

Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission

MINUTES

Tuesday August 5, 2025

Virtual Meeting (ZOOM)

Present: Kimberly Hayes, S. Lisa Herndon, Edward Herring, Stella Mattioli, Sal Moschella, Elizabeth Smiley

Absent: Alicen Brown, Cherry Stewart

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

Late arrivals noted: none

City security features prevented the meeting host (Max Robinson) from being able to start the meeting remotely. When these were resolved Edward was able to call the meeting to order.

Call to Order

Meeting was opened at 4:49 pm. Edward Herring presided. A quorum was deemed present.

I. **Approval of Minutes** (Edward Herring)

Full Commission meeting - July 8, 2025

Approval was deferred until the September meeting

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

Edward noted that he has received phone calls and emails from the Gospel Choir Exchange, including two community members who have applied to be on the Commission as a result. Mayor Wade has also sent his kudos.

a. Discussion: CSCC Annual Retreat

Edward asked for volunteers to help him plan the Retreat, help lead a workshop at the Retreat and coordinate the meal order with Max. Kimberly volunteered to help with planning and work with Max to order the food. Sal volunteered to help with Retreat preparation after August 11, when he is back in town.

Edward has a couple of ideas for topics but welcomes Commissioner input and requests that no later than August 15. **Action item:** Edward will circulate a proposed Retreat Agenda by September 1 for Commissioner review and response.

Kimberly suggested Edward consider developing a document that commissioners can respond to anonymously in case there are members who would be more comfortable offering feedback and ideas that way. **Action item:** Kimberly will send Edward a template to consider.

We will also elect officers and make committee assignments at the Retreat. The officer positions that will need to be filled include Vice Chair, Treasurer and

Communications Chair. Commissioners were asked to consider what roles they might be willing to take on for the coming year.

Three new community members have submitted their applications to join the Commission and will be considered for appointment by City Council at their August 18 meeting. One of the potential candidates is the person who attended our June meeting on behalf of the YMCA.

III. **Finance/Budget Report** (Edward Herring)

Current balance is \$28,751.78. This figure includes our FY 26 allocation of \$15,000.00, leaving us with an unspent FY25 balance of \$17,323.05.

No additional discussion or report

EBS hopes to have final spending figures from the Gospel Choir Exchange to present at the Retreat meeting.

IV. **Reports & Updates**

a. **Communications Update** (Edward Herring, for Cherry Stewart)

Cher has begun to upload new information to the website, including an article she found from a Besancon newspaper about the recent Gospel Choir exchange.

b. **Program and Events Update**

In Cher's absence, it was decided to defer discussion of purchasing t-shirts until a future meeting

c. **Grants** (Kimberly Hayes)

Kimberly will be meeting with the current Grantee on Friday and will have a status update at the Retreat.

Plans for next Grants cycle: **Action item:** Kimberly will prepare a proposed timeline for the next cycle and present it at the Retreat. She anticipates needing additional Commissioners to serve on the Grants Committee including someone who has some experience or interest in financial matters.

Max clarified that any Commission member can volunteer to serve on the Grants Committee. She also asked for clarification that the Grants Committee had previously developed some guidelines for determining grant application selection. Kimberly confirmed that there had been discussion of using a point system but that this has not yet been officially implemented.

- d. **Education** - no report
- e. **Outreach** - no report
- f. **Huehuetenango, Guatemala** (Edward Herring) **friendship city*
October trip update: airline tickets will be purchased on September 1. If the current applicants make their payments by the end of August, the delegation will be 9 people. S. Lisa noted that she had filled out the online application but had not heard back - Edward will follow up on this.

Library Book Drive: Sylvia and Edward met with the Embassy's Attache for Cultural Affairs, who indicated the need to solicit the Ambassador's approval. As a result, the shipping arrangements are still in limbo. The Commission may need to find an alternate way to ship the books.

- g. **Besançon, France** (Elizabeth Smiley)
- h. **Poggio a Caiano, Italy** (Stella Mattioli)
Stella met with the current Mayor of Poggio who signaled that he still intends to travel to Charlottesville, with one other Councilman, who has previously visited Cville. He anticipates a short stay of 2 nights in early December. There was a brief discussion of how to make their visit a "red carpet" experience so that the Mayor returns home with a real ongoing interest in our Sister City partnership.
- i. **Winneba, Ghana** (Kimberly Hayes)
Kimberly met with Mayor Wade last week and has also spoken with former Mayor Walker, who maintains strong ties with officials in Winneba. Both of these individuals have indicated that they are willing to facilitate communication between Kimberly and partners in Winneba to promote reestablishing a working relationship with the Sister Cities Commission.

Max offered that upon reflection, having Winneba Foundation Board members also serve on the CSCC, as they have in past years, may have created a conflict of interest and contributed to blurring the lines between the work of Commission and that of the CWF. S Lisa asked if the City of Cville has an existing "conflict of interest" agreement; Max noted that the City does not, but could assist the Commission with drafting one.

A conflict of interest agreement would not only be important as the Commission strives to reestablish a working relationship with Winneba, but also as a guiding document for Grant application decisions. **Action item**: As she has familiarity with this, Edward asked if S Lisa would share a copy of this type of agreement with the Commission for consideration.

V. **Other Business:**

Ix Market info table Sept 13 and October 11:

Edward volunteered to take an “early shift” and to be the table captain for September 13; Sal will be table captain for October 11. Additional volunteers may be needed. **Action item:** Elizabeth will contact those who had also previously signed up and update the Commission at the Retreat.

Edward will be presenting the CSCC Annual Report on September 22 at either the 4 pm City Council work session or at the 6:30 City Council meeting.

Update on Commission website upgrade: Edward will meet with someone from the City IT department to discuss options and then present them to the Commission for consideration.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting: Kimberly Hayes

Motion seconded: S.Lisa Herndon

Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Smiley, Secretary & Besançon Representative

Annual Retreat: Tuesday, September 9, 5:00 - 8:00, CitySpace Large Conference Room

*9/9/2025

Motion to approve minutes as amended: Kimberly Hayes

Motion seconded: S. Lisa Herndon

Motion carried unanimously by all those present at the August meeting