

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)
Sister Cities Committee

Minutes of the Meeting of January 13, 2020

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
Lourdes Cuzán	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mayor Raúl Valdés-Fauli
Claudio Pastor	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Alma Kadragic	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Comm. Patricia Keon
Gabriel Garay	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Comm. Jorge L. Fors, Jr.
Volker Anding	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Comm. Michael Mena
Alejandra Collarte	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Peter Iglesias, City Manager
Rafael Gavarrete	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Council-at-Large Appointment

Country Appointed Liaisons:

Cartagena, Colombia – Ms. Cuzán
Aix-en-Provence, France – Mr. Anding
Antigua, Guatemala – Mr. Gavarrete
Santa Tecla, El Salvador – Mr. Gavarrete
Quito, Ecuador – Mr. Garay
Sevilla, Spain- Ms. Cuzán
San Isidro, Argentina- Ms. Collarte

A = Absent
P = Present
E = Excused
UA = Unexcused Absence

Staff in Attendance:

Beba Luzarraga, Assistant to the Mayor & Secretary, IACC
Jessenia Monge Fletes, Intern, Mayor’s office

Guests:

Beatrice Rangel, Innovation Council Consultant

Vice chair Volker Anding called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Committee members reviewed the minutes of the IACC meeting of December 17, 2019. Ms. Kadragic made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Pastor seconded the motion. All in favor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE:

Mr. Anding reported sharing the most recent report provided by Rodulfo Raimundo, Director of IT for the City of Coral Gables, with his counterpart in Aix-en-Provence. He also requested that Mr. Raimundo and Julian Perez, the new Director of the Economic Development department, be invited to the next meeting.

LA ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA:

No new update on La Antigua, Guatemala.

CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA:

No new update on Cartagena, Colombia.

SANTA TECLA, EL SALVADOR:

No new update on Santa Tecla, El Salvador.

QUITO, ECUADOR:

No new update on Quito, Ecuador.

SEVILLA, SPAIN:

No new update on Sevilla, Spain.

SAN ISIDRO, ARGENTINA

Ms. Collarte reiterated that due to the current political situation in Argentina it will be difficult to proceed with our relationship at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Collarte reported that the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce is organizing a mission in the month of March to Bogota and Barranquilla, Colombia. She suggested the board may want to use the opportunity to reconnect with our dormant Sister City Cartagena, Colombia. The committee suggested inviting Mr. Pedro Agustin Valencia, the Consul General of Colombia in Miami to discuss the relationship between the two cities. Ms. Luzarraga will follow-up with Liane Ventura of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and Mark Trowbridge, the CEO and President of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce regarding the mission to Colombia.

Ms. Kadragic reported that there is also a pending mission to Poland in the month of May. A discussion ensued regarding the possible role and participation of the current Polish administration and the Consul General of Poland in Miami for the prospect of a future Sister City relationship.

UPDATES:

Mr. Pastor did not have an update on Venice, Italy. However, he informed the committee that Genoa is being explored as a potential Sister City. A discussion ensued regarding the commonalities between Genoa and the City of Coral Gables.

Mr. Anding reported his participation in the “State of the World 2020” conference at Florida International University (FIU) where he met with Birgitta Rausch-Montoto, the director of Faculty and Global Affairs, Office of the Provost. He informed that FIU is involved with Genoa through a “study abroad program” which is a unique and central component of the School of Architecture’s Upper Division curriculum and has been recognized as a “sister port city” of Miami. Mr. Pastor clarified that the relationship between Genoa and Miami goes beyond the ports, considering the role that Mitchell “Micky” Wolfson Jr., the founder of the Wolfsonian Museum in Miami Beach and Genoa-Nervi, Italy, plays between both cities. Ms. Kadragic inquired about the dos and don’t’s with regard to Sister Cities International guidelines provided that both FIU and the Wolfsonian Museum are not within the boundaries of the City. Mr. Pastor explained that these types of institutions go beyond the border of our local city administration since these organization’s activities might be held in different cities but are still part of Coral Gables. He further stated that as long as connection exist where the city is being enriched, a Sister City relationship should not be limited to the boundaries of the City of Coral Gables.

Ms. Rangel reported on her meeting with the Cultural Development Board and also the Arts Advisory Panel. The committees suggested that she submit a proposal. A discussion ensued regarding possible initiatives such as a retrospective of Dante Alighieri. Mr. Pastor explained that just like Alighieri, Coral Gables is a community of exiles which could further serve as a common element. Mr. Anding asked if the Italian Consulate has done anything in this context. Mr. Pastor explained that there has not been a concrete discussion regarding Alighieri and as far as he knows everything is still in the preliminary stages. Ms. Kadragic suggested requesting funds from the Coral Gables International Affairs Foundation, Inc.

A conversation followed regarding initiatives that may be supported by the Cultural Development Board and the Arts Advisory Panel such as the collections in the Kislak Center at the University of Miami.

Mr. Anding provided Ms. Luzarraga the contact information for Marco Antonio Muralles Ortiz who is the successor of Dunia-Miranda Mauri, the former Trade Commissioner of Guatemala.

A list of meeting dates for 2020 was provided to the members. Ms. Luzarraga suggested sending a calendar invitation for the entire year as well as the usual monthly reminder. All agreed.

There being no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beba Luzarraga
Secretary, International Affairs Coordinating Council
and
Jessenia Monge-Fletes
Intern, Mayor’s Office