



**CITY OF HOLLAND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
HOLLAND CITY HALL - Training Room, 2nd Floor
July 9, 2026 at 5:30 PM**

International Relations Mission Statement

Mission Statement

We build and maintain meaningful relationships between the people of Holland and the wider world through cultural, educational, and professional contact.

Vision

The City of Holland connected to and growing with the wider world.

Values

- **Respect:** We commit to the highest levels of courtesy and fairness for those who serve on this commission and those whom this commission serves.
 - **Reliability:** We fulfill our commitments to ourselves, Holland residents, its government, and our local and global partners.
 - **Collaboration:** We seek great ideas and resources in our community and beyond our borders.
 - **Hospitality:** We strive to make Holland a welcoming community for everyone.
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A. Call to Order

B. Mission, Vision, Values

C. Roll Call

D. Special Presentation

E. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Approval of the June 4, 2026, meeting minutes. **Call to Vote.**

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F. Next IRC Commission Meeting:

The next International Relations Commission meeting will be on August 6, 2026, in the City Hall Training Room at 5:30 p.m.

- **Reminder:** The following meeting will be held on Thursday, September 10, 2026, in the City Hall Training Room at 5:30 p.m.

G. City Council Liaison Update

H. Student Representative Update

I. Chair Report

J. Department 2027 Strategic Goal

1. World Affairs Council Great Decisions.
2. Reel Time Film Series. In Progress.

- **Tentative Dates:** March 2nd, 9th, and 16th, 2027

3. International Festival of Holland 2026.

- **Date:** October 10, 2026 from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at the Holland Civic Center Place

K. Commission FY 2027 Strategic Goals

1. Goal 1: Create Quarterly Calendar Update.
2. Goal 2: Build a stronger relationship with Santiago de Queretaro/City of Assen.
 - Parque Holland Playground Options.
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 -

L. Other Business

1. LAUP Fiesta on Saturday, July 18, 2026 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Holland Civic Center Place
 - Sign Up Link - <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0449A8A72EA5F49-64401280-laup#/>

M. Communications from Commissioners

N. Adjournment

PLEASE NOTE: La Ciudad de Holland proporcionará servicios necesarios como interpretación, traducción, ayudas auxiliares, lenguaje de señas, y cintas de audio de materiales impresos para personas con discapacidades. Favor llamar con siete (7) días de anticipación a la Ciudad de Holland, Esther Fifelski, Oficina de Relaciones Humanas para obtener estos servicios 616.355.1322 o por correo electrónico a e.fifelski@cityofholland.com.

The City of Holland will provide necessary services and auxiliary aids, such as signers for hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials, to individuals with disabilities, upon receipt of seven-day prior notice. Person with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids services should contact the City of Holland by writing or calling: Human Relations C/O City Clerk's Office contacting Esther Fifelski, Human Relations Director, 270 S River Avenue Holland, MI 49423, telephone (616) 616.355.1322. Document(s) available for translation upon request.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: In addition to addressing the Commission during public hearings and under "Public Comment," members of the Audience may address the Commission, on items after a motion is pending on a particular item, by addressing the Chairperson. Audience participation shall be five minutes or less per item.

CELL PHONES: Please be courteous and turn cell phones off during the meeting.



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5:30 p.m.

