



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 Wednesday, December 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 2559 131 9617 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, second and majority approval of November 17, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes

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. Finance Report - Lisa (Motion, second and majority approval is needed to approve)

7.B. Discuss and Approve 2026 Sister Cities Commission Meeting Dates - A motion, second, and majority approval is needed

8. Committee Reports

8.A. Ikata Student Exchange Committee Report - Dani/Tammy

The interview committee met with and interviewed ten prospective students between 8th and 11th grade for the 2026 exchange. This is the most student applicants we have had since the 2019-2020 school year. Unfortunately, the 2020 exchange was canceled due to COVID, and we didn't have one in 2021 or 2022 due to the pandemic. This committee

has worked very diligently to rebuild the program, and we are excited to be able to send six students this year. Six is the maximum number that is chosen each year, but the last two years we have had just four in 2024 and five in 2025. A motion, second and majority approval by the commission is needed to approve the six students selected by the Sister Cities interview committee.

The committee should give an update on how the interviews went, and indicate how they determined which six students would represent Red Wing this year to give the commission some basis for supporting the committee's recommendation. The committee was made up of five Sister Cities Commission members.

8.B. YAAS Committee Update - Renee

9. Communication Items

9.A. Lisa to update the commission on items added to the November 24, 2025, City Council Status report

- a. Potential transfer of Sister Cities Collection to the Goodhue County Historical Society;
- b. Delegation to Quzhou in September 2026

9.B. Thank you goes out to Tao Peng and Shawn Niebeling on six years of service to the Red Wing Sister Cities Commission. Tao has been instrumental in assisting the commission with communications with Quzhou and will continue to help us navigate a potential Mayoral Delegation visit in 2026. Shawn has been an amazing commission member, helping us on the YAAS committee with her slide shows, lining up judges, and displays. We are going to miss them both. We are always looking for new commission members that have an interest in international relations or who have new ideas on how we can grow our connections with our Sister Cities of Ikata, Japan and Quzhou, China.

10. 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
November 17, 2025**

Members Present: Commissioners Tao Peng, Ingrid Hokanson, Kimberly Clancy, Renee Kreye, Ashlyn Werner, Danielle DeWitt, and Sheena Whitlock, and Student Advisory Member Nisha Catarino Santiago

Members Absent: Chair Austin Knott and Commissioners Shawn Niebling, Tammy Jaynes, Council Liaison Vicky Lambert (excused absences)

Others Present: Lisa Acker, Staff Liaison

Staff Liaison Acker stated that with the Chair and Vice Chair absent from the meeting, a Chair would need to be nominated as Pro Tem for the meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hokanson, seconded by Commissioner Kreye to approve the nomination of Commissioner Peng as the Chair Pro Tem for the meeting. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7:0.

1. Call to Order

Chair Pro Tem Peng called the meeting to order at 5:17 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Pro Tem Peng led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Roll call was conducted. Chair Pro Tem Peng and Commissioners Hokanson, Clancy, Kreye, Werner, DeWitt, Whitlock, and Student Advisory Member Catarino Santiago were in attendance.

Chair Knott and Commissioners Niebling and Jaynes previously indicated they would be absent.

4. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Commissioner Kreye, seconded by Commissioner DeWitt to approve the agenda as drafted. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7:0.

5. Approval of Minutes

A. Approve the Minutes from the October 22, 2025, Meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kreye, seconded by Commissioner Whitlock to approve the minutes as drafted. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7:0.

6. Public Comment

No one wished to address the Commission.

7. Motions & General Business

A. Discuss and Approve the Interview Committee's Recommendation for the 2026 Ikata Student Exchange Chaperone.

Commissioner Werner explained that there were three individuals who were interviewed, the group decided which person to recommend, and that person has accepted. She noted that there is a backup as well. Commissioner DeWitt added that the deadline was extended because originally, the applicant who was selected declined.

Commissioner Kreye asked if more information could be given about the recommended person. Commissioner Werner shared that the person has experience with children, has a student interested in going on the trip, works in healthcare, and has a lot of interest in Japanese culture. Commissioner DeWitt added that the recommended person was a chaperone on a band trip and has also been international. Staff Liaison Acker asked whether, if their child is not accepted into the program, the recommended person would also be unable to go on the trip. The Commission discussed that the applicant had been well informed of the expectation and was still interested if their child was not selected.

Commissioner Kreye asked if a parent had ever gone as a chaperone. Staff Liaison Acker stated that, not in her own tenure, but the applicant had reached out to her, and it was made very clear before even applying that the applicant would not be there as a parent. The Commissioners who did the interview process noted making it very clear what was expected and what the outcomes could be.

