

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

MINUTES

Meeting July 12, 2023

CitySpace Large Conference Room

Present: Alicen Brown, Claire Denton-Spalding via Zoom, Nana Gharthey via Zoom, Kimberly Hayes, Edward Herring, Stella Mattioli via Zoom, Sylvia New Strawn, Elizabeth Smiley

Absent: Michael Grinnell, Vivien Wong

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

The Commissioners participating remotely cited the following allowable reasons, per

FOIA Va. Code Sec. 2.2-3708 (Effective Sept 1, 2022):

- Claire Denton-Spalding, *(B.4) unable to attend in person due to family business out of town and participating remotely from Chicago*
- Nana Gharthey, *(B.4) unable to attend in person due to ?, and participating remotely from Winneba, Ghana*
- Stella Mattioli *(B.4) unable to attend in person due to personal travel including some Sister City business, and participating remotely from Poggio a Caiano.*

Meeting opened 4:40 pm Interim Chair Edward Herring presided A quorum was present

I. Approval of Minutes

- a. February 7, 2023 Communications & Outreach Committee meeting

Motion (Kimberly Hayes) to approve minutes as written

Motion Seconded (Sylvia New Strawn)

Motion passed unanimously

- b. April 4, 2023 Grants Committee/Travel Scholarship Program evaluation meeting

Motion (Alicen Brown) to approve minutes with the recommended edits

(minutes attached, edits in blue)

Motion Seconded (Sylvia New Strawn)

Motion passed unanimously

- c. June 6 full Commission meeting

Max noted that Commission members attending virtually are ineligible to vote until the CSCC drafts and adopts a policy on virtual attendance

Motion (Sylvia New Strawn) to approve minutes as written

Motion Seconded (Alicen Brown)

Motion passed unanimously by those able to vote (Brown, Hayes, Herring, New Strawn, Smiley)

Following the vote, Edward requested that minutes be drafted and submitted no later than 2 weeks after a meeting has occurred

II. Secretary's Report (Elizabeth Smiley)

- a) All Commissioners were reminded to routinely upload any documents relating to CSCC business to the appropriate folders on our shared google drive
- b) Agendas and minutes from 2022-23 have now been migrated to their own folder on the drive; the folder labeled "Current" will now house agendas and meetings starting with tonight's meetings
- c) Following tonight's meeting, the communications materials folder will be renamed "Social Media & Outreach Materials" to more accurately reflect the mission of that committee
- d) There is now a subfolder in Organizational Docs which contains materials published by Sister Cities International and made available to member organizations, such as guidelines for affiliating with new cities and samples of charters, MOUs, and By-Laws.
- e) Please take a moment to review our 2021-24 Strategic Plan (*copy attached*), in preparation for our Annual Retreat and for work sessions in upcoming months to draft the plan for the next three years

III. Chairman's Report (Edward Herring)

Edward presented the following structural changes to our monthly meetings:

- elimination of committee reporting at every meeting
- elimination of City Rep reporting at every meeting
- full Commission meets from 4:30-5:30 pm
- each month, one or more committees meet from 5:30-6, on a rotation he will determine; Commissioners not on those committees are free to leave once the full meeting has been adjourned at 5:30; Education & Besançon were scheduled for tonight's committee meeting

IV. Request for Funding & Support for Winneba Delegation (Nana Ghartey)

Nana has requested a \$3000 allocation from the Commission to support travel expenses for the four-person delegation from Winneba visiting Charlottesville July 25-August 2 (*written request attached*).

Motion (Sylvia New Strawn) to approve Nana's request for \$3000 to support the Winneba delegation travel expenses

Motion Seconded (Alicen Brown)

Motion passed unanimously by those eligible to vote (Brown, Hayes, Herring, New Strawn, Smiley)

There was additional discussion. Sylvia requested that all Commissioners support this visit by attending scheduled events and opportunities to meet the delegation. Nana reported that he will remain in Ghana while the visitors are in Charlottesville; several commissioners expressed concern that the City Rep will not be present during an official Sister City delegation visit. In his absence we need to be sure that someone from the Commission has an opportunity to deliver welcome and greetings on behalf of the CSCC at one or more events. Edward asked Nana to have Dave Norris (Cville-Winneba Foundation) contact him in order to share additional planning details and coordinate this.

It was suggested that when we draft policies for hosting delegations (a topic already on the agenda for our Annual Retreat) we include expectations for City Reps during those visits.

