

The Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents Newsletter No. 48

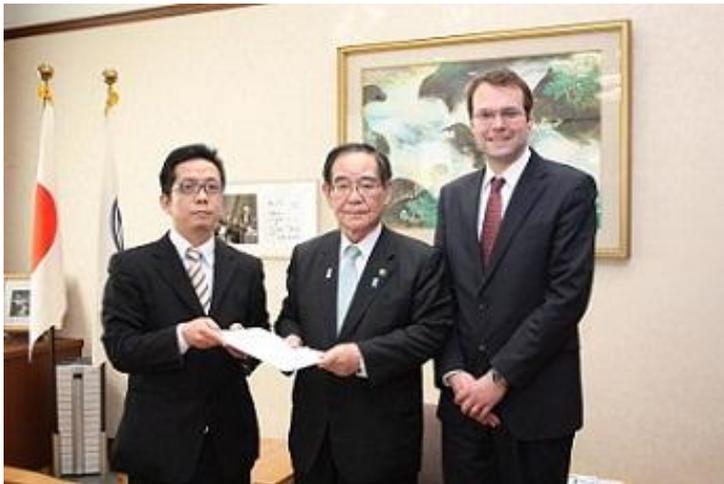


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(Japanese) <http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/shisei/category/60-7-2-0-0-0-0-0-0-0.html>
(Simple Japanese) <http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/250/page/0000042748.html>

FY2012 Activity Report and Proposals Presented to the Mayor and City Assembly



◇Presentation to the Mayor◇

On Monday, April 15, Ping WANG, Chairperson of the Ninth Representative Assembly, and David CHART, Life and Society Section Leader submitted the FY2012 Annual Report to Mayor ABE. Chairperson Ping WANG explained the discussion topics of the Representative Assembly in FY2012, the opinions expressed, and details of activities in the Open Forum to the Mayor based on the annual report. Mayor Abe said, "I am looking forward to seeing good proposals emerge through further deepening the discussions in the remaining year" in response.

◇Report to the City Assembly◇

On Wednesday, May 22, Chairperson Ping WANG and Vice-Chairperson Gajender SHARMA were invited to attend the City Assembly Citizens' Committee as witnesses and made a statement based upon the annual report about the Representative Assembly's FY2012 activities. This hearing was held for the Citizens' Committee to hear the opinions of the representatives and take them into consideration.

<The Representative Assembly FY2013 Meeting Schedule (Beyond October)>

Time: 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Location: Kawasaki International Center

(approximately 10-minute walk from Motosumiyoshi Station, Tokyu Toyoko Line)

Third Meeting, Day 1: Sunday, October 6

Third Meeting, Day 2: Sunday, December 8

Fourth Meeting, Day 1: Sunday, January 19

Fourth Meeting, Day 2: Sunday, February 16

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Anyone is welcome to come and observe the meetings.



<http://www.kian.or.jp/accessmap.shtml>

(information available in multiple languages)

◆◇The Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents - Now Seeking Members for the Tenth Representative Assembly◆◇

The Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents was established in 1996 by ordinance to promote development of better local communities through mutual understanding among the local residents. Assembly members will investigate and hold discussions on topics they have chosen from among the thoughts, concerns or problems currently shared by foreign residents, and submit proposals to the Mayor. This is your chance to ensure that your voice is heard by the city administration.

- **Term:** Two years from April 1, 2014 through March 31, 2016
- **Assembly Activities:** Meetings are held eight to nine times a year, generally on Sunday afternoons.
 - * Meetings are conducted in Japanese.
 - * Compensation as a special public servant will be provided for participation in these meetings.
- **Qualifications:**
 - ① Do not possess Japanese citizenship.
 - ② Be 18 years old or above as of April 1, 2014.
 - ③ Have been continuously registered as a resident of Kawasaki for at least one year as of April 1, 2014.
- **To Apply:** Submit your application by mail, postmarked by Friday, December 13, 2013
 - * Application forms will be available starting in October at ward offices, civic halls, libraries, and the Kawasaki International Center.
 - * Alternatively, they can be downloaded from the Representative Assembly's web site (<http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/shisei/category/60-7-2-0-0-0-0-0-0-0.html>).