Commissioner Kreye asked if the recommended person would be in the student interview process as well. It was stated that she would be. Commissioner DeWitt asked if there is an official rule that states parents cannot be the chaperone for their own children's trip. Staff Liaison Acker clarified that there is no official rule, but this would be the precedent going forward. She added that the student interviews would have to be more careful in how they are conducted. She noted that the chaperone does not have a vote, but their input is valued.

A motion was made by Commissioner DeWitt, seconded by Commissioner Werner to approve the committee's recommendation for the chaperone. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7:0.

8. Communication Items

1. Staff Liaison Acker explained that the 2026 Young Artist and Author, YAAS, Showcase theme was released, and that Commissioner Kreye would be reaching out to coordinate a meeting before the December Sister Cities Commission, SCC, Meeting. The deadline for YAAS is April 1, so the City's

deadline should be March 1, to announce the winners at the March SCC meeting.

2. Staff Liaison Acker shared that an invitation has come for a Mayoral delegation to visit Quzhou in 2026. She added that the Mayor and City Administrator are in support, and the next step would be for Chair Pro Tem Peng and her to sit down with them and determine the next steps. Commissioner Clancy noted that she would like to be included when Staff Liaison Acker and Chair Pro Tem Peng meet with the Mayor and City Administrator. Staff Liaison Acker commented that there will be an opportunity for other Commissioners to get involved as well, but the Commission cannot fundraise for it due to being part of the City.
3. Staff Liaison Acker shared that the Goodhue County Historical Society has asked to keep the SCC gifts and then loan them out as needed if the Commission and the City Council agree to do so. She added that the gifts just sit in boxes, because there is no space to display publicly on a long-term basis. Chair Pro Tem Peng asked about new gifts that come in. Staff Liaison Acker indicated that it would have to be asked of the Historical Society how it would be done piece by piece, or if the same process of accumulating would happen again. Chair Pro Tem Peng shared that it is a good idea, because the gifts are not just for the Commission, but for everybody, and the Historical Society has a way to care for them.

A motion was made by Commissioner DeWitt, seconded by Commissioner Clancy to recommend the transfer of the gifts to the Goodhue County Historical Society. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7:0.

4. Staff Liaison Acker reported that the 2026 Ikata Exchange program parent/student informational meeting is being held on December 1. There has been one student application, Commissioner DeWitt has done a student presentation, and the video is complete and has been shared. Commissioner DeWitt stated that with the video, the teachers have a blurb to read, and the applications are in the main office. The Commission noted that there is a high interest level, with about 22 student applications being handed out. Commissioner DeWitt asked if those who apply are required to host. Staff Liaison Acker stated that it is not a requirement, but better if they can and there is information about that. The Commission discussed the host situations.

9. Adjournment

Chair Pro Tem Peng adjourned the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

Red Wing Sister Cities Commission Financial Report -December 2025

	101 Account - General Fund		248 Account - Sister Cities		Combined	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Income						
From General Fund	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Student fundraising 2025 (bagging)			\$ 6,400.00	\$ 6,453.00	\$ 6,400.00	\$ 6,453.00
2025 Donations			\$ 6,200.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 3,500.00
From previous fundraising & City transfers			\$ 8,253.98	\$ 8,253.98 **		
Downpayments and addtl payments from families			\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Money returned to families (excess funds raised)			\$ 916.36	\$ 916.36	\$ 916.36	
Total Income	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 22,770.34	\$ 20,123.34	\$ 27,770.34	\$ 20,123.34
Expenses - General						
Young Artist Showcase Prize	\$ 600.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 600.00	\$ -
Young Artist Expenses	\$ 300.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300.00	\$ -
River City Days Parade	\$ 200.00	\$ 167.73	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ 167.73
Postage & Copying	\$ 100.00	\$ 22.70	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 22.70
Misc. Expense	\$ 825.00	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 825.00	\$ 100.00
Total General Expense	\$ 2,025.00	\$ 290.43	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,025.00	\$ 290.43
Expenses - Ikata						
Airfare & travel agent fees			\$ 13,750.00	\$ 9,449.36	\$ 13,750.00	\$ 9,449.36
Tour			\$ 2,600.00	\$ 2,758.00	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 2,758.00
Chaperone Background Check	\$ 75.00				\$ 75.00	\$ -
Gifts sent with Chaperone	\$ 250.00	\$ 140.08			\$ 250.00	\$ 140.08
Chaperone Subsidy			\$ 2,500	\$ 2,170.72 *	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,170.72
Student Subsidy			\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Welcome Event & Farewell Picnic	\$ 750.00	\$ 726.97			\$ 750.00	\$ 726.97
Tree Planting	\$ 350.00	\$ 299.99			\$ 350.00	\$ 299.99
T-shirts	\$ 100.00	\$ 46.36			\$ 100.00	\$ 46.36
Miscellaneous (tickets, events, etc)	\$ 800.00	\$ 667.11			\$ 800.00	\$ 667.11
Total Ikata Expense	\$ 2,325.00	\$ 1,880.51	\$ 18,850.00	\$ 14,378.08	\$ 21,175.00	\$ 16,258.59
Expenses - Quzhou						
Miscellaneous	\$ 650.00				\$ 650.00	\$ -
Total Quzhou Expense	\$ 650.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 650.00	\$ -
Total All Expense	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,170.94			\$ 5,000.00	\$ 7,916.20
Balance	\$ -	\$ 2,829.06		\$ 5,745.26		