V. Today's Objective: Review and select key activities for FY24

Secretary's note: this item was not discussed, due to time constraints

Edward reiterated his view that the Commission needs to become more event driven and less process oriented. He would like to see us generate a number of events that generate more Charlottesville community involvement. He would like us to consider eliminating a single point person for email communications and social media involvement. Claire proposed that when we have events or city trips any of the commissioners involved be tasked with interacting with our social media platforms, rather than funneling everything through the outreach/social media chair.

VI. Open Topic (New Business)

Edward requested reimbursement for the pewter Jefferson Cup he purchased to send to Poggio a Caiano with the community youth choir who traveled and performed there in June. Stella gave her consent for this reimbursement to come from her City Rep "allocation."

Edward called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion (Alicen Brown) to adjourn full Commission meeting and begin committee meeting

Motion Seconded (Kimberly Hayes)

Meeting adjourned at 5:33 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Smiley
Secretary & Besançon Rep

Next Meeting: Tuesday August 1, 4:30-5:50 pm, CitySpace Large Conference Room

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission
Grants Committee/Travel Scholarship Program Evaluation Meeting
Minutes - Tuesday , April 4, 2023
Virtual/zoom, 4:30 pm

Present: Alicen Brown, Daman Irby, Vivien Wong, Adrienne Ward, Max Robinson

- Reminder about anonymity in discussing applications; applicants identified by initials
- Brief review of program policies
 - \$8000/year dedicated to TSP, at \$2000/city;
 - Maximum individual travel scholarship = \$1000;
 - In the case that \$ for a city goes unrequested (i.e., no applications, that city's funds can be used for eligible surplus applications for another city);
 - # cycles/year still undecided*

*At our March 2023 meeting we did not make decisions for program long-term, whether 1 or 2 cycles/yr, but decided to run an interim program for 2023, to address immediate requests (and mediate the delay caused by postponement of TSP discussion at Feb meeting)

- Brief review of criteria for funding travel to Sister Cities
 - Travel objective must align with CSCC mission
 - Applicant offers compelling and/or reasonable explanation of need
 - Residency in Cville/Albemarle? (address provided on application)
- Discuss applications – 9 applications in all, as follows:
 - Besançon: 1 app;
 - Huehue: no applications
 - Poggio: 3 apps;
 - Winneba: 5 apps;
- Recommendations
 - The Grants/TSP Committee recommends funding travel for:

WC - \$4000 for travel to Poggio (\$1000 apiece to 4 students on CHS trip)
VP - \$1000 – for travel to Winneba with the Cville-Winneba Foundation trip
DT - \$1000 - for travel to Winneba with the Cville-Winneba Foundation trip
 - The Committee does not recommend funding travel for RGW, KJ, TR, YR, MT, CM; for any single or combination of the following reasons:

- Unclear or inappropriate travel objective
 - Little or no explanation of how travel connects with CSCC mission
 - Little or no discussion of financial need
 - Application lacking in basic information, eg specific funding amount requested
 - Residency issues – city funding intended for Cville/Albemarle County residents; applicants from other counties ineligible
- Discussed next steps, including:
 - informing applicants of decisions, who/when;
 - creation of expectations doc, and financing doc, to be included with letter to scholarship recipients;
 - need to develop formal rubric for evaluation

Meeting adjourned 6:00 pm

Submitted by Adrienne Ward

(Submitted to Edward Herring by Nana Gharthey on July 10)

Request for Support from Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission for Summer 2023 Winneba Delegation

There is arguably no more fundamental or important role for a Sister City to play than to serve as a gracious host to representatives visiting from its international Sister City. Winneba has hosted 11 official Sister City delegations from Charlottesville since 2009, rolling out the proverbial red carpet each and every time and thereby ensuring that hundreds of visitors from Charlottesville have had a wonderful experience in their Ghanaian Sister City. Unfortunately, due to the high cost of travel and the difficulty in acquiring U.S. travel visas, Charlottesville has only had the opportunity to host two official delegations from Winneba during that time, in 2010 and 2012. On both occasions, Charlottesville City government expended a considerable amount of time, effort and money in hosting its Winnebarian guests.

From July 24-August 2, 2023, a third official delegation from Winneba will be visiting Charlottesville, timed to coincide with the African American Cultural Arts Festival at the end of July. After many years, Charlottesville finally has another opportunity to show its Sister City guests the same gracious hospitality that Winneba consistently shows visitors from Charlottesville. Planning for this summer visit is well underway, with the all-volunteer Charlottesville-Winneba Foundation taking the lead role in that effort – sparing City Hall considerable effort and expense.

