

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

MINUTES

Meeting November 16, 2021

Zoom

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

Non-members present: Maxicelia Robinson, Brain Wheeler

Meeting opened at 4:32 Daman Irby presided A quorum was present

I. Approval of October minutes

- Mr. Ghartey requested the following amendment: change City Rept eligible travel amount from \$1500 to \$2000
- Ms. Smiley requested time of adjournment be added

Motion to approve: Grinnell Seconded: Ward Minutes approved as amended

II. Secretary's Report (Ms. Smiley)

Noted the new folder in the shared drive entitled "Goals and Strategic Plans." (Mr. Irby shared a link to the folder in the group chat). Commissioners were asked to upload completed drafts of their 2022 Goals to this folder

III. City Rep Updates and Presentation of 2022 Goals

a. Winneba (Mr. Ghartey, Mr. Norris)

Updates:

- 1) announced Dec 2 fundraising concert at the Paramount to support Winneba Foundation activities
- 2) City Council has given preliminary approval to the donation of a fire engine; final approval is expected at Council's December meeting

Goals:

- 1) organize a delegation trip to Winneba for the deer hunting festival May 2022
- 2) connect community and civil departments in Winneba to corresponding departments in C'ville (eg: Forestry Department, local Police department, Fire and Rescue
- 3) introduce the new mayors of both cities to one another

Mr. Ghartey will fine tune these goals and upload them to the new folder on the shared drive. Ms. Ward asked Mr. Ghartey to provide the Outreach Committee with visuals and text so that the concert and the fire engine donation can be promoted on CSCC media outlets. Mr. Norris suggested pulling posts about both of these from the Winneba Foundation's website.

b. Besancon (Ms. Smiley)

Goals: (please refer to draft goals document, uploaded to shared drive on 11-16-21)

Of particular importance in 2022 will be to work towards establishing a somewhat more formal network of community members to assist the Besancon Rep with the planning and implementation of projects and exchanges. Both Mr. Norris and Ms. Folsom have offered to share ideas/brainstorm with Ms. Smiley.

c. Poggio (Ms. Mattioli)

Goals:

1) establish a relationship between a school in Charlottesville and the middle school in Poggio

2) carry forward the goal of sponsoring a Philipp Mazzei film event in Charlottesville

3) pursue a street naming in Poggio

There was follow up discussion about the challenges in cultivating a relationship with administrators in the Italian schools, specifically the need for teacher/teachers in both communities to spearhead this initiative.

d. Huehuetenango (Mr. Irby)

Goals:

1) locate assistance for contacts in Huehue as they wrestle to create their sister city commission

2) recruit a CSCC At-Large member with a particular interest in focusing on the Friendship City relationship

3) promote additional events/grants to raise awareness in Cville of this new relationship (ex: a gathering at a local coffee house open)

4) work with SCI on steps to move towards official Sister City status

Ms. Ward asked whether we can make a special request that Council approve a "Friendship City" Rep position. Mr Norris reiterated his prior offer to write up a request on behalf of the Commission. Ms. Robinson clarified that in the past it was not standard procedure to have a "friendship city" position on the Commission. She suggested we ask the Ixtatan Foundation to provide assistance. Ms. Smiley and Ms. Ward noted that there are resource documents on the shared drive (organizational documents folder) on affiliating with a sister city.

IV. Education Committee Update, with 2022 Goals (Mr. Irby, Ms. Smiley)

Goals:

1) fill the empty K-12 position

2) shift focus away from the committee itself planning and hosting events towards soliciting grantees and other organizations to create and execute educational programs

- 3) promote the Sister Cities International YAAS competition as an opportunity to engage local students in a program with a global/international focus; use this as a way to introduce more students to the work of the CSCC

V. Outreach Committee Update, with 2022 Goals (Mr. Grinnell, Ms. Ward)

Goals:

- 1) move 2021 goal re: social media forward
- 2) carryover goal to identify a commissioner to manage the commission website
- 3) review brainstorming ideas for outreach notes, select at least one and generate a plan for implementation
- 4) draft a governance document on the responsibilities of the committee and best practices for securing content to publicize on our media platforms; develop a schedule for city reps/committee chairs to follow regarding sharing content so that outreach can regularly disseminate into the community

VI. Grants Committee Update, with 2022 Goals (Ms. Folsom, Ms. Ward)

Goals:

- 1) prepare and complete the next grant cycle, strengthening the procedures related to requiring regular updates from grantees and identifying CSCC liaisons for each grant
- 2) revise the Travel Scholarship program guidelines, incorporating feedback and suggestions from full Commission discussion in October

Updates:

- 1) Proposed grant cycle timeline
Cycle to open in early December; deadline for applications early-mid January 2022; awards announced March 1. Grantees will have one year to complete their projects. There will be a specific liaison person from the Commission for each grant projectschedul. Grants committee will establish a schedule for quarterly check-ins with grantees and reporting back to the full Commission on grant status/progress.

