

CHARLOTTESVILLE SISTER CITIES COMMISSION AGENDA

Tuesday, October 1, 2024, 4:30pm – 6:00pm

CitySpace - Large Conference Room, 100 Fifth Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902

Call to Order – Edward Herring

- 1. Introduction of Mayor Wade** – Elizabeth Smiley
- 2. Report: France trip for the 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of Besancon Celebration**
– Mayor Wade
- 3. Approval of Minutes** – August 6 CSCC meeting; September 10 CSCC meeting
- 4. Grantee Report:** Benjamin Bernard, Sisters Revolution public media podcast
- 5. CSCC Website Update** – Claire Denton Spalding & Murray Susen
- 6. City rep Report**
 - a. Huehuetenango, Guatemala – Sylvia New Strawn
 - b. Besancon, France – Elizabeth Smiley
 - c. Poggio a Caiano, Italy – Stella Mattioli
 - d. Winneba, Ghana – Kimberly Hayes
- 7. Committee Report**
 - a. Program
 - b. Budget & Finance
 - c. Grants
 - d. Education
- 8. Closing Remarks / Adjournment**

Next CSCC meeting: Tuesday, November 5, CitySpace, Small Conference room

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

Tuesday August 6, 2024

ZOOM

Present: Claire Denton-Spalding, Casey Erickson, Kimberly Hayes, Edward Herring, Stella Mattioli (participating remotely), Elizabeth Smiley, Cherry Stewart

Absent: Alicen Brown (on maternity leave), Sal Moschella (had previously notified Edward of his expected absence), Sylvia New Strawn, Murray Susen (had previously notified Edward of his planned absence)

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)*:

- Stella Mattioli *(B.4) unable to attend in person due to personal travel and participating remotely from Poggio a Caiano, Italy*

Meeting opened at 4:40 pm. Edward Herring presided. A quorum was deemed present. Late arrivals noted: Cherry Stewart joined the meeting at 4:43 pm

I. **Approval of Minutes**

Commission Meeting June 4, 2024

Motion to approve: C. Denton-Spalding

Seconded: K. Hayes

Motion passed unanimously

Commission Meeting July 2, 2024

Motion to approve: C. Denton-Spalding

Motion seconded: S. Mattioli

Motion passed unanimously

II. **Chair's Report** (Edward Herring)

We have been approved to participate in UVA Global Week Oct 26-Nov 2, 2024. Edward will be discussing details with Daman Irby at the UVA Center for Politics about our role and involvement; he will provide additional details at our September Retreat meeting.

Max is missing a number of Committee meeting minutes from the past year. Edward went through each of the missing set of minutes and asked each responsible Commissioner to provide those to him.

On Sept 26, Edward will be a guest on a podcast “Today y Mañana” as part of the I Love Cville network. He will be introducing each of our Sister Cities; it will be possible to show slides of our Sister Cities as well; he will work with Claire on visuals for this interview.

Monticello 4th of July- Edward and Sylvia staffed a CSCC info table under the Community Tent. A number of visitors stopped by.

Edward asked Commissioners to visit the CSCC facebook page and “like” a number of events and other news (check out the article on Kimberly Hayes!)

Prior to our Retreat, Edward asks that Commissioners spend some time looking at our current website and be prepared to offer feedback about design and content. This will be incorporated into ideas for a redesign before/as the City assumes the “hosting” and management of it.

Cherry asked if the Retreat date and time is changeable, as she may not be able to attend due to her teaching obligation that evening. Edward reported that we voted on the date and time for the Retreat at our last meeting and that it is now set on the City calendar.

III. **Secretary’s Report** (Elizabeth Smiley)

Elizabeth is still available to offer an orientation to the Commission’s shared google drive at the September retreat. Max replied that she has reviewed the records and documents currently on our drive and that there are many which we need to discard in order to be in compliance with state guidelines for record keeping. Elizabeth will work with Max on identifying which documents need to be purged after she has had a chance to review the guidelines, which Max will forward to her.

