

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
Sister Cities Commission**

9:00 AM  
November 8, 2025

Tibbetts Creek Manor, 750 17th  
Avenue NW Issaquah, WA  
98027

**MINUTES**

**COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Commissioners:*

Stephanie Angula, Co-Chair  
Ryan Opitz, Co-Chair  
Victor Bello (excused absence)  
Shari Gehrke (excused absence)  
Brandon Grossi  
Maryann Heil  
Christian Nilsen  
Wendy Pickering

Pam Robinson - Alternate  
Ellen Wunderley - Alternate

*Administrative Staff:*

Gillian Straub, Staff Liaison

*Youth Advisory Board Representative:*

Sanvi Madan (excused absence)

**SPECIAL MEETING**

Please note, this agenda also serves as the special meeting notice pursuant to RCW 42.30.080.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this special meeting is to hold a planning retreat.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:13 AM.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

None.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

- a) **Prioritize themes of future Commission work (D)**  
The Commission reflected on past retreat brainstorming, the Commission's purpose in municipal code, and other resources to generate ideas and themes for future Commission work. All members shared their ideas and themes.
- b) **Identify & prioritize possible projects under themes (D)**  
Commission members generated high-level project ideas and associated them to the areas of work outlined in city code. Commissioners discussed and re-organized the ideas, then prioritized the ideas for the next 1-5 years of work.
- c) **Map out future year work and projects (D)**

Straub gave an update on ongoing city resources and commission support, including staff time and financial support, and discussed the possible outcomes due to a change in administration.

Commissioners then assessed the prioritized ideas from item b based on the resources likely available, and the following projects were highlighted to potentially begin in 2026:

- Updating the website
- Doing a “thing exchange”
- Travel assistance – guides, resources, orienteering (local), guided tour
- Book club with the library
- Preschool-to-preschool connection program
- Developing resources & relationships
- New Sister City research

The Commission agreed to further discuss these ideas at the November 12 regular meeting of the Commission, and identify subcommittees or leads for all ideas slated for 2026, as a way to further prioritize the work.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:03 PM.

## INQUIRIES

*The next meeting of the Sister Cities Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12 at 6:30 PM in the Steelhead Room.*

Please contact Gillian Straub at [Gillian.Straub@issaquahwa.gov](mailto:Gillian.Straub@issaquahwa.gov).

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*Note: Times listed for meeting topics are approximate and items are subject to change.*

*(A) Action, (D) Discussion, (I) Information*