

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

Minutes

Meeting April 20, 2021

Zoom

Present: Amanda Folsom, Nana Ghartey, Michael Grinnell, Daman Irby, Kate Kogge, Stella Mattioli, Neeley Minton, Dave Norris, Elizabeth Smiley, Adrienne Ward

Absent: Joan Clarke

Non-members present: Maxicelia Robinson, Jeremy Johnson

Meeting opened at 4:33 pm. Ms. Kogge presided. A quorum was present.

I. Approval of March minutes

Ms. Smiley requested a correction to the wording of item VIII.

Motion to approve minutes with correction: Ms. Kogge Seconded: Mr. Irby

Motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

II. Unspecified (Brief Address by Mr. Ghartey)

Mr. Ghartey initiated a conversation about perceptions within city government regarding the CSCC's purpose and its spending priorities as possible explanations for being denied funding in the current budget cycle. Several members responded and there was an exchange of opinions on the subject.

III. Funding updates

Ms. Kogge: our request for funding in the upcoming city budget did not move forward for final approval. Ms. Ward asked if it would be feasible to speak with city council to determine why we were not included in the budget again this year. Ms. Robinson recommended that we direct our inquiry to the city manager. Mr. Norris recalled that the commission had previously discussed inviting the (then current) city manager to attend one of our meetings. It was agreed that Ms. Kogge and Ms. Ward will collaborate on a letter/ invitation to the new city manager.

There was additional discussion regarding the allocation of money to each Sister City representative, upon request, for approved Sister City project/program expenses, up to \$1000 per year. Although it does not appear this expenditure has been officially adopted or voted upon by the Commission, it has been the practice of the Commission for the past several years.

Ms. Smiley suggested the Commission consider amending its By-Laws if there is interest in making this an annual budgeted expense. Mr. Irby offered to work on a draft for

review and voted upon at our next meeting. Ms. Robinson suggested we determine whether City Council will have to approve any proposed changes or additions to our By-Laws; she will consult the city's attorney on our behalf.

Mr. Gharthey asked that Commission approve (motion to approve) his request for this allocation, to reimburse the Charlottesville Winneba Foundation for its costs to ship medical supplies which have already been obtained and are being sent to Winneba ahead of the traveling delegation in May. Motion was seconded by Ms. Minton. The motion passed with no objections.

IV. Grants update (deferred)

V. Nominating/ open positions update

Ms. Kogge reported that the office of Secretary remains open and asked for a member to fill this position. Per our by-laws, the term of office is 1 year, with option to renew. Ms. Ward will consider the position and will communicate her decision to Ms. Kogge prior to the next meeting.

VI. Quarterly committee meetings update

a. There was consensus that 2nd quarter committee meetings be scheduled for May. Ms. Kogge will send members a doodle poll to determine the (zoom) meeting date.

b. There was discussion of the Outreach and Communication Committee's role and objectives. Does its mission include initiating outreach or does it merely report on the outreach activities of the city reps and other committees? How can it serve as a resource to the Sister City reps as they work to educate and engage the community in our sister city relationships? Ms. Ward proposed continued discussion within the committee and follow up conversations with individual City reps if desired.

VII. Young Artist and Authors Showcase

Ms. Smiley gave status report on the collaboration with Charlottesville High School in sponsoring several student entries into this annual Sister Cities International competition.

VIII. It was agreed that we will resume the practice of allocating time at each monthly meeting for reports from each Sister City representative (*Article VIII, Section 2 of By-Laws*).

IX. This item was tabled.

X. Other business

Mr. Grinnell stated that as a companion to today's meeting, he has already begun creating a list of outreach ideas. He will post the document to the Communication and Outreach folder on the CSCC google drive, and invites commissioners to review, respond, and add to it.

Mr. Gharthey reported that he will be traveling to Winneba in May with a local delegation and does not know at this time when he will return to Charlottesville. His term will expire soon (date?) and he will have to reapply to remain on the Commission.

Meeting adjourned at 6:02

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Smiley, Besancon Representative

Next CSCC meeting is on Tuesday May 18 @ 4:30 pm via Zoom.