- Present:** Chair Start and Commissioners Behrendt, Neal, O’Malley, Pierce, and Slauer.
- Others:** Student representative: Komi Ke and Staff Member Esther Fifelski.
- Absent, excused:** City Council Liaison Lyn Raymond and Commissioners Cuellar and Hoekstra.
- 2026.06.01 Call to Order.** Meeting called to order at 5:32 by Chair Start.
- 2026.06.02 Mission, Vision, and Values.**
- 2026.06.03 Roll Call.** See above.
- 2026.06.04 Public Comment.** None.
- 2026.06.05 Special Presentation.** None.
- 2026.06.06 Approval of May 14, 2026, meeting minutes.** Motion to approve the meeting minutes by Commissioner Pierce, support by Commissioner Neal. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- 2026.06.07 Next IRC Monthly Meeting.** Thursday, July 2, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the 2nd floor Training Room at City Hall.
- A.** Chair Start asked the commission to reconsider the July meeting date due to the Independence Day holiday. Motion to change the date of the July International Relations Commission meeting from July 2, 2026, to July 9, 2026, by Commissioner Pierce, support by Commissioner Neal.
- B.** Chair Start asked the commission to reconsider September 3, 2026, International Relations Commission meeting due to the Labor Day holiday. Motion to change September 3rd International Relations Commission meeting to Thursday, September 10th by Commissioner Pierce, support Commissioner Behrendt.
- 2026.06.08 City Council Liaison Update.** Fifelski provided a quick update. The city budget has been approved. The Holland Bike Park groundbreaking ceremony is June 5th at 2:00 p.m. (Bike Park). The city received \$11 million grant to fund improvements at the former power plant site to begin the process to reshape the city’s



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waterfront. This is the first step of many steps to reshape the city's waterfront.

2026.06.09 Student Representative Updates. Komi Ke will be returning to Japan for the Summer. She will begin her Senior year in the Fall.

2026.06.10 Chair Report.

1. Parque Holland Playground Options. Parque Holland options were presented to the commission. Commissioner O'Malley will not support requested the following information 1) accessibility, 2) reciprocity and identify other options to refresh the park. Motion to postpone the Parque Holland discussion and the rest of the agenda by Commissioner Neal, supported by Commissioner Slauer. **Motion carried unanimously.**

2026.06.11 Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m. by Chair Start.

Respectfully submitted,
Esther C. Fifelski
Human Relations Director
Human/International/Youth Services



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Items tabled for the July 9, 2026, International Relations

2026.06.10 Chair Report.

1. Parque Holland Playground Options.

2026.06.11 FY 2026 Department Report Update.

1. World Affairs Council Great Decisions. Completed.
2. Reel Time Film Series. Completed.
3. International Festival of Holland FY2026. Completed.
4. Sister City/ Friendship City Review Process. Completed.

2026.06.12 Commission FY 2026 Goal Update.

Goal 1: Create Quarterly Calendar Update.

Goal 2: Support the Creation of Welcome Center.

Goal 3: Build a stronger relationship with Santiago de Queretaro and City of Assen.

2026.07.13 Commission FY 2027 Goals

Goal 1: Create Quarterly Calendar Update.

Goal 2: Build a stronger relationship with Santiago de Queretaro and City of Assen.

