

Minutes of the Blue Mountains Sister Cities Committee held on Wednesday 11 February, 2009 at the Springwood Neighbourhood Centre, Springwood commencing at 7.32 pm

Present: Chris Wenman, Junko Howard, Chris Howard, Chris van der Kley, Colleen Kime, Kerry Kime, Petra Graham, Allan Graham, Nadia Ireland, Marion Crossman, Trevor Hamilton, Margaret Kennedy, Janne Bent, Earl and Edward O'Brien, Mrs O'Brien, Lindsay Ashby, Rob Spelling, Richard Florczak.

2. Apologies: Joyce Henderson

1 Welcome: Chair Chris Wenman welcomed the runners who went to Sanda for the International Half Marathon. The Chair asked each to say a few words on their trip.

Lindsay Ashby said it was second run. He thoroughly enjoyed the trip and he stayed with a host family on the outskirts of Sanda. The family were wonderful and mother spoke English. Weather was fine and cold but milder than last time. Lindsay said did not do as well as last time.

Margaret Kennedy said she also stayed in a rural area. The host was a widowed lady with 8 cats and some dogs. More family lived upstairs. They took her to a traditional Japanese tea ceremony which she loved and Japanese restaurant and they walked around Osaka one night. Sanda has grown very much. Margaret said she did not finish as she had a fall previous week

Richard Florczak stayed with the family he stayed with last year who lived on outskirts who were rice farmers. Took his 8 year old daughter with him. They treated her as part of the family. They saw a bit more of Japan. Went to Hiroshima.

Kerry Kime had the best time. Kerry handed over a 3 page report he had written which included how he met up with people from 20 years ago. They were driven around the Marathon course, attended calligraphy session, attended a welcome and friendship party put on by International Association. Kerry presented the bowl made out of the cherry tree wood from Tahlia House, Lawson to the Mayor. There were approximately 130 people at the party. Sunday was race day with some 3,900 starters. After the race, had lunch at the Council Hall followed by another party with runners from Sanda who had run in the Woodford to Glenbrook Classic. That evening met up with members from male choir who was out here some years ago and with a puppet man. On the Monday attended Awaji Island with host family and friends with lots of garden displays. On Tuesday was met by Nakamura-sun and taken to Moise School where each student has own teacher. Kerry said all were great ambassadors for the Blue Mountains. Kerry said no alcohol passed his lips on the trip

Earl and Edward O'Brien said had great time and families looked after them well. Earl said he and Edward would like to go back again. They enjoyed the race – Earl came 25th. The host family feed them very well. Went to Kyoto and had a bullet train ride and a trip around the gardens. Edward had an injury and struggled across the line but did finish fairly well. Stayed in an apartment with host family who did not speak much English. They had a welcome party with lots of people.

Rob Spelling came 22nd and 5th in age group. Rob Spelling said differences in Sanda was more development. Main reason for going was for Cassy to have the experience

of the culture. Family they stayed with, the husband was American. The race was similar to previous times and was fantastic and his youngest child enjoyed it. Runners presented with CD's with photos from the race and Japanese pamphlet with pictures of this year's runners.

Minutes silence for Victorian bushfire victims

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Chris Vander Kley moved Minutes be accepted. Colleen Kime seconded. Carried

4. Business Arising from Minutes

See under general Business

5. Correspondence:

- 5.1. Email list (in / out)
- 5.2. Sister Cities News -Vol 22 No.2 November 2008 from Sister Cities Australia
- 5.3. EMS from Sanda City re runners e-tickets booking ref, marathon leaflets, and host family info
- 5.4. Christmas cards to SIA (Sanda) and FISCA (Flagstaff)
- 5.5. Condolence card to Ainslie's for Pat's mother
- 5.6. EMS from Sanda City re marathon pamphlets, photo CD's, and news papers
- 5.7. Financial report (December 2008) from BMCC
- 5.8. A New Year post card from the staff of Sanda City - Machizukuri-Kyodo Centre
- 5.9. A stall application form for Springwood Foundation day from Foundation Day Sub-Committee.
- 5.10. A stall application form w/ payment of \$50 to Springwood Foundation Day (through BMCC) Junko handed the Application for stall to Julie Bargaquast at meeting with her at Council on 21 January and said the payment of \$50 fee was urgent. Julie said she would organise. Insurance is under Blue Mts City Council. Trevor said still not received. We have stall application and not parade application. Trevor said paperwork for the parade is coming.
- 5.11. EMS from Sanda – returning drawings we sent last year with thank you letter
- 5.12. Japan Report from Consulate-General of Japan
- 5.13. National Awards 2009 Handbook 2009 from Sister Cities Australia

6. Business Arising from the Correspondence

- 6.1. Robert Spilling came 5th in the Male from 45 to 49 in the 20th anniversary Sanda International Half Marathon
- 6.2. CD's have 312 snap shots of the runners from their arrival (18th) to departure (23rd) in Dec 2008 and to be handed to the runners at this meeting
- 6.3. **New relationship**
Nikki Cooper, Blue Mountains Grammar Infants Co-ordinator, inquiring a direct contact to a Sanda primary school for her Year 2, to learn about Japan and Japanese culture
As the school years between Australia and Japan don't match Junko suggested it start with Japanese new school year and do it in mid May. Sanda is going to select a class
.
- 6.4. Environmental Ambassadors accommodation cost \$1628.29 in financial report without consultation with the committee – SEE 7. Financial Statement.
- 6.5. Possible SIA's visit to BM in 2009 requiring home stay.

