

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission  
MINUTES  
Meeting February 15, 2022 (Zoom)

Present: Alicen Brown, Amanda Folsom, Nana Gharthey, Michael Grinnell, Daman Irby, Dave Norris, Stella Mattioli, Sylvia New Strawn, Elizabeth Smiley, Adrienne Ward, Vivien Wong  
Absent: Kimber Hawkey  
Non-members present: Maxicelia Robinson, Lachan Parks

Meeting opened at 4:34 pm Daman Irby presiding A quorum was present

- I. Introduction of new Commission members  
Mr Irby asked all members to introduce themselves to Sylvia New Strawn
- II. Approval of January meeting minutes as written  
**Motion** to approve: Ms. Brown **Seconded:** Mr. Norris **Motion passed**
- III. Secretary's Report (Ms. Smiley reporting)  
There is a statewide meeting of sister city organizations on Saturday, April 2, which will be offered virtually as well as in person. Ms. Smiley would like to attend on behalf of the CSCC but will be out of town; perhaps another commissioner will consider attending.
- IV. City Rep Updates
  - a. Winneba (Mr. Gharthey reporting from Winneba)  
Another delegation trip planned for May 2022 to coincide with the annual deer hunt in Ghana. Spots for this trip are already filled; he encouraged commissioner participation in a future visit. The fire engine donated by the Cville Fire Department is ready for shipment and will be leaving for Winneba soon.
  - b. Besancon (Ms. Smiley reporting)  
Several projects are still in various stages of progress, including two musician exchanges, a proposed sports-themed student exchange, a chef exchange, and the "Face to Face International" portrait project.
  - c. Poggio (Ms. Mattioli reporting)  
Ms. Mattioli has recruited several English teachers from Poggio's middle school to partner with local teachers in establishing student penpal exchanges. A 2020 grant-funded exchange postponed due to the pandemic has been reactivated: two musicians will travel to Poggio in March to study and perform Italian music, with a possible return in July to perform in a music festival
  - d. Huehuetenango (Mr. Irby reporting)  
No updates to report. We need a commissioner to volunteer to be the primary contact between the CSCC, the Ixtatan Foundation and our Huehue contacts

V. Committee Updates

a. Budget & Finance (Mr. Grinnell reporting)

No updates to report.

b. Grants

1) Review of 2022 Grant proposals (Ms. Ward reporting)

This cycle we have received 3 grant proposals. An overview of each grant application with committee recommendations can be found here:

[2022 Grant application info.docx - Google Docs](#)

In related matters, the committee discussed the need to revise the grant application so that it gathers additional information about each applicant (for example, whether the grant applicant is a minor or an adult). The committee also discussed improving promotion of the Grants program since this year's applicant pool was smaller than prior years. With regard to unspent grant funds from prior years, the committee decided to establish a deadline of May 31, 2022 by which grantees must request reimbursement of any unspent funds they were awarded.

Mr. Irby called for a motion to accept the grant committee's funding recs

**Motion to accept:** Mr. Gharthey **Seconded:** Mr. Grinnell **Motion passed**

2) Guidelines for Sponsorships (Ms. Folsom reporting)

The committee is currently working on developing new guidelines for sponsorships, but this will be deferred for discussion at another time.

Commissioners were reminded of the dashboard in the Grants folder (CSCC shared google drive), where the grants committee posts updated information on the progress of all existing grants.

3) Process for Travel Scholarships (Ms. Folsom reporting)

There is a current demand for travel assistance for the May 2022 trip to Winneba (the application deadline for this trip is March 1).

Ms. Folsom provided an overview for new Commissioners: The program has been in development for the past year. The goal is to make Sister City trips more inclusive and affordable for members of the entire community. The proposed scholarship amount is \$1000, an amount meant to support an applicant's travel expenses but not intended to fully fund a trip. Ms. Folsom placed the current draft guidelines in the zoom chat for commissioners to review. Mr. Irby called for a vote to approve the Travel Scholarships guidelines as written specifying a maximum scholarship allocation of no more than \$5000/year.

**Motion:** Mr. Norris **Second:** Mr. Gharthey **Passed w/1 abstention**

Further discussion: (Ms. Ward)

There is a current demand for travel assistance for the May 2022 trip to Winneba (the application deadline for this trip is March 1). As a result, several additional steps must be addressed immediately:

The current draft of the application needs to be finalized; Ms. Folsom and Ms. Ward will complete this. The Travel Scholarships need to be announced to the public. Can Michael and Stella help with this? Ms. Robinson will also assist with promotion using the City's media and online outlets. We need to deliberate over applications received and determine allocations prior to the next full commission meeting. As this will require scheduling a separate (public) meeting, Ms. Robinson will work on getting a meeting approved for the Grants committee prior to March 8.

Mr. Gharthey raised the issue of needing designated outside organizations who will agree to become vendors with the City in order to receive and then disburse scholarships funds to recipients. Given the immediate need, Mr. Irby asked if the Winneba Foundation could serve as the fiscal sponsor in this initial round of travel scholarships. Since applicants for this cycle are likely to be for the May trip to Winneba, Mr. Norris agreed for the Winneba Foundation to serve as the fiscal sponsor, without taking a fee for this service.

Ms. Folsom requested the formation of a subcommittee to review applications and select recipients. Mr. Norris volunteered to help with applications; Mr. Grinnell will draft press releases and announce winners; Mr. Irby will ask Ms. Brown (who left the meeting early) to assist as well. It was agreed that for future cycles, each City Rep will participate in the deliberations whenever there are scholarship applicants for travel to their respective Sister Cities.

c. Outreach and Communication

1) CSCC Email (Ms. Ward)

Discussions about how to publicize our activities (Grants, scholarships) and our sponsored events has led the committee to consider creating an extensive email list that would be used for regular CSCC updates and announcements.

The current Sister Cities gmail inbox needs to be checked regularly for incoming messages. The committee would like assistance with monitoring the Commission's gmail, perhaps by establishing a rotating schedule that includes all commissioners.

2) Brochure Proposal (Ms. New Strawn reporting)

Ms. New Strawn asked commissioners to review her proposal and send comments and questions to her via email or phone in preparation for a lengthier discussion at our March meeting.

d. Education (Ms. Wong reporting)

Ms. Wong and Ms. Smiley met to discuss the 2022 Young Artist and Authors Competition (YAAS) sponsored by Sister Cities International. Ms. Wong plans to contact Aaron Eichorst to discuss how she might assist him with promotion and logistics inside CHS, which has been the primary source of student YAAS participation so far.

Meeting adjourned at 6:11PM

Next Meeting:

*Tuesday, March 15 @ 4:30 - Full Commission*