

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Meeting held September 5, 2025

A meeting of the International Relations Committee is held this day commencing at 1:30 o'clock p.m. in Room 139, 350 City Hall Square West, there being present the following members:

Councillor Angelo Marignani, Chair  
Councillor Renaldo Agostino  
Councillor Fred Francis  
Councillor Ed Sleiman  
Lubna Barakat (via Zoom)  
Jerry Barycki  
Ronnie Haidar (via Zoom)

## ***Regrets received from:***

L.T. Zhao

## ***Also present are the following resource personnel:***

Sandra Gebauer, Council Assistant  
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

### **1. Call to Order**

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 1:35 o'clock p.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule:" A", attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

### **2. Declarations of Conflict**

None disclosed.

### **3. Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Fred Francis, seconded by Councillor Renaldo Agostino,  
That the minutes of the International Relations Committee of its meeting held May 21, 2025, **BE ADOPTED** as presented.  
Carried.

#### **4. Business Items**

##### **4.1 Draft Agreement with the Kupiansk City Military Administration (Kharkiv Region, Ukraine)**

In response to a question asked by Councillor Fred Francis regarding how this agreement differentiates from a Sister City Agreement, Sandra Gebauer explains this is a symbolic agreement with no lasting commitments and is meant to show our support with the City of Ukraine and the City of Windsor.

Moved by Councillor Fred Francis, seconded by Councillor Renaldo Agostino,  
That the agreement with the Kupiansk City Military Administration (Kharkiv Region, Ukraine) **BE APPROVED**.  
Carried.

##### **4.2 Recent visit of the Chair and Jerry Barycki to our Sister Cities Mannheim, Germany and Lublin, Poland**

The Chair provides the following remarks relating to the recent visit to Mannheim, Germany and Lublin, Poland:

- The City of Mannheim demonstrated interest in collaboration with the City of Windsor in terms of our environmental department, academics and sports teams.
- There was a meeting with the Mayor of the City of Mannheim, and an exchange of gifts along with a presentation in front of their Council.
- The places that they visited highlighted where Mannheim and Europe are moving in the tech sector and the social sector. They also saw the repurposing of old industrial areas into new factories and facilities.
- The City of Mannheim is interested in further developing their relationship with the City of Windsor, i.e. academic student exchange.

Jerry Barycki provides an overview of the recent visit to Lublin, Poland as follows:

- The City of Mannheim and Lublin are both keen in understanding the political situation and are eager to work on these areas.
- The City of Lublin is very active in terms of culture.
- The City of Lublin opened the doors to Ukraine and organized centres to help the people.
- The business centre in Lublin was impressive along with the airport which accommodates very large aircraft.

The Chair notes that the City of Mannheim is keen on developing collaborations that are in tune with the City of Windsor's industry and education along with sports. He adds that the City of Lublin is more focused on the war due to being on the main gateway to Europe. He remarks that the City of Lublin was impressive in terms of their academics.

Ronnie Haidar advises that the University of Windsor has a student exchange program with the University of Mannheim. He adds that he will be representing the University of Windsor at the the European Conference of Argumentation to be held in two weeks in Warsaw, Poland.

Moved by Councillor Ed Sleiman, seconded by Councillor Renaldo Agostino,  
That the update regarding the recent visit to Mannheim, Germany and Lublin, Poland by Councillor Angelo Marignani, Chair and Jerry Barycki **BE RECEIVED.**  
Carried.

#### **4.3 Children's Art Exhibition**

Sandra Gebauer advises that the Children's Art Exhibition will be displayed at Devonshire Mall from October 6, 2025, to October 13, 2025. This will be followed by a display at Art Windsor Essex; however, the dates have not been confirmed. The Media Release for calls for local participation will be sent out today. She adds that this information will also be shared with the school boards.

### **5. Confirm and Ratify E-mail Poll**

Sandra Gebauer advises that this will be first step in exploring a Friendship City relationship with Arlington, Texas. She remarks that the City of Arlington is eager to welcome a delegation from the City of Windsor to visit possibly in October 2025. The City of Arlington has also requested representation from Economic Development and Tourism. She notes Arlington is also interested in the City of Windsor's environmental process and initiatives as well as representation from education, i.e. University of Windsor and St. Clair College.