IV. **Finance Report** (Casey Erickson)

Our current balance is **\$ 30,481.00**

The only expense incurred so far this fiscal year is for the website.

There remain several carryovers including reimbursements for three grants: “Les Amitiés Musicales” (Daniel Sender), “MisMatch Around the World” (Darnell Williams), and “Tale of Two Cities” podcast (Ixtatan Foundation). The “Tale of Two Cities” reimbursement has been approved and will be processed this week. Kimberly needs to make additional adjustments to the “Les Amities Musicales” reimbursement and will send the finalized request to Max next week. Teenage Life During Covid has not been closed out yet.

Additional pending expenditures: reimbursement to Edward for flag poles purchased to display sister city flags at events; breakfast items not yet purchased for the State SCI Conference we will host in November; and mileage reimbursement to Zan Allen (via Mt.

Zion church) associated with transportation of our Besançon delegation from Dulles Airport to Cville in April.

V. **Grantee Report: “MisMatch Around the World”** (Darnell Walker, Grantee)

Grantee written report, attached

Darnell visited Poggio in July 2023 to film content intended to introduce local children to our Italian Sister City. He was supported by Renaissance School teacher and puppeteer Welford McLellan. They were able to shoot 6 episodes (he will send the Commission a link to these), which will be available on YouTube streaming soon.

Several Commissioners had questions and feedback about the project:

Edward asked about Darnell’s plan for making local community members aware of these new episodes. (Darnell plans to reach out to his existing media contacts as well as school administrators. Edward suggested that Darnell consult our K-12 Rep about best ways to get these episodes into the hands of teachers for use in the classroom. Cherry, who is acting on behalf of K-12 Rep Alicen Brown during her maternity leave, agreed to reach out to Darnell to follow up on this.

Elizabeth asked the target audience age for MisMatch (Pre-K, ages 4-7). Cherry noted that it could also be appropriate for ESL students who are somewhat older.

Claire asked if Darnell would he be interested in offering some type of public viewing opportunity and/or as media interviews to highlight the project as a sister city exchange (Yes)

Kimberly asked Darnell if his marketing for the episodes indicates that he was supported by the Sister Cities Commission. She also asked what type of outlets in the community he plans to use for promoting the episodes. (Yes, CSCC is mentioned in the credits. He plans to promote to several local parenting groups as well as on facebook)

Cherry offered to put Darnell in touch with her professional contacts at ReadyKids and other community organizations that serve preschool children. (Darnell would welcome those connections)

Edward noted that in general it seems like Darnell and the Commission should work together to create a distribution plan for these episodes. He asked Darnell to agree to further meetings with Cherry and others to create a plan. Cherry agreed to be the point person for the planning; Kimberly is interested in helping with this as well. Darnell was receptive and appreciative of this proposal, as he has nothing formalized yet himself. Edward noted that taking this step is important, as one of the requirements for all future CSCC grants will be a clearly articulated plan for how the project will be promoted and be of benefit to the community.

VI. **2025 Grant Application Review /Program Update** (Kimberly Hayes)

Revised Grant application wording has been submitted to the City Attorney's office and is pending approval. Max will try to move this along this week. Assuming a positive response, the 2025 Grant Cycle start date will be set. This could be as soon as August 19. Claire requested as much advance notice as possible so that she can start promoting it.

VII. **Communications Report** (Claire Denton-Spalding)

Claire will follow up directly with Cherry on MisMatch promotions, with Kimberly on 2025 Grants announcements, and with Edward on Annual Retreat planning.

VIII. **City Reports**

a. Huehuetenango (Edward Herring)

No updates other than continuing to solicit computer donations from Cville/Alb schools. We have received word that there is a new "chair" of the Huehue sister city commission and Edward hopes to be in touch with that person soon.

