

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission
MINUTES
May 17, 2022 (Zoom)

Present: Alicen Brown, Amanda Folsom, Daman Irby, Stella Mattioli, Dave Norris, Sylvia New Strawn (joining late), Elizabeth Smiley, Adrienne Ward

Absent: Nana Ghartey, Michael Grinnell, Kimber Hawkey, Vivien Wong

Non-members present: Maxicelia Robinson, Lachen Parks

Meeting opened at 4:37pm Daman Irby presided A quorum was deemed present

I. Approval of April Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve: Ms. Ward **Seconded:** Ms. Folsom **Motion passed**

II. Secretary's Report (Ms. Smiley & Mr. Irby)

- a. Virtual meetings will continue through August 2022. Our September meeting, which will also be our annual retreat, will be in person. Meetings will take place at City Hall.
- b. Mr. Irby screen-shared a list of current Commissioner terms. Ms. Brown, Mr. Grinnell and Ms. New Strawn all intend to reapply. Mr. Norris and Ms. Folsom will step down. Departing Commissioners were thanked for their service. New terms begin July 1, 2022.
- c. Current committee memberships were reviewed and updated as needed.
- d. Ms. Ward and Ms. Smiley will meet on 5/20 to begin drafting an Orientation Handbook for all new Commissioners. Ms. Ward suggested scheduling an orientation meeting in early July after any new Commissioners have been seated.
- e. The Sister City sign on the 5th Street entry into the city is obstructed by bushes; Ms. Robinson will alert public works. Mr. Norris suggested replacing the Pleven sign with one for Huehuetenango, however Ms. Robinson clarified that this should be deferred until a formal sister city charter has been signed. Ms. Robinson will check on whether the costs for these signs come out of the CSCC budget.

III. Email Communications Report (Ms. Ward)

No new updates to report.

IV. City Rep Updates

a. Winneba - (Mr. Norris)

The recent delegation trip was a success. Mr. Norris thanked the Commission for providing travel scholarships to two of the participants.

During the trip, delegates were able to present local officials with \$1400, raised with the help of JMRL and Roger & Jessica Voisinet, to support the library in Winneba.

Three (3) reps from the Cville Fire Dept were in the delegation and were able to prepare their counterparts in Winneba for the arrival of the donated fire engine, which is still in transit.

There are plans to open a dialogue with the newly appointed US ambassador to Ghana, Virginia Palmer, to address and resolve past difficulties securing travel visas for Ghanaian visitors to Cville.

Action items: Mr. Norris will arrange for one or both of the travel scholarship recipients to report on their trip experience at an upcoming meeting; he will also send images from the trip to the Communications committee to be posted on our website and social media platforms.

b. Besancon - (Ms. Smiley)

Former Vice Mayor Kristin Szakos is currently in Besancon for several days and we have arranged visits with city officials there to deliver greetings from both Mayor Snook and the Commission. This will be the first semi-official visit between the cities since the start of the global pandemic and the election of new mayors in both city governments.

Ms. Smiley has postponed her planned Sister City Representative visit to Besancon until Spring 2023, to time it better with the expected resumption of student/school exchanges and several other joint projects that are in the works for later that year.

c. Poggio - (Ms. Mattioli)

We have been invited to provide a Cville resident to serve as a jurist for Poggio's youth music festival this July. Ms. Mattioli suggested Wes Swing (recently returned from Poggio) and he has been accepted.

Ms. Mattioli is exploring locations in town as possible concert venues when the festival winner travels to Cville in the fall. She has scouted out the Music Resource Center and solicited other ideas from the Commission. Ms. Ward suggested partnering with the Festival of Cultures or other local festivals taking place in Sept/Oct. Mr. Irby suggested reaching out to the Front Porch. The Commission can assist Ms. Mattioli in securing sponsorships to help with expenses.

d. Huehuetenango - (Ms. New Strawn)

Ms. New Strawn reported on her meeting with Elias Alonzo of the Ixtatan Foundation. He has asked her to consider traveling to Guatemala with him in October to meet with contacts there and to learn more about our Friendship City.

Action item: Ms. Smiley will introduce Sylvia to Kelly Eplee (Ixtatan Foundation Board) who will be able to connect her to others who have traveled to Huehue and can offer tips for how to prepare for the visit.

V. Committee Updates

a. Budget & Finance (Mr. Irby reporting for Mr. Grinnell)

They are currently working on our annual report, which is due by June 30.

Ms. Robinson reported that our remaining balance is \$ 22,392.07

b. Grants (Ms. Ward)

1. Report on Outstanding projects

Love and Poetry (Myra Anderson)—all funds drawn down, working on having Myra Anderson make a presentation/provide an update at a future Commission meeting

Winneba Fire Safety Project—all funds drawn down

Storie Musicali - a few funds outstanding, aware of May 31 deadline

Ixtatan internet connections- still has funds to draw down, aware of May 31 deadline as well

Pen Pals (Libby Edward Aubaugh)- funds have been drawn down but we need to schedule a report or presentation from this grantee as well

Face to Face International; haven't requested any of their funds yet and also need to provide a report or presentation

Ms. Folsom suggested we consider inviting all grantees to make their presentations at one designated Commission meeting

2. Report on Bridge/PAI "Face to Face International" Show

Reported on the closing reception on April 29. Several commissioners were able to attend as well as 4 of the eight local artists. It doesn't appear that anyone documented the event in photos. Ms. Ward took photos of the actual portraits; the Bridge will take professional quality photos before returning the portraits to the subjects. Mr. Norris was able to carry the two Winneba portraits to Winneba and present them to the portrait subjects during the recent delegation trip.

c. Outreach (Ms. Ward)

Ms. Mattioli did reach out to Henry Pollard (grantee) for a status update on his grant project, but has not heard back from him.

Action item: follow up with Henry Pollard again.

Dave Dillehunt has been named Deputy Director of Communications and Public Engagement

No other business to report

VI. Other Business:

Our usual meeting date (third Tuesday) conflicts with a City Council meeting next month. Mr. Irby proposed June 14th instead; a quorum indicated its availability for that day.

Meeting adjourned at 5:56 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Smiley - Secretary & Besancon Rep

Next Meeting:
Tuesday June 21 @ 4:30 pm - Full Commission