In response to a question asked by Councillor Ed Sleiman, regarding the industries in Arlington, the Chair responds they have automotive (General Motors) and is located next to two large metropolises - Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas.

Councillor Fred Francis advises that the World Cup will be held in the summer of 2026 to be hosted by Mexico, Canada and the United States and one of the venues will be Arlington, Texas. This is an opportunity to welcome the world and countries that host some of our Sister Cities.

The Chair suggests October 16, 17 and 18 as possible dates to visit Arlington. Discussion ensues regarding representation from the City of Windsor and other organizations along with those who will attend from the IRC.

In response to a question asked by the Chair regarding if any members wish to be part of the delegation going to Arlington, Councillor Renaldo Agostino, Ronnie Haidar and the Chair respond affirmatively. It is also suggested that an invitation be extended to

Mayor Dilkens; a representative from Invest Windsor Essex as well as a staff representative from the city for a total delegation of 6.

That the results of the e-mail poll conducted on July 2, 2025 approving the following recommendation **BE CONFIRMED AND RATIFIED:**

Moved by Councillor Fred Francis, seconded by Councillor Renald Agostino,

That the International Relations Committee **MOVE FORWARD** with scheduling reciprocal site visits with Arlington, Texas, as a starting point for exploring a potential partnership; and,

That the delegations **INCLUDE** representation from the Committee as well as representation from Tourism and Economic Development; and,

That the Committee **APPROVE** a budget in the upset amount of \$15,000 to support costs associated with both the incoming and outgoing delegations.

Carried.

## 6. Communications

### 6.1 Letter to Mayor Drew Dilkens regarding the release of "A look at Hirska Community: Recommendations for Occupied Territories"

Moved by Councillor Fred Francis, seconded by Councillor Renaldo Agostino,

That the letter to Mayor Drew Dilkens regarding the release of "A look at Hirska Community: Recommendations for Occupied Territories" **BE RECEIVED.**

Carried.

### 6.2 Letter to Mayor Kang, Im June from Mayor Dilkens inviting a delegation from Gunsan, South Korea to visit the City of Windsor

Sandra Gebauer advises that a cancellation notice was received from Gunsan, South Korea and adds that the visit to the City of Windsor will be rescheduled.

Moved by Councillor Fred Francis, seconded by Councillor Renaldo Agostino,

That the letter to Mayor Kang, Im June from Mayor Dilkens inviting a delegation from Gunsan, South Korea to visit the City of Windsor **BE RECEIVED.**

Carried.

### 6.3 Letter to Mayor Christian Specht, Stadt Mannheim from Mayor Dilkens thanking Mannheim for accepting the delegation from the City of Windsor

Moved by Councillor Fred Francis, seconded by Councillor Ed Sleiman,

That the letter to Mayor Christian Specht, Stadt Mannheim from Mayor Dilkens thanking Mannheim for accepting the delegation from the City of Windsor **BE RECEIVED.**

Carried.

#### **6.4 Polish Heritage Month in Canada – Pictorial Report**

Jerry Barycki advises that a celebration and flag raising for the Polish Heritage Month was held in front of Holy Trinity Parish, with many people sharing in this special occasion. He states that the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lublin/Windsor was proudly displayed at City Hall and he expresses his appreciation to the city.

Moved by Councillor Ed Sleiman, seconded by Councillor Fred Francis,  
That the update by Jerry Barycki regarding Polish Heritage Month in Canada **BE RECEIVED.**  
Carried.

#### **7. New Business**

The Chair advises that he received a call from the Masonic Lodge of Windsor who stated that there are Masonic Lodges located in our twin cities. He asks if the IRC would be interested in having an association with Masonic Lodge. Councillor Renaldo Agostino responds that the IRC represents everyone, and all groups and it may not be good policy.

Jerry Barycki refers to Invest Windsor Essex and proposes inviting representatives to a meeting of the IRC for a discussion on how they support international relations and trade. The Chair asks if Gordon Orr, CEO of Tourism Windsor Essex, Pelee Island and CEO Invest Windsor Essex can be invited to attend the next IRC meeting to discuss collaborations economically with our Twin Cities and what strategies can be deployed. It is generally agreed that Gordon Orr will be invited to attend the next meeting of the IRC.

#### **8. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on a date to be determined in November 2025.

#### **9. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 2:30 p.m.