Sylvia will present more information on her project to collect Spanish language books of all kinds to ship to Huehue to develop a community library there.

b. Besançon (Elizabeth Smiley)

Mayor Juandiego Wade and his spouse will be in Besançon Sept 6-8 to participate in several events commemorating the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Besançon by American soldiers of the 7th Army Infantry Division . Elizabeth has worked closely with the Mayor and with the Office of International Relations in Besançon on preparations for this visit. She will be in contact with Mayor Wade throughout his visit and will debrief with him upon his return.

Elizabeth will meet with Carla Mullen at CACVB later this month to explore the possibility of displaying sister city information at the Mobile Visitors Center at the IX market on Saturdays. She will report further on this at the Retreat.

c. Poggio a Caiano (Stella Mattioli)

Stella has met with the Mayor and Vice Mayor of Poggio and they have signaled their interest in an official visit to Charlottesville in summer 2025. They would like to include a few members of the community and will need to open applications for community members in March for a summer trip. Edward asked Stella to specify that the visit would need to be scheduled July 1 or later to allow the Commission to include expenses for hosting a small delegation in its FY 2025-26 budget. We will also need to vote to approve asking our City Council/Mayor to invite the Mayor of Poggio to organize an official delegation visit. Stella will follow up with the Mayor of Poggio to confirm next steps.

On a related note, Edward reported that the Cville Chamber of Commerce trip to Italy next year will not include a stop in Poggio as previously thought. Max asked if the Chamber is aware that Poggio is one of our Sister Cities. Edward responded that they do, the decision was taken because there was a lack of interest in visiting Poggio in 2017 when the Chamber last organized a similar trip.

d. Winneba (Kimberly Hayes)

Kimberly has continued to make contacts with various Winneba partners, including some of the delegation visitors from 2023 and Dave Norris at the Winneba Foundation.

e. Pleven (Edward Herring)

Edward is continuing to move slowly but deliberately in making contact with local community members who have some historic interest and connection to Pleven or to Bulgaria. He plans to organize a meeting to get this group of people together. Cherry Stewart signaled her interest in becoming more involved with Pleven if there is genuine momentum on reactivating that relationship.

VIII. Other Business

Max needs to get the food for our Retreat ordered. Edward will send out an email to the Commission with dinner choices for feedback and then will coordinate with Max.

Murray will resume attending Commission meetings in September.

Meeting adjourned at 5:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Smiley
Secretary and Besançon Representative

Annual Commission Retreat:

Tuesday, September 10, 5 - 8 pm at the UVA Equity Center, 201 West Main Street (on the Downtown Mall)

attachments

Report to the Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

Project Title: *MisMatch Around The World*

Dates of Filming:

- July 5 - July 10

Point of Contact:

- Stella Mattioli

Special Thanks:

- Mayor: Riccardo Palandri

- Vice Mayor: Diletta Bresci

Overview:

During our filming in Poggio A Caiano, Italy, we had the pleasure of staying in the neighboring town of Prato. My colleague, Welford McLellan, Jr., and I utilized public transportation to commute to and from Poggio A Caiano each day. The experience was enriching, both personally and professionally, and the hospitality extended to us by the local community was truly exceptional.

Information about Poggio A Caiano:

Poggio A Caiano is a charming town in the province of Prato, Tuscany. Known for its historical significance and picturesque landscapes, Poggio A Caiano is home to the renowned Villa Medici, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The town offers a unique blend of cultural heritage and modern amenities, making it an ideal location for exploring the daily lives of its residents. The welcoming nature of the people and the town's rich history provided a perfect backdrop for our project.

Purpose of *MisMatch Around The World*:

The primary goal of "MisMatch Around The World" is to introduce the children of Charlottesville to the everyday life of the people in Poggio A Caiano, broadening their understanding and appreciation of the world beyond their immediate surroundings. The show aims to:

- Showcase how schools, libraries, museums, gardens, and play areas in Poggio A Caiano resemble those in Charlottesville.
- Provide an opportunity for children to learn about different cultures and languages.
- Foster a sense of global connectedness and curiosity.

