



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee

Date: May 12, 2009

From: Mike Kirk
GM Corporate Services

File:

Re: Richmond Sister City Committee Invitation to Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra

Staff Recommendation

1. That authorization be given to the Richmond Sister City Committee, on behalf of the City of Richmond, to invite the Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra to perform in Richmond between October 3-6, 2009.
2. That the General Manager, Corporate Services, or his designate, be authorized to execute any necessary agreements or documentation in relation to the Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra performance.

Mike Kirk
General Manager, Corporate Services
(604-276-4142)

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ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Recreation & Culture.....	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO
			YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

At the February 2, 2009 meeting of the General Purposes Committee, it was resolved “that the matter of the Richmond Sister City Committee Invitation to Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra be referred back to staff for further information on the financial and cultural aspect of the situation.” This report provides a summary of the background on this issue and includes updated information for the Committee’s consideration.

Background

In November 2007, Council resolved “that the City of Richmond pursue a Friendship City relationship with one of the following cities in China (Xiamen, Yangzhou, Yantai and Qingdao).” In April, 2008, the City of Richmond signed a Friendly Cooperation Agreement with the City of Xiamen, China.

The Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra is a professional orchestra currently supported by the Xiamen municipal government and the Gulangyu district government, with contributions from the Fujian and Xiamen Electrical Power Bureaus. The Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra through the Xiamen Municipal Foreign Affairs office has recently offered to visit the City of Richmond as part of a North American tour this year.

Analysis

One of the purposes of the Richmond Sister City Committee is to engage the Richmond community and its Sister/Friendship Cities abroad in projects and exchanges that promote Cultural awareness and joint learning opportunities. A visit from the Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra would create numerous opportunities to engage the local community.

Approval of this event would contribute to the 2010 Arts & Culture Plan’s directive to provide increased performance opportunities for local artists; in this case, a local choir will have the rare opportunity to perform on-stage with a world renowned Orchestra. Plans include engaging some of the Xiamen musicians as guest speakers to educate and inspire local classical musicians in a separate event. The Xiamen Orchestra's visit is also in keeping with the 2004 Richmond Arts Strategy which calls for us to "increase the variety and diversity of arts experiences and opportunities" available to the community at-large.

The Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra is intending to visit several cities in the USA. They believe that a visit to Richmond as part of this tour would be a prime opportunity to build on the cultural ties between our two cities. It would be the first time this Orchestra has performed in Canada. Details on the Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra are included in attachment 1.

Approval to fund this event is needed in order to secure a commitment from the Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra. The Orchestra is currently coordinating various venues and making travel arrangements. The Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra has offered to pay for all their own air fare and will provide performances without a fee. The Richmond Sister City Committee has been requested to provide funding for all ground transportation, accommodation and meal costs

that are anticipated to be a maximum of \$40,000. The Four Points Sheraton hotel will donate services in kind which will bring down these costs.

Projected Expenses

Accommodations - hotel	\$22,000
Transportation – Bus Coach Lines	\$7,000
Meals	\$11,000
Total	\$40,000

Projected Revenues

Milan & Maureen Ilich Foundation*	\$10,000
Mercedes Benz *	\$10,000
The Canadian Xiamen Friendship Association**	\$8,000
The Xiamen Friendship Society of Canada**	\$8,000
The Canadian Fujianese Association (Vancouver)**	\$8,000
HSBC Securities**	\$1,500
Steveston Community Society*	\$1,000
Event ticket sales	\$33,000
Total	\$79,500

* funding secured ** funding committed

The Richmond Sister City Committee has been actively recruiting potential sponsors. To date, \$47,500 has been committed with \$21,500 of these funds in hand. The two lead sponsors for \$10,000 each are The Milan & Maureen Ilich Foundation and Mercedes Benz. Of note are the commitments of \$8000 each from The Xiamen Friendship Society of Canada, The Canadian Fujianese Association (Vancouver) and The Canadian Xiamen Friendship Association for a total of \$24,000.

Ticket sales for this event are anticipated to generate \$33,000. This is based on two performances, one matinee and one evening. There are 1800 seats available with total projected

sales of 1000 tickets. There will be a three tier pricing structure with average ticket prices of \$33. There are projected net proceeds of \$39,500.

An appropriate performance venue has been secured. The Richmond Sister City Committee has had discussions and received approval from The Great Canadian Casino Corporation to use its main theatre at the River Rock Resort for the two performances. The Great Canadian Casino Corporation is prepared to support this event and is willing to waive all base facility fees of approximately \$12,000.

Financial Impact

There is no net impact to the City budget as a result of this recommendation due to sponsorship and fundraising that has occurred.

Conclusion

A decision on this matter is necessary to allow sufficient time to extend an official invitation to the Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra. Net proceeds from this event will go to the Sister City Sponsorship account.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Toda". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "R".

Richard Toda
Manager, Customer Service
(604-276-4335)

Attachment 1

Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra

The Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra is a professional orchestra currently supported by the Xiamen municipal government and the Gulangyu district government, with contributions from the Fujian and Xiamen Electrical Power Bureaus. It made its debut on September 9, 1998, on the beautiful Egret Island, Xiamen, under the leadership of Professor Zheng Xiaoying, the most prominent female conductor in China, who remains the orchestra's artistic director and principal conductor. Since that time, the weekend symphony concerts have brought to audiences more than 340 well-received concerts that have included more than 90 different programs of classical and contemporary music, domestic and from abroad. During performances, the "Zheng Xiaoying System" of explaining while performing, helps people become familiar with the symphony and become more receptive, and to understand more about the music. They also have made short tours to 19 cities in seven provinces to spread the seeds of philharmonic music more widely. The orchestra actively advocates composition of symphonies with background stories or musical content of concern to China or Fujian for advancing Chinese symphonic achievement. This they view as a duty of Chinese orchestras. As a result of their idea, through promotion and recording, the symphonic poem "Echo of Hakka Earth Buildings," composed by Liu Yuan, was glorious in receiving the only Golden Prize of the First Chinese Music "Golden Bell Awards" for instrumental compositions.

In April 2002, the orchestra successfully toured three cities in Japan with "Echo of Hakka Earth Buildings," the newest accomplishment for Chinese symphonic music. In May, it took part in the opening and closing concerts of the Gulangyu International Piano Festival. In preparation for the Fourth International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians, which was held in Xiamen October 18-31, the young orchestra played 77 concertos in cooperation with more than 70 musicians over the preceding four years. They received high praise from world class juries and were presented an Award for Outstanding Contribution from the Xiamen Government. The orchestra was the only local orchestra to be invited to perform for the opening of the 16th Communist Party Congress in Beijing in November and its program was of Fujian subjects. Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra was warmly welcomed

by the capital's audience, and was called "an orchestra with creativity."

In April 2003, the orchestra began holding its weekly concerts in the Music Island Philharmonic Hall, a new music hall with superb acoustics, designed and constructed on the premises of an Electrical Power Bureau facility, which is now the permanent home for Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra. More than 70 artists in the orchestra have come from across China to devote their efforts toward building Xiamen and Gulangyu into "Music Islands of the Orient" which can live up to this name.