



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 5654
January 21, 2020
Special Business

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 5654: Sister City 20 th Anniversary Proclamation No. 248	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Proclaim February 3-7, 2020 as Mercer Island and Thonon les Bains, France Sister City 20 th Anniversary Appreciation Week.	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

DEPARTMENT:	City Manager
STAFF:	Kirsten Taylor, Sr. Project Manager
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. Mercer Island and Thonon les Bains, France: 20 Years as Sister Cities 2. Mercer Island and Thonon les Bain Sister City 20 th Anniversary Proclamation No. 248
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

SUMMARY

This proclamation establishes the week of February 3-7, 2020 as Mercer Island and Thonon les Bains Sister City 20th Anniversary Appreciation Week in the City of Mercer Island and pledges continued friendship, respect, and commitment to maintaining a long-lasting and productive sister city relationship.

BACKGROUND

It was in 2000 that the mayors of Mercer Island and Thonon les Bains signed the official agreement of "jumelage," establishing an official sister city relationship between the two cities, through Sister Cities International. The sister city relationship has been growing and going strong for twenty years. The non-profit Mercer Island Sister City Association (MISCA) has organized a number of cultural exchanges, a handful of "official" delegations and numerous student exchanges between the two cities.

Hundreds of Island residents have either visited our sister city, hosted a French visitor, sent their student to experience a 10-day peek into French life, or been otherwise personally touched by the sister city relationship. All of these activities, exchanges, programs, and scholarships have been accomplished at virtually no cost to the city. Nevertheless, the "city" part of sister city is essential. The involvement and

support of the Mayor, the City Council, and the highest officials of both cities are essential to a sister city relationship. (See Exhibit 1)

MISCA has organized an official 20th Anniversary delegation visit to Thonon les Bain, France scheduled for February 3-7, 2020. The delegation will include Mayor Benson Wong, along with members of the MISCA Board and other community members who have been involved with sister city activities over the years. Mayor Wong and the delegation will present this proclamation to the mayor and people of Thonon les Bains.

Accepting this proclamation on behalf of the community are several of the following residents who are Mercer Island Sister City Association (MISCA) board members and members of the 2020 Delegation who will meet with sister city and local government representatives in Thonon les Bains, France to mark the 20th anniversary and to plan future exchanges for students and adults between the two cities.

MISCA Board:

- Roberta Lewandowski, president
- Sue Sherwood, secretary
- Jane Meyer Brahm
- Beth Brennen
- Rich Conrad
- Susan Gates
- Monica Howell
- Terry Moreman
- Gabrielle Sisco
- Kirsten Taylor, staff liaison
- Linda Todd
- Joel Wachs

2020 Delegation:

- Mayor Benson Wong
- Jane Meyer Brahm
- Rich Conrad
- Pete and Bing Day
- Monica and Robinson Howell
- Roberta Lewandowski
- Terry Mark
- Alan Merkle and Linda Todd
- Terry Moreman
- Gabrielle Sisco
- Kirsten Taylor
- Joel Wachs
- Sherry Weinberg
- Ted Weinberg

RECOMMENDATION

Mayor presents the proclamation and proclaims February 3-7, 2020 as Mercer Island and Thonon les Bains Sister City 20th Anniversary appreciation week

Mercer Island and Thonon les Bains, France:
20 years as Sister Cities

By the numbers:

Official delegation trips to Thonon:	3
Students exchange trips to/from Thonon	8
Students who've been on an exchange	160
Years that MISCA has given up to three student scholarships	9
Adults who have visited Thonon with our program	50+
Official delegation trips to Thonon	3
Mercer Island mayors since 2000	6
Thonon mayors since 2000	1

But the numbers don't begin to tell the of the eyes opened to a different culture, language and way of thinking; the countless rich experiences felt; and the lasting friendships formed.

It was in 2000 that the mayors of Mercer Island and Thonon les Bains signed the official agreement of "jumelage," establishing an official sister city relationship between our two cities, through Sister Cities International. Our sister city relationship as been growing and going strong since then. Since then, we've organized a number of cultural exchanges, a handful of "official" delegations and numerous student exchanges between our two cities.

And meanwhile, at home, our association has put on dinners, sponsored French films, conversation evenings, wine tastings, travel events, art lectures and many programs and activities to foster an interest in all things French and in Thonon les Bains in particular.

Hundreds of Island residents have either visited our sister city, hosted a French visitor, sent their student to experience a 10-day peek into French life, or been otherwise personally touched by our sister city relationship.

All of these activities, exchanges, programs, scholarships have been accomplished at virtually no cost to the city. Nevertheless, the "city" part of sister city is essential. We cannot be a sister city without the city. The involvement and support of the mayor, the City Council and the highest officials of both cities are essential to a sister city relationship. There is no Sister City without the City.

- by Jane Meyer Brahm



The City of Mercer Island, Washington

Proclamation

MERCER ISLAND AND THONON-LES-BAINS SISTER CITY 20TH ANNIVERSARY

WHEREAS, on July 8, 2000, at the 2000 Mercer Island Summer Celebration, the Mayors of Mercer Island, Washington and Thonon-les-Bains, France forged a firm and lasting friendship by adopting a resolution establishing a Sister City relationship; and,

WHEREAS, the year 2020 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Mercer Island-Thonon Sister City relationship; and,

WHEREAS, from the beginning, the two cities acknowledged their many common attributes including their tradition of democratic government, physical settings adjacent to large and beautiful freshwater lakes, mountains and major world-class metropolitan cities; citizens dedicated to caring for their children, their schools, their homes, and their businesses; beautiful communities each having strong commitments to parks, gardens, visual and performing arts and public gathering places; and,

WHEREAS, since 2000, the sister city relationship has spawned many student exchanges between our cities, facilitated a 2005 art exchange of priceless 17th and 18th century French lithographs exhibited at the newly-opened Community Center at Mercer View, and facilitated various other exchanges; and,

WHEREAS, the citizens of Mercer Island, Washington and Thonon-les-Bains, France have demonstrated their commitment to learning about the people, culture, history and commerce of each other's city as well as other cities around the world; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor will lead a delegation to Thonon-les-Bains, France from February 3-7, 2020 to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the sister city relationship;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Benson Wong, Mayor of the City of Mercer Island, Washington, and on behalf of its City Council, do hereby proclaim the week of February 3-7, 2020 as

MERCER ISLAND AND THONON-LES-BAINS SISTER CITY 20TH ANNIVERSARY APPRECIATION WEEK

in Mercer Island. The City of Mercer Island pledges its continued friendship, respect, and commitment to maintaining a long-lasting and productive sister city relationship.

APPROVED, this 21st day of January 2020

Benson Wong, Mayor