How MisMatch Around The World Furthers the Mission of the CSCC:

MisMatch Around The World aligns with the mission of the Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission (CSCC) by fostering relationships among individuals, communities, and cities worldwide. Through this project, we aim to:

- Dive into the heart of Poggio A Caiano and showcase its unique charm and hospitality.
- Highlight the warmth and openness of the local families and individuals we encountered.
- Encourage viewers to see the world as a welcoming place and to embrace new cultures and experiences.
- Create connections that go beyond the screen, inspiring viewers to explore and engage with the global community.

Key Players:

- Darnell Lamont Walker, Producer & Director
- Welford McLellan, Jr., Host & Puppeteer
- Stella Mattioli, Guest
- Diletta Bresci, Host & Guest
- Darnell Walker-Jones, Editor

Budget and Final Expenses:

- Total Budget: \$4,000
- Airfare: \$1,999.38
- Food + Lodging: \$1,108.67
- Transportation: \$430.41
- Editor: \$500
- Total Expenses: \$4,038.46

The Experience:

Our time spent in Poggio A Caiano was absolutely incredible. The entire town came together to make us feel at home and ensure we had everything we needed. Poggio's local newspaper even mentioned our project and the joy of having us in town. We arrived with little knowledge about Poggio A Caiano but left feeling like we were leaving behind family. The experience not only deepened our understanding of Poggio A Caiano but also strengthened our connection to Charlottesville.



Additional Notes:

While Poggio A Caiano wasn't necessarily affordable for what we wanted to create in its entirety, the people of the town truly stepped in and helped feed us, drive us around, and welcomed us into their world, allowing us to save where possible. It truly is a community, very much like the one I was born and raised in. Their generosity and support were crucial in making this project a success.

We would love to return and expand this project further, continuing to build bridges between our communities and fostering a deeper sense of global unity.

Conclusion:

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission for providing us with the opportunity to create "MisMatch Around The World." The experience has been invaluable, and we are excited to share the final product with the children of Charlottesville. We believe this project will inspire a new generation to embrace the world with open hearts and minds.

Thank you for your continued support and belief in the power of cultural exchange.

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission
MINUTES - Annual Retreat
Tuesday September 10, 2024
UVA Equity Center, Downtown Mall

Present: Claire Denton-Spalding, Kimberly Hayes, Edward Herring, Stella Mattioli, Sal Moschella, Sylvia New Strawn, Elizabeth Smiley, Cherry Stewart

Absent: Alicen Brown (on maternity leave), Casey Erickson (had notified Edward that he would be absent), Murray Susen (had notified Edward of his planned absence)

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

Retreat opened at 5:13 pm. Edward Herring presided. A quorum was deemed present. Late arrivals noted: Cherry Stewart joined the meeting at 5:19 pm

- I. **Welcome/Opening Remarks** (Edward Herring)
Edward greeted participants and declared the Retreat open.
- II. **Icebreaker Activity** (Claire Denton-Spalding)
This was a round robin in which each participant stated their name and one fun activity they did this summer.
- III. **Committee and committee member review** (Edward Herring)
Edward reviewed the Proposed slate of Officers and Committees Members (**document attached**). The Standing Sister City Committees were not included on this list but were reviewed later in the meeting.

It was noted that there were several open committee positions. After reviewing the list, Edward asked participants to confirm the Committees they wished to serve on. The following committee assignments were added:

- Program Committee - Cherry Stewart
- New City Committee (Huehue) - Stella Mattioli

The CSCC Chair (Edward) serves *ex officio* on all Committees per our By-Laws.

- IV. **Programs and Planning** (Claire Denton-Spalding)
Claire led us in an exercise to develop implementation plans for 5 potential 2024-25 Programs selected from the list we initially brainstormed at the 2023 Retreat and have continued to revise and refine over the past few months. These were: 1) UVA Global Week (Edward as “lead” organizer) ; 2) Festival of the Book (Cherry as lead organizer) ; 3) Farmer’s Market (Sylvia as lead organizer); 4) Harvest & Wine Festival (Casey as lead organizer); 5) International Cooking Classes (Sal as lead organizer).
Due to Casey’s absence, we did not include the Harvest & Wine Festival in this exercise.

