

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission
MINUTES
July 19, 2022 (Zoom)

Present: Clare Denton-Spalding, Michael Grinnell, Edward Herring, Daman Irby, Stella Mattioli, Sylvia New Strawn, Elizabeth Smiley, Vivien Wong

Absent: Alicen Brown, Nana Ghartey, Adrienne Ward

Non-members present: Maxicelia Robinson, Deputy Clerk of Council

Meeting opened at 4:38 pm Daman Irby presiding A quorum was present

I. Approval of June meeting minutes

Motion to approve: Mr. Herring **Seconded:** Ms. Mattioli **Motion passed**

II. Welcome & Intro of New Commissioners (Mr. Irby)

Mr. Irby invited the two new commissioners to introduce themselves:

Clare Denton-Spalding was motivated to join the CSCC b/c of her high school exchange experience in Casablanca through a Sister Cities organization in her hometown of Chicago.

Edward Herring is a returning Commissioner who was very involved in establishing the Besançon student exchanges. He looks forward to supporting both the Besançon and Huehuetenango programs.

Current Commissioners and Max Robinson (administrative support liaison from the City) also introduced themselves to our newest members.

III. Secretary's Report (Ms. Smiley)

Ms. Smiley welcomed the new members and oriented them to the minutes of our meetings. She then checked in with Commissioners about progress on Action items from the June minutes. Status report: Mr. Irby's is ongoing, not yet completed; Ms. Mattioli's is completed (she will report on this in her City Rep update).

Update on new Commissioner Orientation Handbook: Ms. Ward and Ms. Smiley have almost completed a full draft of the handbook and will present it to the Commission for review in August.

Action item: Commissioners are requested to draft their committee descriptions for inclusion in the handbook, using the templates provided, and upload them to the google drive by **August 2**.

IV. Email Communications Report (no report)

V. City Rep Updates

a. Huehuetenango
(Guest Speaker Elias Alonzo, Director of Development, Ixtatán Foundation)

Mr. Alonzo gave a presentation highlighting the accomplishments and current status of our Friendship City relationship. A link to his presentation can be found here: [Internet & Introductions: Huehuetenango and Charlottesville](#)

The Huehue sister city commission's website is still under construction but has been assigned the domain name www.huehuecharlottesville.com.

Huehue's commission has requested an official CSCC delegation visit and is prepared to cover the delegation's expenses during their stay. Mr. Alonzo has proposed that the visit coincide with Huehue's annual Revolution Day ceremonies in October and has offered to travel with the delegation himself. Ms. New Strawn had previously indicated her plans to travel to Huehue in October; Mr. Herring is interested in participating; other Commissioners are welcome to participate and the Commission will continue to coordinate with Mr. Alonzo and with the Huehue contacts to organize and finalize details.

b. Winneba (no report)

c. Besançon (Ms. Smiley)

No significant updates to report this month

d. Poggio (Ms. Mattioli)

Update on the youth musician's visit and concert Fall 2022:

The winners of the youth competition have been chosen and can be heard via this link: [Radio VINCI Autoroutes \(107.7 FM\)](#). Planning is still underway to bring the winners to Cville in November for a visit and performance. The Carver Rec Center is the likely performance venue.

Ms. Mattioli was encouraged to contact both Terri DiCintio (former Poggio Rep) and former mayor Catherine Slaughter, both of whom have contacts in Cville and Poggio, for assistance in securing hosts and volunteers to help with the logistics of the visit. Dates need to be set soon so the Italians can purchase their plane tickets.

Update on Henry Pollard's Grant (Teenage Life During Covid):

His website is developed (link: <https://sistercity9.wixsite.com/my-site>)

He has also created an online form that any interested participant can fill out and submit with their photographs to be featured on the website.

VI. Committee Updates

a. Budget & Finance (Mr. Grinnell)

Our budget allocation from City Council arrived in early July. Mr. Grinnell is currently developing a budget template (spreadsheet) for the 2022-23 fiscal year. The Annual Report to City Council (Mr. Irby) was due on June 30; Mr. Irby is still working on this and would like City Reps to send him brief reports on the year's activities for inclusion.

b. Grants (no report)

c. Outreach (Mr. Grinnell)

Action item: Mr. Grinnell will reach out to Ms. Wong over the next month to orient her to the Commission's website and begin to work together on upgrades and improvements.

d. Education (no report)

VII. Other Business

a. Annual Retreat Planning (Mr. Irby and Ms. Smiley)

Our Retreat is scheduled for September, and will be 3-4 hours long. The agenda has not yet been set. We may hold it in a location of our choosing, as long as it is still open to the public. If we are able to meet in person, there is an interest in sharing a meal. **Action item:** Mr. Grinnell will look at past budgets and advise us on an appropriate amount that the CSCC might cover for food.

Ms. Smiley proposed that we form a retreat planning group so that the preparation of an agenda and the logistics do not fall solely to Mr. Irby as Chair. Ms. Smiley and Ms. Denton-Spalding both offered to help Mr. Irby with the planning. It was agreed we will meet in early August; **Ms. Robinson will assist with setting up a zoom meeting for us.**

Meeting adjourned at 5:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Smiley
Secretary and Besançon Representative

Next Full Commission Meeting: *Tuesday August 16 @ 4:30 pm*

Annual Retreat: *Tuesday September 20, 4:30-8:00 pm*