

## **Hickory International Council**

### **Thursday, January 16, 2020, 5:30 pm**

A meeting of the Greater Hickory International Council (GHIC) was held on Thursday, January 16, 2020 at 5:30 pm, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room at the Patrick Beaver Memorial Library.

**In Attendance:** President Hani Nassar, Lorna Seddon, Marc Swinnen, Steven Chuang, Eric Brandon, Anne-Sophie DaCosta, and Tracey Trimble.

**Call to Order:** Hani Nassar called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and thanked everyone for attending.

#### **Introduction of Guests and special announcements**

There were no new guests at the meeting.

#### **Old Business:**

##### **HIC Financials**

- No change from the prior month since no invoices were submitted and no donations were received:
  - City Account: \$ 12,610.00
  - GHIC account: \$7,535.65.
- Need to file the tax postcard soon.

##### **GHIC Website**

- Board requests to update look and content of website
- Unlikely that a board member will do it.
- Tracey Trimble to check with the Furniture Mart web designer for ideas.
- Will probably have to get a quote from someone.

##### **10<sup>th</sup> Annual International Christmas Concert**

- Full house with very few seats left.
- Discussed numbered seats and low cost to attend (\$3.00)
- Decided at the end of the discussion to keep the venue and some structure.

##### **HIC Grants**

- The grant applications have not gone out yet but need to.
- We typically have few applications, so if the board is aware of individuals, businesses, or non-profits that have projects, to reach out and invite them to apply.
- Churches could be an opportunity.
- We still work closely with the CRC.

##### **Model MUN**

- Still scheduled for March 10 and 11, 2020.
- Background papers completed.
- Students arrived this week back on campus.
- Dr. Cindy Combs getting the Keynote speaker
- MUN classes are on Thursdays before lunch.

- “Chairs” need no training this year because of the MUN classes the students are attending.
- ASU students have an interest to attend as Chairs. Dr. Combs is coordinating.
- Scouts of America personnel have changed over time and they do the student recruiting.

#### Children’s International Film Festival

- As of today we have 247 films on the Film Freeway site.
- Alan Jackson will email the interested people (Madison Hamilton, Lorna Seddon, Marc Swinnen, Ed Tashjian, Steven Chuang, Eric Brandon, Anne-Sophie DaCosta, and Tracey Trimble) sign-in information.
- Additional information will be provided via Email or at the March meeting (Hani to send judging instructions).

#### GHIC Retreat

- Decided on February 8 or 22 pending Ed Tashjian’s availability.
- Will check with Maple Grove regarding availability.
- Discussion ideas for the retreat are shown below.

#### **Brainstorming Ideas: What should the GHIC emphasize short-term?**

##### **Rebranding**

1. Reevaluate branding elements including the logo to better reflect our mission.
2. Re-examine current mission and concrete goals
3. Revise the website based on redefined mission, target, and short-term goals.

##### **Awareness and Communication**

1. Increase general awareness. Define GHIC in terms that make it so easy to explain that our target audience immediately understands and appreciates how it can benefit them.
2. Once defined, increase awareness through multiple forms of publicity.
3. Use social media to increase awareness.
4. Identify and create content for other social media platforms that reach specific audiences such as younger teens, young adults, and older adults.
5. Develop a strategy for appearing on public calendars

##### **Collaboration**

1. Collaborate with other educational institutions including CVCC, Lenoir Rhyne University, Western Piedmont Community College, and Caldwell Community College. Reach a better understanding of their missions and how GHIC can play a part.
2. Become an educational resource in the Unifour.
3. Identify other organizations to model after such as the international House of Charlotte. What is their mission and Charter and what best practices can we adopt from them?
4. Work more closely with the Hickory Chamber of Commerce to provide tools to make it easier for companies to appreciate some of the softer benefits of relocating to Hickory.
5. Leverage Chamber of Commerce information to identify new or existing international companies and to engage them in the GHIC.
6. Provide student mentoring to international students, such as student help, language help, cultural understanding, and possibly housing when campuses are closed. There are currently 92 students on F1 visas at Lenoir Rhyne alone. An F1 visa is a nonimmigrant visa for those wishing to study in the U.S.
7. Identify and participate in other international organizations and festivals.
8. Expand beyond the Unifour to include state and national resources.

9. Target companies that have international business interests, either because they are based in a foreign country, or multinational companies selling globally. This should also include global non-profits.

### **Fundraising**

1. Develop more fundraising events.
2. Create more social events as fundraisers. Consider an international food festival.
3. Develop a dream mission and estimate what it would cost to fund it.

### **Improving member satisfaction**

1. Become more inclusive. Redefine mission in a way that attracts ethnic diversity that reflects our community including Hmong, Asian, African American, Hispanic, and Native American.
2. Brainstorm ways to make the GHIC more fun, engaging, and interactive.

### **Organizational Changes**

1. Consider the benefits and implications of adding more structure such as hiring an executive director or interns to help execute plans
2. Form sub-committees to simplify and engage all volunteers / members

### **Events**

1. Focus on specific ethnic events that are important are culturally interesting and provide more global awareness and understanding.
2. Reverse cultural mentoring. Solicit participation from international students to present what is special, interesting, or unique about their language or culture to the broader Hickory community.

### **Tools**

1. Update the newcomer guide for international families and associate it with the GHIC
2. Develop and execute seminars that are consistent with our mission and charter.

### **Next Step**

The next step is to participate in a retreat where we prioritize which of these brainstorming ideas are most important and flesh out plans for the coming year.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, January 16, 2020, 5:30 pm. Meeting location TBD.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

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Hani Nassar, President  
Greater Hickory International Council