The four members of the visiting Winneba delegation will include:

- Hon. Alhaji Zubairu Kassim, Municipal Chief Executive (aka Mayor) of Winneba
- Ms. Farida Iddrisu, Co-Coordinator, Winneba Sister City Program
- Mr. Bio Kwakye, Co-Coordinator, Winneba Sister City Program
- Mr. Enoch Obeng, Finance Director, City of Winneba

This will be the first time that any of these Winneba officials has visited Charlottesville, and in fact it will be first time that any of them has visited the U.S. Their visit to Charlottesville will be virtually identical in focus to the visits that Charlottesville delegations make to Winneba: part cultural immersion, part forging and renewing mutually-beneficial ties, part sightseeing, and part spreading awareness & understanding of Ghanaian and African lifestyles, customs and traditions. The draft itinerary for their visit is attached. (Note that a number of trip details remain to be finalized; certain arrangements will depend in large part on how much funding the City of Charlottesville is able and willing to contribute.)

As you'll see on the draft itinerary, we have already scheduled a meeting between the delegation and Charlottesville Mayor Lloyd Snook at Charlottesville City Hall on July 31; Mayor Snook has already asked the Clerk of Council to consider what gifts he might present to the delegation members on behalf of the City. In addition, numerous City officials (including every City Councilor, the City Manager, and all members of the Sister Cities Commission) will be invited to meet the delegation at the Welcome Reception on July 25. That reception will be open to the public as well, and will be advertised through

the Foundation's social media and e-mail channels. We will especially encourage attendance from the hundreds of Charlottesville-area residents who have visited Winneba over the years. Members of the Winneba delegation will also be in attendance at the African American Cultural Arts Festival at Washington Park on July 29 along with other Festival-related programs & activities during the week, so the general public will have multiple opportunities to engage with them then as well. Local immigrants, refugees and students from Ghana will have their own opportunity to welcome and interact with the visitors from Winneba at a dinner event hosted by the Ghana Association of Charlottesville on July 30.

As evidenced on the budget below, the total cost for this trip is likely to exceed \$15,000. Almost half of this cost will be covered by the Charlottesville-Winneba Foundation and by in-kind donations (meals, homestays, volunteer drivers, etc.) arranged by the Foundation. About a third of the cost will be incurred by the City of Winneba and the travelers from Winneba themselves. We are asking the City of Charlottesville (via the Sister Cities Commission) to contribute \$3,000 to cover the difference. This amounts to about 20% of the total travel budget. We understand that the City's funds would be paid out retroactively upon submission of receipts by the Charlottesville-Winneba Foundation.

Draft Travel Budget -- Winneba Sister City Delegation Visit to Charlottesville Summer 2023

INCOME

City of Winneba/Out-of-Pocket Contributions by Travelers	\$5,000
Charlottesville-Winneba Foundation	\$3,400
City of Charlottesville (Sister Cities Commission)	\$3,000
In-Kind Donations (meals, homestays, volunteer drivers, etc.)	\$3,820
Total:	\$15,220

EXPENSES

Airfare (\$1,600/person)	\$6,400
U.S. Travel Visas (\$185/person)	\$740
Lodging (\$100/night/person for 9 nights)	\$3,600
Meals (\$50/day/person)	\$2,000
Ground Transportation (rental van, driver & gas, \$200/day)	\$2,000
Admission Fees (Monticello, DC museums, etc., \$120/person)	\$480
Total:	\$15,220

Draft Itinerary – Winneba Sister City Delegation Visit to Charlottesville Summer 2023

(note: subject to change/confirmation)

Mon, July 24 — Arrival/settling in

Tues, July 25 — Tour of Charlottesville & UVa; evening Welcome Reception (at The Independence)

Wed, July 26 — Individual meetings & appointments; Dinner hosted by Barry Sisson

Thurs, July 27 — Washington, DC day trip - sightseeing, White House, African-American History Museum

Fri, July 28 — Tour of Monticello 9:15am, Islamic Society of Central Virginia Friday prayers 1:15pm;
Fridays After Five 6:00pm

Sat, July 29 — African American Cultural Arts Festival, 10:00am-7:00pm, Washington Park

Sun, July 30 — Church service & light lunch with Dale Johnson 10:00am - Faith Christian Center
International - 2186 Richmond Rd; Dinner hosted by Ghana Association of Charlottesville

Mon, July 31 — Meeting with Mayor Lloyd Snook at Charlottesville City Hall 11:30am; lunch with
Chamber of Commerce officials; afternoon tour of Apex Clean Energy

Tues, Aug 1 — Free day; Farewell party @ Renee Branson's house

Wed, Aug 2 — Departure