Ms. Folsom requested the Commission's approval to move forward with this proposed timeline as well as the revised grant application.

Motion to approve timeline: Smiley Seconded: Norris Motion passed

- 2) Grant application revisions
Ms. Folsom proposed several additions/revisions regarding eligibility, funding and regular reporting expectations

Ms. Ward screen shared the revised grant application for review. Mr. Grinnell requested the application be altered from 2021-22 to 2022-23. Mr. Ghartey

requested the committee implement a process for addressing the feasibility of proposed projects with the grant applicants. Ms. Ward asked whether there needs to be additional language in the application about this? Mr. Irby suggested not; we are always in the position to approve or not approve if a grant application appears achievable, particularly if a grant proposes to include all of the sister cities. Ms. Smiley suggested the committee consult city reps when there are feasibility questions about implementing a project in one of our sister cities.

Motion to adopt the revised grant application: Ms. Ward Seconded: Norris Passed unanimously

VII. Budget Request/Funding Procedures (Mr. Grinnell, Ms. Ward)

Mr. Grinnell submitted our budget request to City Council, asking for \$30K.

Subsequently Grinnell and Ward spoke to City Council at their meeting but discovered later that councillors had not yet seen budget requests. Mr. Grinnell recommended we request a spot on an upcoming Council agenda to deliver our required annual report, to answer questions, and to underscore our need to be funded in the next budget cycle. At Mr. Irby's request, Max Robinson will provide information about when we can next request a spot on Council's agenda. Mr. Norris suggested we wait until after the two newly elected councillors are seated, January 2022 or later.

Mr. Grinnell requested that we vote at our December meeting on some of the outstanding grant monies from prior years that remain unspent.

Mr. Grinnell thanked Ms. Ward for her help with the narrative that accompanied the budget request.

VIII. Recruitment of New Commission Members (Mr. Irby)

Seats currently vacant: At-Large (1), K-12 Rep, Youth Rep, Business Rep

Mr. Irby reported that Erin Hughey-Comers is planning to apply for the At-Large position. She has a particular interest in Huehue. He also reported that Alison Brown, Social Science Coordinator for Cville City Schools, has agreed to help identify a K-12 appointee. Mr. Irby asked her for assistance identifying a possible Youth Rep as well. Mr. Irby solicited Business Rep candidate ideas from the Commission. Mr. Ghartey suggested we reach out to the Chamber of Commerce for help recruiting candidates. Ms. Ward pointed out that there is a very tight window with this application cycle for reviewing applicants and making any recommendations to Council about appointments and there is not a Commission meeting scheduled in this window. Mr. Irby proposed that commissioners independently read any applications received by the December 10 deadline, and forward their reactions/thoughts directly to him so that he can share those with Council prior to its meeting on Dec 20 (when appointments will be made).

IX. Vote on Travel Reimbursement to Mr. Gharthey for Winneba trip

Mr. Irby reviewed the adopted revisions to this reimbursement amount and clarified that \$2000 has been approved for City Rep travel in the current (2021-22) fiscal year.

Motion to approve Mr. Gharthey's request for \$2000 to support his travel to Winneba in December 2021: Ward Seconded: Irby Approved unanimously

X. Funding Request: Winneba project

Mr. Gharthey has submitted a formal request for \$1000 towards the shipping costs of a donated fire engine from Charlottesville to Winneba. Mr. Grinnell clarified that this is a separate request not related to the 2020 grant already awarded to Winneba Foundation for fire safety/equipment.

**Motion to approve the funding request: Mattioli Seconded: Folsom
Motion passed unanimously.**

It was decided that we will not hold a December Commission meeting and will defer topics referenced earlier in this meeting until January 2022.

Meeting adjourned at 6:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Smiley
Secretary and Besancon Representative

Next meeting: Tuesday January 18 @ 4:30. Location TBA.