Junko said she thought it was not the actual Agreed yes we organise home stay for short visit (they are probably going to other areas).

6.6. SIA's website <http://www.sia-japan.org>, since 1991

SIA is considering making an English version of its website

6.7. SIA's 20th anniversary calendar scheduled to be completed in Sanda summer 2009

6.8. One of the applicants for the July/August 2009 student visit from Sanda is in wheelchair

Chris Howard said they could probably host a wheelchair student as their house would be OK. Will respond can take one.

6.9. Sister Cities Australia National Awards 2009

6.10. Community directory update

7. Financial Statement:

Council have reimbursed us \$706.11 out of the \$16289.28 that was shown as expenditure for the staff trip. We don't know how that is made up of. Hotel \$657.59 each and \$180.11 for Blue Mts Tourism (which might be runners jackets) and \$133 for another Hotel night which Julie said was going to investigate. We think they spent 2 nights in hotel due to "jetlag".

8. General Business:

8.1. An article with a photo in Gazette on 22/12/08 about our 20th anniversary for Sanda International Half Marathon. Thanks Trevor very much for article and photo by Colleen.

8.2. Springwood Foundation Day (4th April). Will discuss at next meeting.

8.3. Japanese Foundation Day (11th of February) or other celebration. Used to celebrate at Council. Haven't done anything for last 2 years. Several other dates suggested. Defer to next month.

8.4. Communication methods: email, phone, fax. Colleen said phone line is still connected to her home. Junko spoke with I.T. at Blue Mts City Council who it would be followed up, particularly the Telstra accounts which are still coming. Current plan is Council will allocate number to us and they will allocate free mobile to Junko free and divert calls to us. This allows flexibility as the mobile phone can be handed over from one person to another.. Emails are being monitored by Junko and Warwick Purdy suggested they increase capacity of their existing internet contact and Committee pay the extra which is approximately \$30 per month which is less than paying now. However there is an issue about having receipts for it. Kerry move motion that Secretary and Warwick Purdy came up and sound best method of email connection.. Seconded Marion Crossman. Carried.

8.5. Procedure/Manual for annual events. Defer to next meeting

8.6. Visit to Blue Mts City Council. Chris Wenman, Junko Howard and Janne Bent went to the Council and saw Julie Bargenquast, Executive and Warwick Purdy from I.T. on 21 January. Julie said the \$300 was for a gift for Sanda. One of the staff who was going to Sanda was making a present out of wood to take and it broke so it the last minute thing that they had purchased a gift by local artist.

The Committee originally agreed to pay for 1 airfare and find host family. Chris van der Kley said he would deliver a letter to the Mayor about the \$300 if necessary.

Council were in direct contact with Sanda over insurance, etc.

Action Item: Letter to Council seeking refund of all expenses taken out of our money, nothing out of the new budget towards visit.

8.7. Report. Request from Julie Bargenquast, Executive Officer, BMCC to present a report, justifying the existence of the Blue Mountains Sister Cities Committee. What she wants from us is that we clarify what we do, and how much Sister Cities brings into the Blue Mountains area and to justify the budget we get. Discussion among members that lots of things we do are cultural, international friendship can't be quantified.

Clr Chris van der Kley advised Council is counting every cent of ratepayer's money and everything has to be justified. Colleen said it's a Council Committee and it's up to them to say whether we exist or not. Chris van der Kley said Council said we were the only funded Community Committee. Nadia spoke of all her teaching for 3 years in Japan and through this, how thousands of people know about the Blue Mountains and many of them have visited and spending money locally.

Colleen Kime moved motion that we send a report to Council, pointing out all things we do, they see all our accounts, pay them, and it's about friendship relationship and that's why it was set up by the Council with Sanda and Flagstaff. That this organisation is wholly run by volunteers and we have save Council thousands of dollars for organising all visits been committee for 19 years. And that letters accompany our report from runners, schools, and environment staff that went recently and one some years go. Visits from Mayor and elected members from Sanda to Blue Mountains at least 3 times to look activities in Blue Mountains. Chris Howard seconded motion. Carried.

Chris Wenman suggested form a small subcommittee to write report. Volunteers were Nadia, Chris Wenman, Petra, Colleen and Janne.

8.8 Australian Sister Cities Association National Awards. We have no nomination to put in an application for an award this year. This is the competition that Colleen judges. Closes Monday 16 March. We did ask the Council staff who went to Japan if they wanted to put something together. Colleen moved that we contact Julie to ask the 2 Council staff who went to Japan if they want to put a nomination to the National Sister Cities program. We do have to be a member of the National Association despite the cost.

Action Item. Contact Julie to ask her if Mr. Chris Dewhurst and Mr. Soren Mortenson would like to put an entry into the Australian Sister Cities Association National Awards.

8.9 Flagstaff Pen Pals. Chris Wenman advised that she had not heard from the Flagstaff school re pen pals yet.

Had an email from the Library Support services officer. She wants to update the information book.

Flagstaff and Australia Day. Understand they did raise the Flag in Flagstaff they and often have a BBQ when it gets warmer.

Committee Expenditure.

Janne presented an account for the cost of Christmas cards, sympathy card and postage, plus 2 cartridge refills for the printer. Total of \$68.80. Junko presented her account for \$7.05 for phone calls. Janne moved that the accounts be past for payment. Seconded Kerry Kime. Carried.

Action Item. Send accounts to Council.

Meeting closed 9.55pm