

## Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

### MINUTES

August 16, 2022

### Zoom

Present: Claire Denton-Spalding, Michael Grinnell, Edward Herring, Daman Irby, Elizabeth Smiley, Adrienne Ward, Vivien Wong

Absent: Nana Gharthey, Sylvia New Strawn (her attempt to join at 5 pm was unsuccessful)

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

Meeting opened at: 4:33      Daman Irby presiding      A quorum was present

#### I. Approval of July minutes

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

#### II. Secretary's Report

##### a. New Member Orientation Handbook (Ms. Ward)

Status update: as soon as it's ready to read, we will ask older members of the commission, as well as Max/Kyna to read it first & offer edits, and then we will revise it and make the completed version available to all the newer members.

##### b. Retreat Planning/Decisions (Mr. Irby)

- Brief discussion on location for our Retreat which is expected to be held in person. Mr. Herring asked if we might move the Retreat start time to 5 pm so that we can use the room available at the Central Library. Ms. Robinson will check on the possible use of City Space. Ms. Brown will also check on meeting space at CHS annex.
- Brief discussion on meal options. Deman proposed ordering Chinese take out. Ms. Brown also suggested Roots, Sticks and Pearl Island.  
**Action item:** Mr. Irby will send out an email to the commission so that all can respond with their preferences.
- Quick overview of the Retreat agenda as currently planned.

#### III. Email Communications Report (Ms. Ward)

Received in past month: request about Besançon; request about possible new sister city in Asia; request for information to support research related to a French topic. Ms. Ward proposed formalizing a new position of Email Coordinator (Standing Committee) **Action item:** Ms. Ward will submit a request to be considered and voted upon at our next meeting.

#### IV. City Rep Updates

##### a. Huehuetenango (Mr. Herring)

Both Mr. Herring and Ms. New Strawn attended the Ixtatan Foundation reception last month. Following the reception, Mr. Herring drafted and distributed an email which proposed three levels of ongoing focus for the Friendship City. He hopes

to travel to Huehue in October and make contacts with 2 of the high schools regarding establishing partnerships with our city schools. **Action item:** Mr. Herring will draft an itinerary for this trip outlining the agenda he proposes for his time there. He and Sylvia will meet next week to continue developing the goals and agendas for this trip and will then forward their plan to Mr. Irby.

- b. Winneba (no report)
- c. Besancon (Ms. Smiley reporting)  
Update on progress with the proposed jazz musician exchange, which has now been scheduled for April 2023. More details and discussion on how the CSCC can promote and support this exchange in upcoming meetings.
- d. Poggio (Ms. Mattioli reporting)
  - Still exploring possibilities for school based partnerships and particularly identifying teachers in Poggio who would agree to coordinate and lead this (likely penpal) exchange.
  - Concert: following input from the Commission, it was agreed to propose early December for the local concert. Carver Rec Center has been selected as the concert venue; once this space is reserved, Ms.Mattioli will begin working on the hospitality details (lodging, transportation meals) for the musicians.

#### V. Committee Updates

- a. Budget & Finance (Mr. Grinnell reporting)  
We received our budget appropriation on July 1. Current balance is approximately \$47k. Mr. Grinnell would like to use some Retreat time to set target amounts for grants and other programs in the upcoming fiscal year.
- b. Grants (no grants report)
- c. Outreach/Social Media (Mr. Grinnell)  
Currently there is not a great space on our website for announcements- would like for us to discuss. Vivien Wong has volunteered to assist with website/outreach improvements; she suggested we build an events page with a link from our current homepage.
- d. Education (Ms. Brown)  
Ms. Brown and Ms. Smiley had several productive meetings over the summer to clarify and discuss the logistical issues related to student exchanges and penpal programs. Ms. Brown notes that, as the City school division is rather small, we need to consider how best to tap into the school-based resources (time, teachers, families, administrators) without stretching those resources too

thin. Ms. Brown should always be a point person for the Commission whenever there are new school-based programs or exchanges being proposed.

VI. Other Business

Ms. Robinson informed us that Mayor Snook has several questions for the Commission regarding the Friendship City relationship, pursuant to receiving our recent Annual Report. **Action item:** Mr. Irby will reach out to the Mayor to answer his questions.

**Action item:** Mr. Irby will send out a Retreat agenda in the next two weeks; this should coincide with the Orientation Handbook finalized draft also being ready for Commissioners to read in preparation for our Retreat.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Smiley,  
Secretary & Besancon Rep

*Next Meeting:*

*Tuesday, September 20, 4:30-7:30 – Annual Retreat Location TBA*