

## **Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission**

### **MINUTES**

**Meeting June 15, 2021**

#### **Zoom**

Present: Amanda Folsom, Kate Kogge, Stella Mattioli, Dave Norris, Elizabeth Smiley, Adrienne Ward

Absent: Joan Clarke, Nana Gharthey, Daman Irby, Michael Grinnell, Neely Minton

Non-members present: Maxicelia Robinson, Brian Wheeler

Meeting opened at 4:35 pm                      Ms. Kogge presided                      A quorum was present

#### **I. Approval of May minutes**

##### **a. Commission Monthly meeting**

Motion to approve with no corrections: Ms. Kogge      Seconded: Ms. Ward

Motion passed with no abstentions

##### **b. Quarterly Subcommittee meetings**

Ms. Robinson reviewed the minor changes she made to the minutes regarding dates, times and participants

Ms. Smiley requested a minor wording correction in Education minutes to "Sister Cities International"

Motion to approve with correction: Ms. Kogge                      Seconded: Ms. Ward

Motion passed with no abstentions

#### **II. City Rep Updates**

##### **a. Winneba - Mr. Norris (for Mr. Gharthey who remains in Winneba)**

1. Mr. Norris presented highlights from the 8-member delegation's visit to Winneba May 17-28; presentation of a plaque and a proclamation to the King at his 25th anniversary "Enstoolment" ceremony; official kick-off of 2019-2020 grant recipient Myra Anderson's poetry workshop; kick-off of 2020-2021 grant recipient Libby Edwards-Allbaugh's Pen Pal project.
2. Another community delegation visit is being planned for the end of December 2021.
3. Charlottesville firefighters will also travel to Winneba later in the year.
4. Planning for a delegation visit to Charlottesville from Winneba is on hold until after local elections and the possible transition to new officials there.

##### **b. Besancon - Ms. Smiley**

1. Ms. Smiley is in active contact with Paul LoPapa, who has sent a proposal for a student sports exchange in 2022. She will be reaching out to local school personnel and will facilitate connections for planning.

2. Follow up on Youth for Understanding request: there are a number of French high school students seeking host families in Charlottesville for the 2021-2022 school year. The Alliance Francaise Cville has agreed to promote this program in its next member newsletter.
3. We are still awaiting news of the winning submissions to this year's Young Artist and Authors Showcase (sponsored by Sister Cities International).

c. Poggio - Ms. Mattioli (reporting from Poggio)

1. While in Poggio, she has met with the Vice-Mayor to determine if there are projects happening there that we might want to highlight on our webpage/social media.
2. The Poggio Mayor's office has produced a documentary on Filippo Mazzei and Ms. Mattioli has been given a copy to share upon her return to Charlottesville. It was suggested that the documentary be screened virtually or outdoors as a community event to highlight the Sister City partnership. Ms. Ward asked that Ms. Mattioli find out what would be required in order to mount a public screening locally in Cville.
3. Activities in Poggio a Caiano need the cooperation/approval of both local gov't and a small volunteer group in charge of organizing cultural events; there is interest in having another exchange of citizens, however getting both these entities (city gov't and cultural events group) on same page can prove difficult.

d. Huehuetenango - Ms. Kogge

1. We have received an official letter from their Mayor accepting our request to become Sister Cities and they are in the process of establishing their own Sister City Commission.
2. Questions regarding the process for establishing a new city rep were again raised. Ms. Kogge stated that typically there is a Friendship City "courtship" period of 2-3 years before the Sister City relationship is formalized. Ms. Robinson clarified that at that point, we can request that a designated city rep position be added to the Commission. At present, however, we will need to ask a current Commission member to step into an unofficial role as the Huehue contact/liaison person. Ms. Robinson offered to investigate the possibility of petitioning the Council for an official Friendship City rep, and doing so sooner than waiting until the next cycle of appointments later this year. Mr. Norris has offered to draft a petition on our behalf. Ms. Kogge offered to pass on her knowledge about people who might be interested in the role.
3. Ms. Folsom asked for an update on the Huehue internet project/grant; Mr. Norris mentioned that he had run into someone connected with the Ixatan Foundation recently who seemed enthusiastic about progress on this project.

### III. Updates from subcommittee meetings

#### a. Grants - Ms. Folsom

1. The committee is continuing to track progress on prior-year grantees in addition to current year recipients; re: question about funding of last (2019-2020) grant cycle projects, yes, funding is underway.
2. Next order of business will be to work on Travel Scholarship guidelines begun last year, distinguishing between requirements for Grant project funding vs Travel Scholarship funding.

#### b. Outreach & Communications - Ms. Ward & Ms. Mattioli

1. Ms. Ward noted we've recently received images from Rachel McLaughlin relating to her ongoing grant project w/students in Cville and Huehue; in light of that she asked Mr. Norris for some digital images from the recent Winneba trip. All of these can be included on our website and other virtual sites. In general, we are in need of additional and updated visuals representing our Sister Cities' activities, to be used for promotion on our various social media.
2. Ms. Mattioli reported that the subcommittee reviewed its objectives to determine if they are still relevant but has not yet generated a timeline for implementation.

#### c. Education - Ms. Smiley

1. Clarified with Ms. Kogge that Mr. Irby has agreed to continue overseeing the International Space Station broadcast project that she (Ms. Kogge) initiated earlier this year.
2. No updates at this time on progress regarding an in-person event targeted to underserved students.
3. There was enthusiasm in the committee for establishing an ad hoc group from the community to help build and plan ahead for ongoing annual involvement with YAAS.

#### d. Finance- Ms. Kogge

1. Ms. Kogge circulated a chart of outstanding grant-related expenses from the 2019-2020 grant award year. Members were invited to refer to that chart to view which expenses remain outstanding. (copy of chart available on share google drive)

### IV. Designation of new Co-Chair to replace Ms. Kogge

This will be Ms. Kogge's final commission meeting, as she is leaving the area in July to start a new job. Mr. Irby has requested we elect a new co-chair. There was discussion but no nominations were made. It was decided that the nomination should be deferred to the July meeting, in order to give members time to consider the position and conduct the process with more members present (today only six of eleven members in attendance).

## V. Other business

- a. Ms. Smiley asked for follow up on the Spending Guidelines item from the May meeting. Ms. Robinson reported that the meeting between two CSCC members (Mr. Irby and Mr. Grinnell) with city attorney re: Spending Guidelines had taken place. Both Mr. Irby and Mr. Grinnell were absent today so the results of that meeting have not yet been shared with the Commission. It was decided we should defer further discussion of this item until the August meeting, so that the full commission can participate. Members are asked to review the Guidelines as drafted and be prepared to suggest revisions and determine needed changes in advance of the August meeting.
- b. Members thanked Ms. Kogge for her service and wished her well with her relocation and in her new job.

Meeting adjourned at 5:46 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Smiley, Secretary and Besancon Rep

*Next CSCC meeting is on Tuesday July 20 @ 4:30 pm*