

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

AGENDA

Meeting March 16, 2021

Zoom

Minutes of the meeting of March 16:

Present: Joan Clarke, Amanda Folsom, Nana Gharthey, Michael Grinnell, Daman Irby, Kate Kogge, Stella Mattioli, Dave Norris, Elizabeth Smiley, Adrienne Ward, Maxicelia Robinson (Staff Liaison), Communications staff person

Call to Order: 4:33 p.m.

- I. First all the members introduce themselves to Nana Gharthey, the representative for the Winneba sister city.
- II. There are no new members to approve, maybe there will be some in the summer.
- III. Then we talk about the Festival of the Book, in which the commission is sponsoring two events. Nana Gharthey proposed to find a way to have an event for each sister city in the next edition. This can be a goal for the Outreach Committee, and the committee decides to start the conversation about it. Nana Gharthey may join these sub-committee.
- IV. Approval of the minutes of last meeting. Kate Kogge motions to approve; Elizabeth Smiley seconds - and the minute is approved unanimously.
- V. Sister Cities International Youth Artist and Authors Showcase 2021: Elizabeth Smiley explains that the Sister Cities International has been sponsoring for 20 years young artists and events related. Charlottesville probably never participated, and this will fit with the goal of the education sub-committee. Young artists can submit their original works every year to the showcase organized by the Sister Cities International, who has the mission of empowering the youth and involving them in the community. There have been talks with the school system of Charlottesville, and the information has already been sent to the teachers of the different schools. The deadline is May 1st, and the students interested will be able to submit their works. Elizabeth says that this year could be considered as a pilot year: if there is interest amongst the students and the teachers, we can consider it as an annual sponsorship. With more time, it can become a community-wide event. Elizabeth offers herself to be the contact person inside the Sister Cities Commission. The commission decides to approve this idea.
- VI. The Festival of Cultures is doing a virtual celebration this year in May.
- VII. Update on Funding. We should send the letter again to the City Manager, but also to the council, in order to see if more people will be interested in funding the Commission. The recommendation for funding was not approved by the Acting City Manager, so it is a matter of trying again. In order to be more successful, Dave Norris explains that it is possible to write emails to the council and talk to the public meeting.
- VIII. Student Exchanges. There are no updates about possible student exchanges with the French sister city. It is not an officially sponsored event and it has nothing to do with the Sister Cities Commission.
UPDATED 4/16: Student Exchanges. There are no updates regarding the resumption of student exchanges with Besancon. The commission recently received an email from Youth for Understanding (another international exchange organization) announcing their plan to resume student exchanges in August 2021. There are no students from any of our sister cities scheduled for visits to Charlottesville through this program at this time.
- IX. We speak about the 1000\$ allotted for each sister city, that has been used in the past. Each sister city representative can ask up to 1000\$ to support that specific relationship. It has to be a submitted request for an approved expense. It is decided to have a more deep conversation in the next meeting, in order to better understand this possibility.

- X. There is the possibility of an exchange of musicians between the French sister city and Charlottesville. Everything has been put on hold due to the pandemic, but there is going to be a live Zoom event of recorded material. Every person can attend, and the event is for free.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:53 p.m.