

**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
SISTER CITY COMMITTEE**



THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2026, 5 pm

City Hall Conference Room A

1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth NH

For the Zoom recording: <https://youtu.be/3glptybVgGk>

MINUTES

Roll call: Councilor Rich Blalock, chair; Robert Conard, Mary Carey Foley, Robert Sullivan, Ben Van Camp, Stephanie Seacord. Excused: Christine Frieese

1. Review and approve past minutes (June 16, 2026) – On a motion by Van Camp, seconded by Conard the minutes were approved unanimously.
2. Old Business
 - Update on Szolnok, Hungary – Several members of the Committee met via Zoom on July 13 with Adrienn Adam from the Mayor's office in Szolnok, Hungary. She reported that the Mayor has met with the US Embassy and is planning a trip to the US in September. If he visits Boston he might be able to make the trip to Portsmouth to meet with Mayor McEachern. She will keep Frieese posted. In the meantime, both parties are researching documentation of the 1993 Friendship Agreement and the reasons for make the connection.
 - Update on Halifax, Nova Scotia – Sullivan suggested that a self-funded scouting visit to Halifax would aid in making the case for a Friendship or Sister City agreement. He noted the connection that Halifax is home to the Royal Canadian Navy and that the RCN submarine *Onondaga* visited Portsmouth and was welcomed by Mayor Foley. Van Camp will keep the Port Authority informed in conjunction with their discussions with Halifax. Due to scheduling issues the visit might take place in early December.
 - Update on Sister City Fund – City Manager Conard reported the establishment of the Fund at the July 13, 2026 City Council meeting. Seacord/Frieese will meet with Michael Tucker in the Finance Department to discuss how the Fund Donation letter/form can be added to the City's online donation portal so that donations for specific initiatives can be approved by the Sister City Committee and forwarded to the City Manager for distribution.
 - Letter to Mayor Sacchetti, Santarcangelo re: art lights – On a motion by Conard, seconded by Sullivan, the Committee approved the draft letter for submission to Mayor McEachern to send to Mayor Sacchetti.
3. New Business
 - Chair Blalock reported he had received an email from Adam Boltik, a Portsmouth resident, program manager for the NH Office of International Commerce, re: Portsmouth UK, to say he will be accompanying a delegation to the Farnborough Air Show (July 20-24, 2026) near Portsmouth UK.
 - Seacord reported on the Portsmouth UK 100th anniversary choral video performance of "On Shining Waters" in which the Portsmouth High School chorus took part. Conard recommended posting the video on social media and

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the Sister City page. [This and other Committee initiatives are now reported on that page: <https://www.portsmouthnh.gov/economic/sister-and-friendship-cities>

- Seacord also announced that the Japan-America Society of NH will be inviting local businesses and organizations to celebrate in what ever way they may choose the blossoming of the Portsmouth Peace Treaty Living Memorial Cherry Trees next spring. VanCamp asked if all the public schools where cherry trees have been planted are aware of their significance. Seacord agreed that while PHS include the Treaty history in their curriculum and is aware because of the exchange trips to Nichinan, that the elementary school trees that have been championed by individual teachers might need a briefing.

4. Other Business – None.
5. Public Comment – None.
6. Adjourned at 5:54 pm on a motion by VanCamp seconded by Sullivan.

Next meeting: Thursday August 20, 2026 at 5:00 pm