

CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)
Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 21st, 2023

Location: The Fink Studio
2506 Ponce de León, Coral Gables, Florida

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
Olga Ramudo							P	P					Mayor Vince Lago
Vicky Rua						X	P	P					Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Sadia M. Raja						X	P	A					Comm. Kirk Menendez
Raoul Cantero						X	E	P					Comm. Ariel Fernandez
Richard Montes de Oca						X	P	P					Comm. Melissa Castro
Alejandra Collarte						X	E	P					Peter Iglesias, City Manager
Rafael Gavarrete						X	E	A					Council-at-Large Appointment

A = Absent P=Present E= Excused UA= Unexcused Absence X= No Meeting - =Former Member

The International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC) meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m.

Ms. Alejandra Collarte welcomed everyone to the committee and led today’s meeting as the acting Chair. Incoming and standing committee members as well as city staff introduced themselves.

Approval of the Minutes (May 15, 2023)

A motion to approve the minutes of May 15, 2023, was made by Board member Montes de Oca. Acting Chair Collarte seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes (July 17,2023)

A motion to approve the minutes of July 17, 2023, was made by Board member Ramudo. Board Member Montes de Oca seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Excused Board Members’ Absence

Board member Ramudo made a motion to excuse Raoul Cantero, Rafael Gavarrete, and Alejandra Collarte. Mr. Montes de Oca seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. There was no discussion regarding the absences.

ELECTION OF A CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR

Acting Chair Collarte made a motion to elect Mrs. Olga Ramudo for the position as Chair. Ms. Vicky Rua seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mrs. Ramudo accepted the nomination.

Acting Chair Collarte made a motion to elect Mr. Richard Montes de Oca as Vice-Chair. Mrs. Olga Ramudo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Montes de Oca accepted the nomination.

COUNTRY REPORTS

- Chair Ramudo discussed with Board members the assignments of the Sister Cities and asked Mr. Raoul Cantero if he would like to represent Cartagena de Indias being one of Coral Gables' Sister Cities. He then requested some clarity and explanation on what a Sister City relationship entails. Ms. Leticia Perez together with Vice-Chair Montes de Oca provided Mr. Cantero some explanation on different ways to reactivate the relationship with Cartagena de Indias. Vice-Chair Montes de Oca provided a brief description of what he has done to activate the Sister City of Quito, Ecuador.
- Chair Ramudo told Board members that she would like to revamp the Sister Cities program since there has not been any activity since the pandemic.

SAN ISIDRO, ARGENTINA

- Board member Collarte, spoke a little about her role with Sister City San Isidro in Argentina. She explained how former Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli's relationship with the Mayor of San Isidro helped to foster the Sister City relationship. There has not been much activity in recent years due to changes in the local government. Former Mayor Gustavo Posse who was her contact, wants to run as Vice Governor in the next elections in Argentina taking place in October of 2023.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

- Board member Rua announced that she is going to France in a few days and during her stay she would like to visit and connect with a representative from the City of Aix-en-Provence. She asked the committee if she would be able to bring other creative ideas on how to collaborate with Aix-en-Provence. All Board members agreed with Ms. Rua and provided some ideas.

QUITO, ECUADOR

- Vice Chair Montes de Oca provided a brief update about Quito. He informed board members that there was an assassination of a presidential candidate in Quito two weeks ago. He said that this brought unrest to the country and the region. The elections continued despite of this event and there is a runoff between two candidates, Luisa Gonzalez, and

Daniel Noboa. The final election will take place October 15, 2023. Due to the turmoil and uncertainty, he recommends waiting until the election is over and to schedule a follow up meeting with one of their advisors, (Juan Tehran) who is going to be in Miami in September.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Chair Ramudo and Board member Collarte discussed the many delegations that the Greater Miami Chamber and the International Trade Consortium bring to Florida and, also how each of the Board members can coordinate and bring other delegations in the future collaborating with their own Sister City. They also talked about the many international missions that they have done with the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce- American Linkage. She reported that last year they had more than 60 delegates that went on the Israel Mission.

- Ms. Leticia Perez spoke about the meeting she had with Mr. Kazuhiro Nakai, Consul General of Japan, and informed board members of his interest in having a city in Japan become a Coral Gables Sister City.
- Ms. Leticia Perez also mentioned that she received an email from Consul General Nakai letting us know that he is working with Japan's Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR), to find out if there is a Japanese municipality that is considering starting or expanding a sister city partnership.
- A discussion about the next IACC meeting took place since some of the members will not be available on September 18, 2023. They also talked about October and since most board members are not available on October 16, 2023, the meeting is now scheduled for October 23, 2023.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Leticia Perez
International Business Development Representative
Economic Development Department
City of Coral Gables