

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)