



**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NH**  
**BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON SISTER CITIES**  
**FORUM, 6:30-8:30 pm, Apr 30, 2018**  
**Portsmouth Public Library**  
**FORUM SUMMARY**

- Committee Attendees:
  - Karina Quintans, Chair
  - Nancy Carmer
  - Stephanie Seacord
  - Mike Nelson
  - Valerie Rochon
  - Steve Zdravec
- Forum was called to order at approximately 6:40 pm

Notes:

- The Committee made a brief presentation on the national Sister City Program, the City of Portsmouth's membership and its active and inactive Sister City relationships and opened the meeting to input from attendees on shaping a vision for moving the program forward. Input follows below:
  - Need public education about our program history
  - Events gets people interested
  - One attendee noted that on a recent visit to Grand Rapids, it was immediately apparent that they had sister city relationships
  - Neal Duffitt, Attorney, head of Portland Arch Angel Committee may be a good connection
  - City exchanges have been based on historical, industry and demographics—often the reasons why sister cities have worked and stayed active
  - Parnu, Estonia is a regional technology hub – would be a good industry exchange opportunity
  - Suggested Canada as next sister city; we have a lot of commercial connections with the French Canadians, there is a big Franco-American community in the Manchester/Concord area
  - Question: what is our goal with the program?
    - tourism/business (Canada is largest NH trading partner)
    - culture—this covers it all

- Portsmouth needs a clearinghouse for all international activities already happening (this could be a Friends Forever project?)
  - Seasonal workers (we should have a support event to meet/greet the students, get to know them)
  - Locally-led trips to Cuba
  - Friends Forever
  - Religious community
  - Portsmouth HS is running a cultural trip to Tanzania this summer
  - French teachers at HS are a good local resource
  - Steve Butzel and Laura Horwood Benton, PPL World Affairs
- UNH has a program in Dijon, can we connect somehow?
- Instead of just Portsmouth, make it Greater Portsmouth sister cities
- Look into NHCF for support
- Two-way connection is important, must be interest from both sides of relationship
- French teachers in high school are connection for owners of La Maison Navarre who would like to start a French sister city
- Consider international service learning
- One community member in attendance came to the forum to see what's going on and because she wants her kids to be global citizens
- PPL would be a good place to host the clearinghouse; it's where everyone goes already for this type of information
- Convene some of the people already doing international work (see list above)
- There are 40 languages in Portsmouth School System
- Chamber brings in lots of foreigners: Canadians #1, UK #2, and Germany/Italy #3
- Explore opportunities with the international business community that has a local presence in the region (Lonza, Novocure, Ionbond, etc.)