

## Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

### MINUTES

April 19, 2022 (Zoom)

Present: Alicen Brown, Amanda Folsom, Michael Grinnell, Kimber Hawkey, Daman Irby, Stella Mattioli, Dave Norris, Elizabeth Smiley, Adrienne Ward, Vivien Wong

Absent: Nana Ghartey, Sylvia New Strawn

Non-members present: Maxicelia Robinson, Lachen Parks, Kelley Libby & Wes Swing (2019 grant recipients)

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

I. Approval of March Meeting Minutes

**Motion to approve:** Mattioli    **Seconded:** Grinnell    **Motion passed**

II. Secretary's Report (Ms. Smiley)

a. Open Commission seats June 2022

There are five (5) commission terms expiring on June 30. All commissioners in these positions are eligible to serve an additional term and are encouraged to apply. Any commissioner who wishes to be re-appointed will need to complete the city's application and submit it to Council by the June 10 deadline. Mr. Irby asked the commissioners serving the expiring terms to signal their intent to reapply before the next full Commission meeting in May.

Ms. Ward reiterated her proposal to develop a new member orientation to offer our most recently appointed commissioners and to have ready for any new/incoming commissioners for the next term. She also suggested we develop a plan for community promotion whenever new commissioners are appointed. **Action item:** Smiley and Ward will meet to work on an orientation and plan a 1-hour q&a for our newest commissioners sometime between the May and June Commission meetings.

III. Email Communications Report (Ms. Ward)

Ms. Ward asked whether the new commissioners are now receiving emails from Fred Blanton, SCI State Rep for Virginia (yes) Mr. Irby encouraged any and all commissioners to take advantage of the meetings and events planned by SCI and by Mr. Blanton whenever the topics might be of interest to our local commission.

IV. City Rep Updates

a. Winneba - (Mr. Norris)

Delegation trip to Winneba is scheduled for May 4-14 (26 travelers).

Mr. Norris was asked to send photos of the delegation to be posted on our social media outlets. Ms. Hawkey will assist in posting photos on her Nextdoor account if Mr. Norris will send them to her during the trip.

- b. Besancon - (Ms. Smiley)  
Former Vicemayor Kristin Szakos will visit Besançon May 11-14; she will deliver greetings from Mayor Snook and meet with various sister city partners there.
- c. Poggio - (Ms. Mattioli)
  - 1) Poggio would like to send the winner of its July 2022 local music contest to Cville in the fall to offer a concert and has asked for financial assistance with trip expenses (for a traveling party of 1-4). It was suggested that Stella contact former Poggio City Rep Terri DiCinti and other friends of Poggio to recruit host families, sponsor meals and help with transportation.
  - 2) Wes Swing & Kelley Libby (2019 grant recipients) reported on their recent trip to Poggio as part of their Storie Musicali project. They shared photos and recordings made during their visits at a music school, a peace rally in support of Ukraine, and a performance of local musicians. They will integrate their recordings with sounds recorded in Charlottesville, to create an “audio” picture of what each sister city looks and sounds like, which will be launched as a YouTube event. Wes Swinghas been invited to return to Poggio to perform in a music festival in summer 2023.
- d. Huehuetenango - (Mr. Irby)  
Kelly Eplee (Ixtatan Foundation Board) trip in August. He has agreed to deliver greetings/meet & greet to our Friendship City partners while there.

#### V. Committee Updates

- a. Budget & Finance (Mr. Grinnell)  
Council did approve our budget request for the full 30K. Many thanks to Mr. Grinnell and Ms. Ward for their hard work on that request.
- b. Grants (Ms. Ward)  
“Face to Face:International” project status: the show apparently did open at the Bridge PAI on April 1, but the gallery has been closed since. It will re- open to the public on April 29 for one night. After the show comes down, the portraits will be shipped to the subjects in our sister cities. Ms. Ward will document the show (photo/video) so that it can be featured on our website/social media platforms.  
**Action item:** Ms. Ward will follow up with the Bridge to discuss how it might be possible to make footage available to our Sister Cities.  
  
**Action item:** Ms. Ward asked Stella to reach out to 2022 Grant recipient Henry Pollard for a status update on his projects and report back at the May Commission meeting.

It was proposed that Ms. Wong be invited to join the Grants committee. There will be a need for additional committee members if both Ms. Folsom and Mr. Grinnell rotate off the Commission when their terms expire this June.

c. Outreach & Communications (Ms. Ward)

Nextdoor Account:

Ms. Mattioli spoke with Max Robinson about establishing an account for Commission use. This is complicated given our status as a city government commission. Council wants to be certain that we are maximizing the existing platforms we have. [Ms. Ward: how would we gauge if we are using our current platforms to capacity?]. The City already has a Nextdoor account that it uses to send info to specific neighborhoods, but it is unable to see any conversations that occur between users in those neighborhoods; this is a drawback of this platform. Since the City's Communications department would have to be heavily involved in setting up and overseeing the use of a commission-specific account, we have been asked to wait until a new Director of Communications has been hired and then arrange to meet with that person. **A vote has been tabled at this time.**

d. Education (Ms. Wong)

YAAS 2022 report: Ms. Wong met with several teachers at CHS and reports that there is increasing awareness of this program. We sponsored 5 entries to this year's competition (that is more than double last year's entries). Judging will occur over the summer; winners will be announced in August at the SCI annual Youth Summit.

VI. Other Business:

Mr. Irby noted that we are past due for quarterly committee meetings and suggested we schedule these in May. [Action item](#): Irby will email all commissioners soon to coordinate scheduling those.

*Best wishes go out to Lachen Parks, who will be leaving the city for a job at UVA.*

Meeting adjourned at 5:59 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Elizabeth Smiley - Secretary & Besancon Rep

Next Meeting:  
*Tuesday May 17 @ 4:30 pm - Full Commission*