaison Acker stated that the applications would get back up on the City website, the Facebook page would reflect the new date, and past applicants would be reached out to.

2. Staff Liaison Acker shared where the Commission is with the video process, and is hoping to wrap it up by the end of next week. Commissioners Jaynes and DeWitt noted that they would come in to interview to add to the video. Commissioner DeWitt clarified that the video would be shared with the whole high school and potentially the middle school as well.

Staff Liaison Acker suggested that, with all the outreach that is being done, there be an informational night for those who are interested in more information, potentially at the beginning of December. She added that the student application deadline is December 5.

Commissioner DeWitt asked if December 5 was the original deadline or if that was the deadline that was set back, as there needs to be enough time for families. Commissioners discussed when the deadline should be for an informational night, applications, and interviews before the December 17 meeting. Commissioners suggested having a table at the upcoming high school conferences, October 28, with more information. Staff Liaison Acker stated that there is a lot of material available to have at conferences if wanted. Commissioner DeWitt and Hokanson volunteered to sit at a table at the high school for conferences to share information.

Staff Liaison Acker clarified that an informational meeting would be on December 1 at the high school at 6:30 p.m., applications due on December 5, interviews the week of December 8 through 13, and selection at the December 17 meeting. Student Advisory Member Nisha Catarino Santiago suggested having refreshments and fun activities to engage the students.

3. Commissioner Werner is available to attend the upcoming 2025 student presentation to the City Council on October 27. Student Advisory Member Catarino Santiago discussed that three others, along with herself, would be able to attend and potentially conduct an activity as well. Councilmember Lambert noted that the Council is looking forward to the presentation.
4. Commissioner Hokanson gave an update on the service organization presentations. She noted that they were at the Elks recently, and the presentation went well. Staff Liaison Acker noted that there is another presentation coming up in November for Kiwanis.

C. Friendship Delegation Committee Update.

Chair Knott stated there were no updates.

D. YAAS Committee (Young Artists and Authors Showcase) Update.

Chair Knott stated there were no updates.

Staff Liaison Acker noted that an email had been sent asking for the theme, and a reply was received that apologized for the delay and that it would be on the website within a month. Commissioner Kreye noted that on the YAAS Facebook page in August, there was a note about the theme being Voices of Today, Visions of Tomorrow.

8. Communication Items

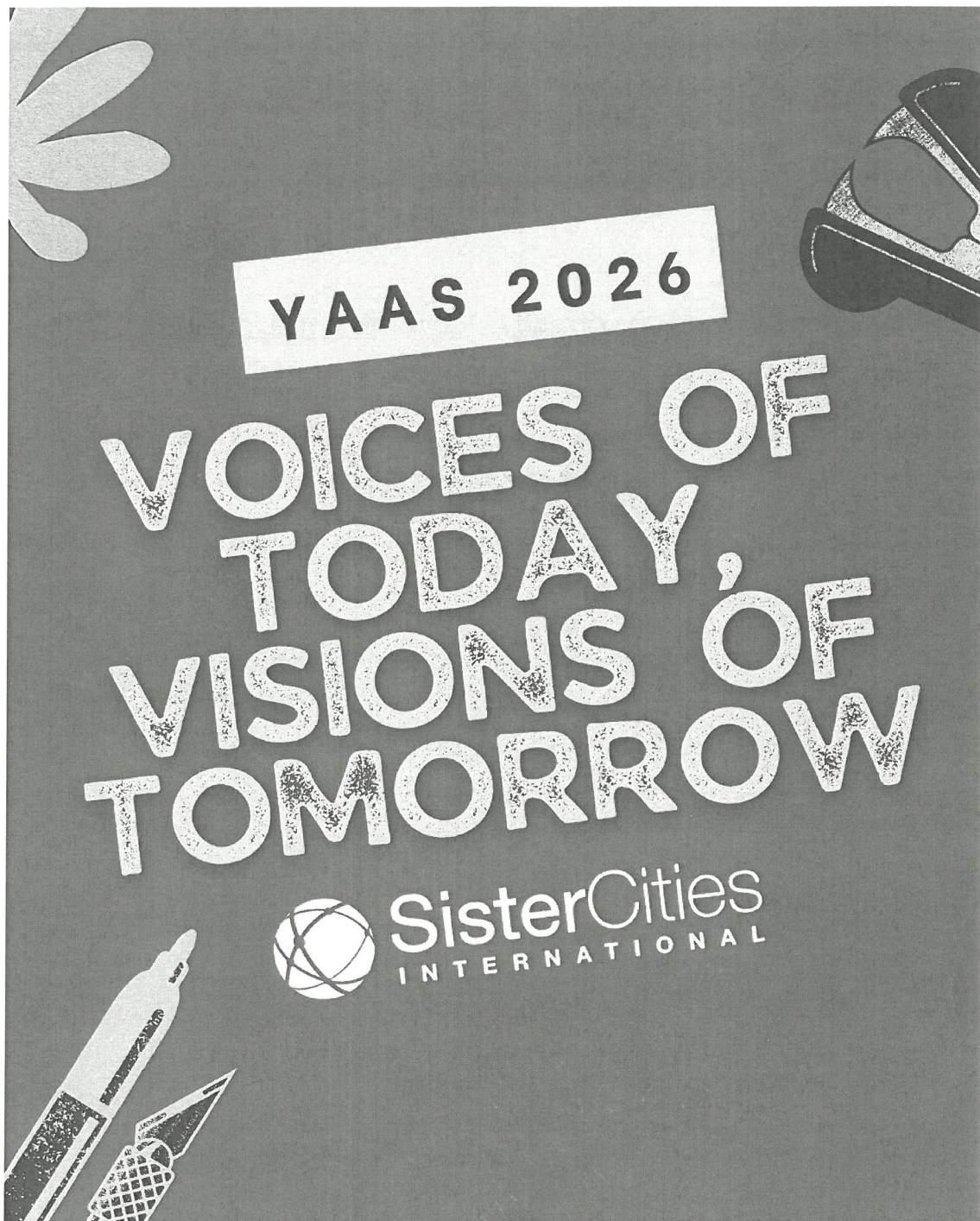
A. Sister Cities Commission Meeting and Workshop Schedule.