2026.06.13 Other Business. None.

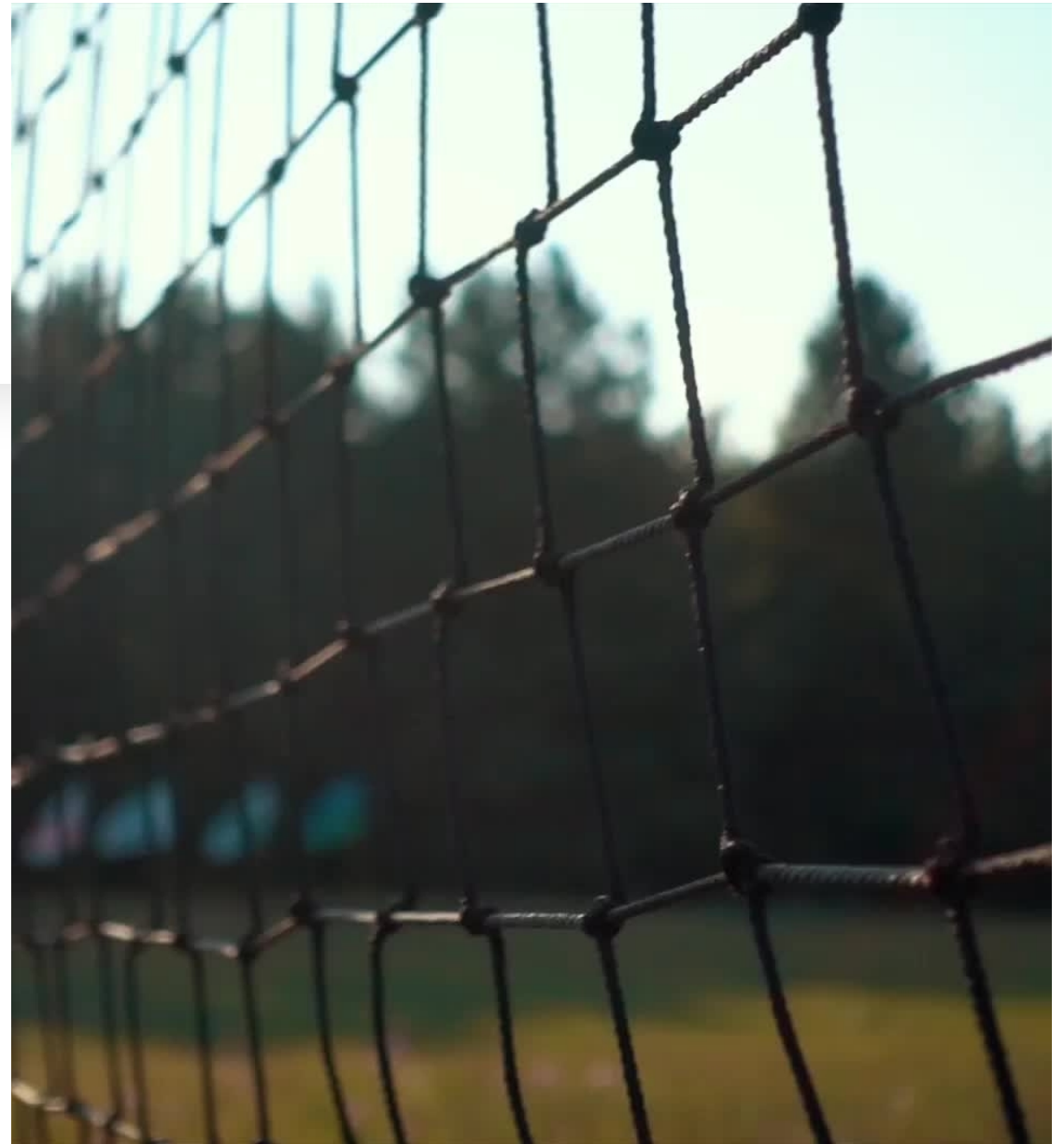


Playground Equipment Quotes

Holland Sister City- Santiago de Queretaro, Mexico
Project: Parque Holland



- Partnership with Sinclair Recreation, LLC for playground equipment & design.
- Sinclair Recreation is a Michigan corporation incorporated in 2003 with the main office located in Holland, MI.
- Three options presented – *all options include similar equipment in the renderings.*
- Quotes do NOT include the following:
 - Installation
 - Removal
 - Surfacing
 - Freight through Mexico



Intellectual property of GameTime, a PlayCore Company. The site shown in rendering is an interpretation and may not reflect exact site conditions.



Option A

Option A

- Cost \$77,055.02
- Two playscapes
 - Main playscape
 - Smaller playscape for younger children
- Simple playscape design
 - Funnel bridge
 - Wave climber
 - Bongos
 - Rock wall climber
 - Leaning wall
 - Zip slide



Intellectual property of CDM Smith, a Playcore Company. The drawings are rendering & an interpretation and may not reflect exact site conditions.



