

**Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission  
Minutes Meeting May 18, 2021  
Zoom**

Present: Amanda Folsom, Michael Grinnell, Daman Irby, Kate Kogge, Stella Mattioli, Elizabeth Smiley, Adrienne Ward

Absent: Joan Clarke, Nana Gharthey, Neeley Minton, Dave Norris

Non-members present: Maxicelia Robinson, Lachen Parks, Terri DiCintio, Gary O'Connell

Meeting opened at 4:37 pm. Ms. Kogge presided. A quorum was present.

I. Approval of April minutes

Ms. Smiley requested a correction to the wording of item VIII. There was no exchange update from Besancon.

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

Motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

II. City Rep Updates:

a. Winneba – Mr. Gharthey

i. Mr. Gharthey is in Winneba, and no report was provided.

b. Besancon – Ms. Smiley

i. Ms. Smiley received an email from Besancon teacher, Paul Lo Papa, who is interested in bringing a student group to Charlottesville for a sports related activity most likely in 2022. She plans to meet virtually with him to learn more.

ii. Contact has been established with the Director of International Relations of Besancon following a change in local elected officials.

iii. Contact has been made to Charlottesville teachers to determine if any outreach has been made in regards to potential exchanges with Besancon.

c. Poggio – Ms. Mattioli

i. Ms. Mattioli is currently in Poggio, her home city, and she has plans to meet with city officials to discuss future opportunities for cooperation.

d. Huehuetenango – Ms. Kogge

i. The process for establishing the official "Friendship City" status is proceeding well, and grant programs connected to the city are also progressing. A city representative or person to stand in that role until it is officially established needs to be found relatively soon.

- ii. A question on the process of establishing a CSCC city representative for Huehuetenango was brought forth by Ms. Kogge. Ms. Robinson stated that the “Friendship City” relationship would need to be officially established. Charlottesville is waiting for the Huehuetenango’s official response. At that time the City of Charlottesville City Council may establish a new Commission Sister City representative.

III. Update from Elizabeth on spending guidelines - no formal documentation on what the commission adopted regarding discretionary spending guidelines.

- a. Missing 2018 meeting minutes
  - i. The missing minutes were found in another location in the CSCC Google folder. The only minutes now missing are those from the January and February 2020 meetings.
- b. How do we best proceed?
  - i. A document outlining CSCC Spending Guidelines was drafted over a period of time and completed in early 2018. Former CSCC Chair, Terri DiCintio, stated that it was approved by the Commission though it appears that this approval was not recorded in meeting minutes.
  - ii. Ms. DiCintio encouraged the CSCC to review these Spending Guidelines and add updates that the current Commission sees fit. Commissioners agreed. It was noted that guidance regarding the funding of discretionary spending such as \$1,000 per year for expenditures proposed by City Representatives could be added. The question was asked if the Commission should establish an ability for commissioner to make purchases of a smaller amount prior to Commission approval.
  - iii. Ms. Ward asked for clarification on if it is permissible to allocate \$1,000 per year if we do not have an associated line item in the budget.
  - iv. Ms. Robinson stated that a conversation between two Commission members and Charlottesville City Attorney, Lisa Robertson, would help to determine answers to the questions. Mr. Irby as Co-Chair and Mr. Grennell as Treasurer agreed to meet with Ms. Robertson, and Ms. Robinson agreed to make the meeting arrangements.

IV: Plevel Update from Terri.

- a. What “Emeritus” status means
  - i. The relationship is on hold. It should be listed as a Sister City Emeritus but the CSCC should not actively search for or promote opportunities for engagement with the city.

- b. Pleven's status as an official Sister City to Cville
  - i. The CSCC could state that the relationship is "inactive". If the CSCC did receive a grant or event proposal focusing on Pleven, contact should be made to assure Pleven is willing and able to participate.
  - ii. Pleven has always been gracious to visitors and contact from Charlottesville.
  - iii. Gary O'Connell, former Charlottesville City Manager, who was a founding member of the CSCC, spoke to the Commission as a guest. Mr. O'Connell recently received contact from the Mayor of Pleven and would like to assist in reestablishing contact with the city and Charlottesville including potential participation in the 2022 Pleven Day for Sister Cities. The CSCC agreed and encouraged his efforts.

V: Other business

- a. Ms. Smiley agreed to serve as CSCC Secretary through the next Commission retreat which will take place in August or September 2021.
- b. Ms. Kogge announced that she will move out of the Charlottesville-area in July and will at that time end her service on the CSCC. Commissioners thank Ms. Kogge for her service and leadership particularly during the unusual COVID period.

Meeting adjourned at 5:41

Respectfully submitted,

Daman Irby, Higher Education Representative

*Next CSCC meeting is on Tuesday June 15 @ 4:30 pm via Zoom.*