

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

Meeting - March 12, 2024, 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm

Small Conference Room, CitySpace, 100 Fifth St. NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902

1. Call to Order
2. Minutes submitted for approval:
 - CSCC Minutes - February 12, 2024
3. Chairman's Update:
 - a. New Commissioner introduction: Mr. Salvatore Moschella
 - b. Upcoming State Conference - March 16
 - c. Proposal - Hosting November 16 State Conference
 - d. Miscellaneous Expense Proposals (Display Materials)
 - e. Founder's Day at Monticello
4. Secretary's Update
5. Communications Committee Update
6. City Updates:
 - a. Huehuetenango
 - b. Besancon – Written Report Submitted
 - Besancon First Visit, April 12-17, 2024
 - c. Winneba - No update
 - d. Poggio - No update
7. Committee / Officer Updates:
 - a. Finance
 - b. Grants - Update on rewrite of Grants Program
 - c. Education
 - d. Programs and Events
8. New Business: Comments and questions / Ex-officio commentary
9. Adjournment

Next CSCC Meeting, April 11, 2024

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the public meeting may call (434) 970-3182 or submit a request via email to ada@charlottesville.gov. The City of Charlottesville requests that you provide a 48-hour notice so that proper arrangements may be made.

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

MINUTES

Meeting February 12, 2024

CitySpace Small Conference Room

Present: Alicen Brown, Claire Denton-Spalding, Casey Erickson, Kimberly Hayes, Edward Herring, Stella Mattioli, Sylvia New Strawn, Elizabeth Smiley, Cherry Stewart

Absent: Nana Gharthey, Murray Susen

Non-Voting Members Present: Maxicelia Robinson, Deputy Clerk of Council

Meeting opened at 4:33 pm with Edward Herring presiding. A quorum was present.

I. Approval of Minutes

- a. December 6 Grants Committee Meeting - no edits or changes made

Motion to approve as written: E. Herring

Seconded: K. Hayes **Motion carried**

- b. December 7 Full Commission Meeting - one edit needed: Section VIc., to specify that the \$240 requested was for breakfast reception at CHS welcoming the Lycee Pasteur students

Motion to approve minutes with noted correction: E. Smiley

Seconded: C.Erickson **Motion carried with 1 abstention** (C. Stewart)

- c. Besançon Committee - no edits or changes made

Motion to approve as written: C. Denton-Spalding

Seconded: K. Hayes **Motion carried**

- d. Jan 3 Full Commission Meeting minutes - two corrections needed: 1) Section Va. to correct the spelling to "Huehue;" 2) Section Vc. to specify the event referenced in Sylvia New Strawn's motion as the Sister Cities "Mapping" exhibit planned for April 20

Motion to approve with noted corrections: K. Hayes

Seconded: S. New Strawn **Motion carried w/1 abstention** (C. Stewart)

II. Chairperson's Update (E. Herring)

- a. New Member Introduction

Cherry Stewart introduced herself and indicated that she plans to work on the Friendship City (Huehuetenango) programs/process and to serve on the Education Committee

- b. Recommendation for Establishing a Non-profit Support Organization

Edward distributed a draft proposal (*attached*). Discussion followed. Claire suggested identifying one or more former Commissioners to spearhead the process. We will need to prepare a robust proposal, which will go first to the City Manager for review in coordination with the Finance Department. We should be prepared to justify the need to fundraise to City Council in light of Council's concerns about perceived low volume of Sister City activity in preceding years. Max reported that the City Manager is still reviewing the legalities of a public commission engaging in private fundraising and suggested we wait for his feedback before proceeding further.

c. Miscellaneous Expense Approvals (Besançon-CHS Student Exchange)

Edward distributed an updated Budget Review (*attached*)

Alicen requested to add \$40 to the existing budget to cover the cost of CHS lunch vouchers that may be required during the exchange. She personally paid for vouchers so that the three teacher chaperones were able to eat lunch at the CHS cafeteria today. Edward reviewed the additional budget item requests for meals, noting differences between his previously estimated amounts and actuals.

Motion to approve raising the budget from \$840 to \$1040: S. New Strawn
Seconded: C. Stewart **Motion carried**

III. Secretary's Update (E. Smiley)

The proposed shared google drive refresher/review will be offered at a Commission meeting later this year

Elizabeth has begun drafting proposed revised language for our By-Laws for full Commission review later in the year as well. Max reported that City Council has initiated a process to review and establish uniform governing documents for all City boards and commissions. As there is currently no timeline by which this will be distributed, we will proceed with our own review and revisions in the interim.

IV. Communications Update (C. Denton-Spalding)

Claire distributed printed Global Business Cards for Commission use.

Claire now has a charlottesville.gov email address that she will use for Commission business.

Alicen thanked Claire for the press releases and for organizing local television to be at CHS during the welcome reception for the Besançon student visitors

Claire and Kimberly have collaborated to create a VolunteerMatch posting for the April Besançon delegation visit.

