



**ABILENE OMITAMA SISTER CITY BOARD
JORDAN ROOM, ABILENE PUBLIC LIBRARY, 209 NW FOURTH STREET
FEBRUARY 17, 2026 - 6:00 PM**

Agenda for Board Meeting:

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Changes to Agenda/Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. January 13, 2026
- 4. Public Comments and Correspondence**
 - a. News from Omitama
 - b. Official Correspondence
- 5. Financial Report - Kim Shafer**
- 6. Friends of Siter City - Heather Unruh**
- 7. School Programs - Jerry Rankin and Corina Ryland**
- 8. Old Business**
 - a. March 22 visit to Japan
 - b. By-laws
- 9. New Business**
 - a. Gift for Summer Delegation
 - b. Sister City Fund - Community Foundation
 - c. Longford water order
- 10. Next Meeting - March 10 , 2026**

11. Adjournment

**CITY OF ABILENE
SISTER CITY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

**January 13, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.
Abilene Public Library
209 NW 4th St. Abilene, KS 67410**

Members Present: Jennie Hiatt (Chair), Kim Shafer (Treasurer), Corina Ryland, Christal Hall (Member), Jennifer Hager (Member), Mary Montgomery (Member, and Samantha Geissinger (Member).

Members Absent: Kevin Unruh, Jerry Rankin (Vice-Chair), Heather Unruh (Friends of the Sister City)

Additional Present: Finance Director Kelsey Briand (arrived late @ 6:40 due to conflict), Sister Cities International: Cindy Elliot from Hays sister city and Mehran Shahidi, Treasurer for the sister city in Hays.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Jennie Hiatt at 6:03pm.

Approval of Agenda

Corina moved to approve the agenda as read by Jennie Hiatt, seconded by Mary. All in favor.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes – November 11, 2025

Mary moved to approve the minutes, Christal seconded. All in favor.

Public Comments and Correspondence

- a. News from Omitama - None
- b. Official Correspondence - None

Sister City International

Cindy Elliott from Hays sister city and Mehran Shahidi treasurer in Hays discussed Sister city International. Hays is also partners with Paraguay. International grandfathered Abilene in a 12-month membership.

Cindy shared benefits of the program including:

- Spring Leadership in San Jose, March 6-7, including a sports diplomacy panel
- Washington DC 70th Anniversary, July 22-26.
 - There will be a parade of city flags and this year they want to do it at the Eisenhower Monument and want Abilene to lead the parade. They would like Abilene to come. (It overlaps with our delegation visit; it was suggested sending them to go to Washington.)
- Youth Artist and Authors showcase - deadline April 1.
- Youth Leadership Summit, June 21-27. Deadline Feb. 1 for 14- to 18-year-olds. Simulation training for US diplomacy. Tour the city. Applications on the website.
- Grant opportunities.

Financial Report

New Balance: \$2,870.27

There was a question about payment to Heather B. for the painting. Jennie will follow up on that tomorrow.

\$8110.00 still sits in the scholarship fund.

Corina moved to accept the financial report. Jennifer seconded. All in favor

Friends of Sister City

Heather was absent. No report

School Programs

Jerry was absent.

Corina shared that Omitama received the gift from the middle school last week and the next meeting at AMS will be Thursday.

Old Business

- a. Artist gift: Jennie said Heather is excited about doing the paintings. She is flexible and will do whatever we need. She said Heather suggested the seasons. Corina suggested taking a spring painting as the commemorative gift for the 20-year anniversary of Omitama and later doing the other 3 seasons. Jennie held up two of the Eisenhower park spring paintings. Kim moved to purchase and frame for \$200. And take the spring painting as a commemorative gift for the 20-year anniversary of Omitama. Mary seconded. All in favor. This will come out of the 2025 budget.
- b. March 22nd visit to Japan: Heather and Kevin are leaving on the 18th and coming back on the 24th out of KC. Corina, Kim and Tim are flying out of Salina on the 16th or 17th and returning the 24th. Christal, her sister, Michel, and daughter, Natalie will fly out on the 9th and come back on the 24th.
- c. By laws: Jerry stepped down from the by-laws committee. Kim and Jennie will bring something to the next meeting. Cindy shared there is a tool kit on the SCI website, and she will send a copy of Hays by-laws for our information.

New Business

- a. Delegates from Omitama are coming July 22 to August 5th with four students and two adults.
- b. Kelsey asked if we could meet on February 17th for the next meeting. All in favor.

Adjournment

Next meeting: February 17, 2026. Corina made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kim. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

Minutes Approved,

Attest:

Sister City Board

Kelsey Briand, Finance Director