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Voices of the Representatives

What do you do in the Representative Assembly?

What are some of the positive experiences you had as a representative?

- As a representative of the foreign residents living in Kawasaki, you will inform the city such about current issues and problems. It is a very rewarding experience to resolve issues and problems by speaking out to the city for foreign residents.
- The Representative Assembly is an excellent place for discussion where people of various nationalities come together, and you can engage in discussions in order to help make the city a better place to live for foreign residents in Kawasaki.
- You can share ideas with each other that might be useful for foreign residents living in Kawasaki, through exchanging opinions on current issues and problems.
- As a representative, you will have valuable experiences. For example, you can engage in discussions not only for foreign residents, but also to build proposals for community development that would also benefit Japanese residents.



- I think it is great to see people from so many different countries come together in a group to discuss a common goal. That is why I'm always excited to participate in the meetings.
- Being a representative, I was able to participate in various events held within local communities, and it gave me opportunities for contact with many Japanese residents. I would like to expand the range of contact even further through this Representative Assembly.
- I decided to join the Assembly because I wanted to help those foreign residents who are not so fluent in Japanese. I would like to help make the city of Kawasaki a more comfortable environment to live in, through cooperating with the other representatives.
- Why don't you take part in the activities of the Representative Assembly in order to help foreign residents live a better and more comfortable life in Japan, and to promote mutual understanding and to further deepen the communication between Japanese and foreign residents?

Meeting Reports

■ Welfare and Education Section

Within the Welfare and Education Section, discussions were carried out mainly focusing on the topics of "native language education" and "multicultural exchange." Staff from the Board of Education were invited to explain the details of certain efforts such as encouraging citizens to undertake projects and offer services in an independent way. We also conducted some field research. During the discussions on "multicultural exchange", representatives suggested encouraging the Representative Assembly to become more engaged by visiting schools and giving on-site lectures, as such an effort itself may be a good way to promote awareness of the Representative Assembly.

Additional topics such as "support services for raising infants" and "welfare services for the elderly" were also discussed. On the topic of "support services for raising infants," the following contents were brought up for discussion: (1) the system in Japan for raising infants; and (2) admission and the problem of waiting lists for nursery schools. On the other hand, discussions over "welfare services for elderly" centered on reviewing the contents of the proposals submitted in the past and their progress status.

We will continue to work towards building proposals by exchanging information and sharing our experiences within the Welfare and Education Section, to help develop the city of Kawasaki into a better place to live for foreign residents.

(Izumi Beatriz SONODA, Welfare and Education Section Leader)

■ Life and Society Section

Discussions on the main topics of the Life and Society Section were completed in the previous meeting. Although we held discussions on the topic of "attracting enterprise" over several sessions, in conclusion we reached a consensus that we cannot build a concrete proposal for this issue as there are currently no representatives with expert knowledge in this field. We also reconfirmed our awareness that the big issue of "transmission of information" is indeed a very difficult problem. Certain unresolved issues still remain, particularly on the methods for transmitting information to foreign residents who are rather passive in seeking out information, even though Kawasaki city does have a relatively sound system established for providing information to those foreign residents who are actively seeking out information.

Additionally, discussions were held over the "assessment of and follow-up on proposals." We are considering the possibility of introducing assessment by third parties, as the current system relies on just the self-assessment of results conducted by the designated department by the city. Finally, as the last major topic of discussion, we considered the topic of "support for employment". As with the other issues, information is made readily available through the city or public agencies such as Hello Work, but we have heard numerous stories from foreign residents that they were not offered jobs because they were not Japanese. The city does not have the power to influence and change the mindsets of employers, but we discussed the possibility of establishing systems to help resolve such issues. We will focus on selecting topics and deciding on wording for the proposals during the remaining meetings.

(David CHART, Life and Society Section Leader)

New Representative Member

Representative Ke Hsin HSU has resigned and Bing Qing ZHANG has joined the Assembly.

◇ Name: ZHANG, Bing Qing

◆ Thoughts on becoming a representative: This is my first time as a representative. I only have one year remaining of my term, but I want to contribute as much as I can by sharing my personal experiences. I want to solve problems through discussions with the other members to help build better proposals.

◇ Favorite Quote: "Happy Life, Enjoy Life."