After we brainstormed in pairs, we then reported on our recommendations. Claire will compile the recommended program ideas into a report for our review.

Edward proposed 2 additional programs that he is willing to spearhead:

- 1) Sister City Concert - working with Daniel Sender and the UVA music department to offer a concert celebrating music from our sister cities. Edward will be working on this and report at our November meeting.
- 2) Art in Place contest - a mural project inspired by a mural in Cleveland, Ohio painted by an artist from one of their Sister Cities. Edward would like to start by exploring this as a Besançon-Cville exchange.

V. **Dinner break**

VI. **Website Review** - (Claire Denton-Spalding)

Claire led us in an exercise to examine how well the website meets the needs of different stakeholders. Participants worked in pairs to assess how well our website currently answers one of four questions:

- 1) Who do I contact to get more information?
- 2) How can I learn more about Cville's Sister Cities?
- 3) How do I apply for a scholarship or a grant?
- 4) How can I volunteer/participate with CSCC?

Pairs presented their findings, which Claire will compile into a summary document for our review.

VII. **Review of Attendance Policy** - (Edward Herring)

Edward circulated a one-page summary of the Commission's current attendance policy, which Elizabeth prepared after reviewing the City's attendance policy as well as the Commission's By-Laws, New Member Orientation Handbook, and the minutes of prior meetings (**copy attached**)

A brief review and discussion followed. The Commission is required to conform to the City's attendance policy, which was set by a Council Resolution in 2014. Max pointed out that any expectations set by the Chair above and beyond the City policy must be clarified as specific to our Commission. Edward suggested that our current By-Laws do not adequately address additional expectations or allowable exceptions for our Commission members, and that a By-Laws review and revision is needed. Elizabeth will make several changes to the summary document she prepared to clarify which are City attendance requirements and which are CSCC-specific guidelines.

VIII. **City Rep Updates**

- a. Winneba - (Kimberly Hayes did not have an update)
Edward reported that he had recently met with Dave Norris and that Dave has agreed to assist Kimberly with contacts already established in Winneba
- b. Huehuetenango - (Sylvia New Strawn)
Sylvia has begun to collect books that can be donated to Huehue. She is coordinating this project with Elias Gonzalez, who will provide guidance on what types of books would be most useful. She plans to contact the Embassy in DC about shipping the books in the "diplomatic pouch."
- c. Besançon - (Elizabeth Smiley)
Mayor Juandiego Wade and his spouse will be in Besançon Sept 6-8, having accepted Mayor Anne Vignot's official invitation to participate in the weekend ceremonies commemorating the 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of Besançon by troops of the US Army 7th Infantry Division. Elizabeth has met with Mayor Wade several times to prep him for the visit and will stay in contact with him over the course of the weekend.
- d. Poggio a Caiano - (Stella Mattioli)
Stella met with Poggio's Mayor and members of city council this summer to determine their interest in sending a delegation to Cville in 2025. They are keen to come and would envision several including community members from Poggio as well. Stella requested that the Commission vote to approve hosting an official delegation from Poggio. Once approved, Edward will draft an official invitation to present to the Cville City Council for its approval.

Motion to officially invite the Mayor of Poggio to form a delegation to visit Charlottesville in the FY 2025-26: S. Mattioli

Motion seconded: E. Herring

Motion passed unanimously.