V. City Rep Updates

a. Huehuetenango - no monthly report submitted (E. Herring)

Edward anticipates having a draft MOU ready for Commission review at April meeting. Max suggested we schedule another full Commission discussion to determine whether we wish to proceed with Sistering with Huehue. **Action item:** Edward will place this item on the March Agenda and will provide the Commission with information to guide the discussion in advance.

b. Besançon - January monthly report submitted (E. Smiley)

1. Student Exchange - February 11-18

There was a Welcome Reception this morning at CHS; Alicen, Elizabeth, Edward and Casey were all present to welcome the students from Besançon. Edward updated our Facebook page today with photos from that welcome reception

2. April delegation visit - April 12-17

Elizabeth discussed the draft Itinerary she is currently working on. She also distributed a Budget Request (*attached*) and outlined the individual items she is asking the Commission to commit funds towards

Motion to approve budget as presented: A Brown

Seconded K Hayes? **Motion carried**

3. Daniel Sender Grant Program Update - deferred due to time constraints

c. Winneba - no monthly report submitted (N. Gharthey) - No update

d. Poggio - no monthly report submitted (S. Mattioli) - No update

VI. Committee & Officer Updates

a. Finance

Casey reviewed our current balance and outstanding/pending commitments

b. Grants - no monthly report submitted (K. Hayes) - No update

c. Education

Alicen reviewed the Besançon student delegation activities this week; the itinerary and all supporting documents are in the Education folder on the shared google drive.

d. Programs and Events - (S. New Strawn)

Sylvia distributed a written update on the "Mapping" grant-funded project now planned as a Tom Tom Festival event for Saturday April 20 (*attached*). The location for the installation and workshops has changed from the McGuffey Art Center to the Lewis and Clark Expedition Center itself. Sylvia anticipates there will be a need for additional funds to cover expenses not anticipated in the original Grant application. The Commission asked Sylvia to request that Grantee Alexandria Searles provide a written statement of any anticipated additional expenses for a vote consideration at our March meeting.

VII. New Business (none)

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Smiley, Secretary & Besançon Rep

Next Full Commission Meeting: Tuesday, March 12, 4:30 pm

attachments

Huehuetenango City update for March 12, 2024

Since the departure of the delegation from Huehuetenango, there has been minimal contact or display of interest from the Huehuetenango Mayor and Commission. As we approach the end of the three year period that was established, we, the CSCC, have to decide if and how we want to move forward with our relationship.

I was recently contacted by Kelly Eplee, president of Ixtatan Foundation, looking to discuss how to move forward. Kelly wishes to initiate a project to obtain computers for students in Huehue schools.

Kelly and I met last week and reviewed the limitations of each of our roles in terms of providing materials to Huehuetenango. We discussed the role of the Charlottesville-Winneba Foundation in actively working on behalf of this city.

The existence of a local support organization is critical to initiating and managing assistance projects for our sister cities. We are looking at how we can establish a local support organization for Huehuetenango, as that is not the role of the CSCC nor the Ixtatan Foundation.

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission
Besançon Representative Report
February 2024

- Update on Lyceé Pasteur - CHS Student Exchange - February 11-18

Twenty-five students and three teachers completed a successful weeklong exchange stay in Charlottesville. I attended the welcome breakfast reception at CHS on Monday Feb 12 to offer greetings on behalf of the CSCC and as the Besançon Representative. We distributed a welcome gift to each student (a Cville heart sticker, a pen, and a map) provided by the Charlottesville-Albemarle Visitors & Convention Bureau. The CAVCB also prepared welcome bags to give to each of the teachers. On Friday Feb 16, I was invited to attend a farewell dinner, hosted by CHS, at Zocalo Restaurant, where I was able to meet Dr. Gurley and Dr. Otey from CCS, and exchange with the Lycée Pasteur teachers and their host teachers from CHS.

- Update on April Besançon Delegation Visit

In February I received confirmation of the third official delegation member, Sylvia Schmidt, who will represent the Rectorat of the Academy of Besançon. I secured a host family for Sylvie and communicated host information to our Besançon visitors.

Other completed tasks:

- Prepared a Budget Request for funds to support the delegation visit and presented it to the Commission at its Feb meeting for vote approval
- Confirmed date, time, and description of Alliance Francaise event scheduled for April 17
- Secured an alternate accommodation location for our use in the event of any illness or emergency requiring a visitor to be housed outside of their host family
- Met with Alicen Brown to coordinate planning details for the delegation's visit with CCS administrators on April 16
- Conducted two zoom planning meetings with Florent Werguet; one of these meetings included Sylvie Schmidt and Alicen Brown to discuss CCS meeting
- Met with Benjamin Bernard to review his planning for the "Sister Revolutions" podcast event, a meeting with the French Department, a reception, and a dinner for the visitors on Monday April 15
- Secured a catering company to provide the food and beverages for the CSCC Community Reception on April 16
- Secured a participating restaurant for CSCC Welcome Dinner on February 12
- Responded to a community member request to host a private event for the visitors on 4/13
- Corresponded with Daniel and Shelby Sender regarding the approval from STAB

- Secured a volunteer from the AFC Board to serve as a Concierge assistant for Deputy Mayor Gharet for the Sender Concert and for the CSCC Reception for a reception following their concert on April 14; reached out to STAB contact to initiate exchange regarding the use of the space and planning
 - Began soliciting donations for visitors' welcome bags
 - Began drafting an official invitation to Mayor Wade and City Council for the Community events during the delegation's visit
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- Update on Besancon Committee Activity:
 The Committee met again on Feb 28 to review the Draft Itinerary for the April delegation visit, to determine a timeline for announcements and publicity, to review progress on Reception venue, transportation needs, and other logistics related to the three public/community events planned for the visit.
 Committee members assisted in February with several key elements of the April delegation visit planning:
 - Kimberly Hayes and Claire Denton-Spalding created a VolunteerMatch posting to recruit community volunteers to help out before and during the visit
 - Edward Herring offered to spearhead our search for a reception venue for our CSCC Community Reception
 - Kimberly is working to secure transportation for the visitors from Dulles airport to Cville on the afternoon of their arrival (as an in-kind donation)
 - Casey Erickson has volunteered to help with logistics for the Community Reception
 - Other Updates:
 Responded to a request from Peabody School French teacher Séverine Frémy for assistance connecting her to our Besançon partners to help her plan a day trip to Besancon with her group of middle schoolers who are traveling to France in April

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Smiley
 Besançon Representative
 3/3/24