Option B

Option B

- Cost \$98,046.09
- Two playscapes
 - Main playscape
 - Smaller playscape for younger children
- Moderately complex design
 - Rock climb wall
 - Bongos
 - Spiral steps
 - Crunch bar
 - Funnel bridge
 - Schooner climber



Intellectual property of Daini's Inc., a Playworks Company. The size shown in rendering is an interpretation and may not reflect exact size conditions.



Option C



Option C

- Cost \$98,078.98
- Two playscapes
 - Main playscape
 - Smaller playscape for younger children
- Moderately complex design
 - Rock wall climber
 - Sloped funnel climber
 - Chain link climber
 - Sky wheels
 - Bongos
 - Funnel bridge





FY 2027 Strategic Discussion from 1/6/2026 meeting.

During the January 6, 2026, meeting commissioners refined goals to add assignments.

Goal 1: Create Fiscal Calendar (continuation). The draft calendar was prepared at Strategic Planning meeting for FY 2027. Completion for FY2026 0% Completion) (There was no activity in Quarter 3 and 4 of FY 2026). Team 2: Vice Chair Bonadies and Commissioners Slauer, O’Malley, and Neal. Adding Commissioner. Pierce.

Quarter 3 – FY 2026

Month	What	Who
January	Academic WorldQuest™	Robert O’Malley
February	Academic WorldQuest™ International Potluck <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lunar New Year - -Africa Food Option for WACA Speaker - Rotary 	Robert O’Malley Sandy Pierce (Lunar & Africa)
March	Academic WorldQuest™	Robert O’Malley

Quarter 4, 2026

Month	What	Who
April	International Fashion Show	Sandy Pierce/Esther Fifelski
April	Academic World Quest™	Bob O’Malley
May, Tulip Time	Cultural History Walk	Nathan Slauer
June	Juneteenth Table	(All Commissioners)Collaboration with Human Relations who already host a table

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Quarter 1, FY 2027

Month	What	Who
July	LAUP Fiesta – help HRC with City Table	Collaboration with Human Relations who already host a table
August	Mural Festival – have table at Mural Festival	Dave Hoekstra
September	Gwenbeshle Celebration – Global Games and Trivia	Nathan Slauer

Quarter 2, 2027

Month	What	Who
October (IFFY)	Indigenous (Culture Demonstration)	Esther Fifelski (IRC Collaboration with HRC Pow Wow)
November	Academic WorldQuest™ Teacher Sponsor Promotion Logistics	Bob O'Malley
December	Academic WorldQuest™	Bob O'Malley

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Repeat FY 2026 Goals in FY 2027 for the remainder of FY 2027. Evaluate and make determination of success after each event.

Goal 1: Create Fiscal Calendar FY 2027, continued

Quarter 3 – FY 2027

Month	What	Who
January	Academic WorldQuest™	Robert O'Malley
February	Academic WorldQuest™ International Potluck - Lunar New Year - Rotary	Robert O'Malley
March	Academic WorldQuest™	Robert O'Malley

Quarter 4, 2027

Month	What	Who
April (ends)	Academic World Quest™	Robert O'Malley
May, Tulip Time	Cultural History Walk	Nathan Slauer

Goal 2: Build Stronger Relationship with Santiago de Queretaro and City of Assen. Team 1: Commissioner Hoekstra, Cuellar, and Start.

2a) Santiago de Queretaro / Parque Holland

- ✓ Sinclair Recreation to identify low, mid, and high point estimates for playground equipment.
- ✓ Identify physical groundwork necessary at Parque Holland for their team.
- ✓ Fundraising focus in FY 2027.

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- ✓ **Continue to grow local connections**

2b) Send a muralist for Parque Holland Wall. (stretch goal)

Youth Goals: Student Representatives

- ✓ Develop relationships with area schools to develop international calendar of events and engage them in our work.
- ✓ Build connections between area school clubs/programs.
- ✓ Develop a Holland area wide event?
- ✓ Academic WorldQuest™
- ✓ Consider Youth-serving non-profits.

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