4 students and 1 chaperone = 2025 Ikata Exchange

** This is a combination of funds donated, raised and transferred from the GF since 2021

* Student subsidy is a "scholarship" of up to \$500 per student if fundraising falls short



~ Sister Cities Commission 2026 Regular Meeting and Workshop Schedule ~

The Red Wing Sister Cities Commission will hold their regular meetings at City Hall, 315 W 4th St., Red Wing, MN. The meeting will take place in the City Council Chambers beginning at 5:00 p.m. They will hold their regular workshops months at the Ignite Conference room of the Community Development Building, 419 Bush St., Red Wing, MN, beginning at 5:15 p.m.

Regular Meeting Council Chambers, City Hall 315 W 4 th St., Red Wing, MN	Workshop Ignite Conf. Room, Community Dev. Bldg. 419 Bush St., Red Wing, MN 55066
Wednesday, January 28, 2026	Wednesday, February 25, 2026
Wednesday, March 25, 2026	Wednesday, April 22, 2026
Wednesday, May 27, 2026	Wednesday, June 24, 2026
Wednesday, July 22, 2026	Wednesday, August 26, 2026
Wednesday, September 23, 2026	Wednesday, October 28, 2026
Wednesday, November 25, 2026	Wednesday, December 23, 2026

Monday

16

16

A quorum of the Red Wing City Council Members may be in attendance.

Please publish in the Republican Eagle Government Calendar.

2026 YOUNG ARTIST & AUTHOR SHOWCASE

VOICES OF TODAY,
VISIONS OF TOMORROW



Deadline to Enter
MARCH 1, 2026

EMAIL SUBMISSION TO:

lisa.acker@redwingmn.gov

WHAT IS YAAS?

The Young Artists and Authors Showcase (YAAS) is an annual contest that encourages youth worldwide to express the mission of Sister Cities International through original artwork, literature, photography, and music.

ARE THERE PRIZES?

Sister Cities International will award the following prizes: Selected Grand Prize Winners in each category will win a \$1,000 prize, while second place winners will win \$500, and third place winners will be awarded \$250. Winners' artwork will be displayed on the Sister Cities International Website after the winners are announced during the Youth Leadership Summit. Local prizes will be awarded as well.

HOW IS IT JUDGED?

Submissions are centered around an annual theme and judged based on creativity, composition, and theme interpretation.

ELIGIBILITY & GUIDELINES:

There is NO fee to submit an entry to the local or International YAAS competition. Students must be 12-18 years old to participate in the YAAS competition. The City will be judging local submissions to determine which entries are submitted to the international competition. Prizes will be awarded to local winners. Fill out an application provided on our website, Facebook page or by your teacher and submit it with your piece.



CLASSIC ART

- Media accepted includes but is not limited to oil, acrylic, watercolor, charcoal, and colored pencils.
- Photograph of the artwork must be submitted in the application in a .jpg or .png format.



DIGITAL ART

- Submissions must have a minimum of 1350x1080 px.
- Moving art pieces will not be accepted.
- Photograph of the artwork must be submitted in the application in a .jpg or .png format



ESSAY SHOWCASE

- Essay submissions can be creative writing, anecdotes, and other written words following the content guidelines.
- Submissions must be written in English.
- Essays must not exceed 500 words.
- Writing must be submitted in the application in a .pdf or .doc format



POETRY SHOWCASE

- Submissions must be written in English.
- Poetry must not exceed 200 words.
- Students must upload their document in either a .pdf or .doc format.



ORIGINAL MUSIC

- Only audio submissions will be accepted, no videos.
- The piece must be original. Reinterpreted music will not be accepted.
- Music recordings do not have to be live. Music writing software is acceptable.
- Submissions can not exceed four minutes.
- Music must be submitted in the application in a MP3 format.



PHOTOGRAPHY SHOWCASE

- Limited digital manipulation is allowed for the photographers showcase. Edits include but are not limited to filters, lighting changes, color corrections, and cropping. However, adding or removing key elements of the photo is not allowed. Please note that heavy edits change the category of the submission. If that is the case, please consider submitting your artwork under the digital art category.
- Only two-dimensional (2-D) artwork will be accepted.
- Photograph must be submitted in the application in a .jpg or .png format.