- e. Pleven - (Edward Herring - deferred due to time constraints)

IX. **Committee Updates** - deferred due to time constraints

X. **Committee Memberships and Officer Nominations**

Edward reviewed the three (3) Standing Sister City Committees, which are convened as needed for purposes of planning exchanges and delegation visits. Committee membership follows, with new additions in bold:

- Besançon - Elizabeth (Chair), Casey, Kimberly
- Poggio a Caiano - Stella (Chair), **Sal**
- Winneba - Kimberly (Chair), **Stella**

The current Officer positions were then reviewed. Claire indicated her desire to relinquish her position as Communications Officer. Cherry signaled her interest in the position and will follow up with Claire to gather more information. Claire will remain the Communications Officer until another person agrees to be nominated.

Motion to accept the slate of Officers presented for FY 2024-25: S. New Strawn

- Chair: Edward Herring
- Vice-Chair: Claire Dento-Spalding
- Secretary: Elizabeth Smiley
- Treasurer: Casey Erickson
- Communications Officer (formerly Email Coordinator): Claire Denton-Spalding

Motion seconded: S. Mattioli

Motion passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Smiley
Secretary and Besançon Representative

Next Commission Meeting:

Tuesday, October 1 @ 4:30 pm CitySpace

Attachments (2)

CHARLOTTESVILLE SISTER CITIES COMMISSION AGENDA

Annual Retreat, Tuesday, Sept. 10, 2024, 5:00pm – 8:00pm

UVA Equity Center, 201 W Main Street, Charlottesville, VA

Proposed Committee Memberships and Officers

a. CSCC Officers

- i. Chair – Edward Herring
- ii. Co-Chair – Claire Denton-Spalding
- iii. Secretary – Elizabeth Smiley
- iv. Treasurer – Casey Eriksen
- v. Communications Officer – Claire Denton-Spalding (Formerly email coordinator)

b. Education Committee

- i. Alicen Brown (Chair)
- ii. Cherry Stewart
- iii. *Edward Herring*
- iv. _____

c. Grants Committee

- i. Kimberly Hayes (Chair)
- ii. Casey Eriksen
- iii. Sal Moschella
- iv. *Edward Herring*

d. Budget & Finance Committee

- i. Casey Eriksen (Chair)
- ii. Kimberly Hayes
- iii. Sal Moschella
- iv. *Edward Herring*

e. Programs Committee

- i. Sylvia New Strawn (Chair)
- ii. Claire Denton-Spalding
- iii. Murray Susen
- iv. *Edward Herring*
- v. _____
- vi. _____

f. New City Committee (Huehuetenango)

- i. Edward Herring
- ii. Sylvia New Strawn
- iii. Cherry Stewart

CSCC Meeting Attendance Policy - September 2024

The CSCC attendance policy follows City Council's stated expectations for all members of its boards, commissions and task forces:

1. Commissioners are expected to attend all scheduled meetings and to devote the time to be full and meaningful participants on the commission for the duration of their term.
2. Commissioners are expected to notify the Chair in writing in advance if they are unable to attend a scheduled meeting.
3. Commissioners are not permitted to be absent from more than 3 consecutive meetings, or from more than 4 meetings in a 12-month period.

"it shall be the policy of the City Council that a City Council-appointed member of any City board, committee, task force or commission shall be subject to removal from office if he or she is absent from any three consecutive meetings, or any four meetings within any twelve month period."

4. If a commissioner fails to meet the attendance requirements, the Chair is expected to report the absences to the Mayor and the commissioner may be subject to removal from the Commission, as follows:

In the event that any board, committee, task force or commission member fails to meet the meeting attendance requirements as stated in this policy, the chair or presiding officer of the board, committee, task force or commission in question shall notify the Mayor of the absences.

Upon the receipt of information indicating a failure to meet the meeting attendance expectations set forth in this policy, City Council will provide notice to the board member in question and provide an opportunity to respond to the concerns regarding meeting attendance.

The City Council may thereafter, in its discretion, remove the member from office. Any City Council consideration or discussion regarding the removal of a City Council appointee from office may take place during a duly convened closed session of City Council.

(Excerpts from "Resolution Regarding Meeting Attendance by City Council Appointees to City Boards, Committees, Task Forces and Commissions adopted November 3, 2014)