Chair Knott reviewed the upcoming meetings along with the changes that were made at the meeting.

Staff Liaison Acker explained that the November 17 meeting can transition into a workshop meeting based on the needs of the Commission.

9. Adjournment

Chair Knott adjourned the meeting at 5:58 p.m.



DEADLINE TO APPLY: APRIL 1, 2026

Sister Cities International is proud to present the 2026 Young Artists and Authors Showcase, inviting youth from around the world to

Acker, Lisa

From: Sister Cities International <info@sistercities.org>
Sent: Monday, November 10, 2025 12:51 PM
To: Acker, Lisa
Subject: 2026 Young Artists and Authors Showcase

Email not showing up correctly? [View this email in your browser](#)



express their creativity through the theme **"Voices of Today, Visions of Tomorrow."**

This year's theme invites young artists and authors to raise their voices during a historic moment as the **United States celebrates 250 years since its founding, and Sister Cities International honors 70 years of building global friendships and cultural understanding.** It reflects the ongoing journey from the country's founding ideals toward a more interconnected, peaceful world.

By participating in this inspiring competition, young creators will have the opportunity to share their vision of a world where today's voices shape tomorrow's global community. Winning entries will be featured across Sister Cities International's global network, inspiring people and partnerships around the world.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION

This year, we are hosting two separate competitions based on age groups. Applicants aged 12-14 will compete in one showcase, while those aged 15-18 will compete in another. In each age group and each art medium, there will be a first, second, and third place winner.

In order to participate in YAAS 2026, you must be affiliated with a dues-paying member of Sister Cities International

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)

Awards will be given out to YAAS winners who place 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each category and in each age showcase.

1st Place: \$1,000

2nd Place: \$500

3rd Place: \$250

[VIEW 2025 WINNERS](#)



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1012 14th Street NW

Suite 1400

Washington, DC 20005

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衢州市人民政府外事办公室

November 5, 2025

To: Mr. Peng Tao

Member of the Sister Cities Commission, Red Wing, USA

Dear Mr. Peng Tao,

Greetings!

As 2025 draws to a close, we reflect with great satisfaction on the fruitful exchanges and cooperation that Quzhou and Red Wing have conducted since the establishment of our sister-city relationship in 1994. Over the years, our collaboration has flourished across a wide spectrum of areas, including economy and trade, culture, education, and healthcare, yielding substantial outcomes. We particularly note and deeply appreciate your personal commitment, evidenced by your multiple visits to Quzhou at the head of delegations. These engagements, featuring on-site inspections and substantive exchanges, have been instrumental in fostering numerous friendly cooperation projects between our two cities, thereby continuously deepening our bilateral ties. On behalf of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Quzhou Municipal People's Government, I wish to extend our sincere gratitude for your exceptional efforts and invaluable support in advancing the friendship between Quzhou and Red Wing.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are eager to build upon the solid foundation already laid to further deepen our cooperation.

We anticipate launching more practical exchanges and collaborative projects, with a focus on education, culture, economy, trade, and other relevant areas, aiming for our shared prosperity and development. To this end, we have already extended an invitation, welcoming Mr. Mayor Gary Yoko and Mr. Chairman Austin Knott to lead a delegation on a visit to Quzhou at a mutually convenient time next year. We would suggest late September next year for the visit, which would allow the delegation to attend the Confucius Memorial Ceremony held annually on September 28th. We hope this visit will provide an opportunity to discuss plans for future cooperation and open a new chapter in our cities' friendship. We sincerely hope you will be able to join the delegation, and we very much look forward to welcoming you, our old friend, back to Quzhou. We are confident that with your continued support and collaboration, the friendly relations between our two cities will reach new heights. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any assistance.

Executive Director of Foreign Affairs Office of Quzhou
Municipal People's Government
Peng Li