



International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)
Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 16, 2024

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

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
Olga Ramudo	P	E	E	E	P	P	X	P	P	E	X	P	Mayor Vince Lago
Vicky Rua	P	P	A	E	P	P	X	P	E	P	X	P	Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Sadia M. Raja	P	P	A	P	UA	E	X	P	A	F	F	F	Comm. Kirk Menendez
Raoul Cantero	P	P	P	E	P	E	X	E	A	P	X		Comm. Ariel Fernandez
Richard Montes de Oca	P	E	P	P	E	P	X	P	E	A	X	P	Comm. Melissa Castro
Alejandra Collarte 0000 Ilsa Danielson 10/21/24	E	P	E	P	P	P	X	E	P	P	F	P	Amos Rojas, Jr., C.M.
Rafael Gavarrete	E	P	E	P	P	UA	X	P	P	F	F	F	Council-at-Large Appointment

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

The International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC) meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. Chair Olga Ramudo welcomed everyone to the committee. She asked Board members to introduce themselves, since among them was Mrs. Ilsa Danielson, a new IACC Board member.

Approval of the Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2024 IACC meeting was made by Board member Victoria Rua and Vice Chair Richard Montes seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

COUNTRY REPORT

SEVILLA, SPAIN

- Chair Ramudo gave an overview of the Feria of Sevilla. The Feria de Sevilla will take place on March 8, 2025, with related events from March 5–7, along Alhambra Circle between LeJeune Rd. and Ponce de Leon Blvd. Inspired by the traditional fair in Spain, the event celebrates Coral Gables’ sister-city relationship with Sevilla and expects 3,000–4,000 attendees. Activities include casetas hosted by corporations and Spanish restaurants, flamenco performances, flower workshops, carriage rides, and a fashion show. There will be food, cultural displays, and tickets with discounts for residents.

The event is unanimously supported by the Commission, and partners such as the Coral Gables Museum, Chamber of Commerce, and Beacon Council. Preparations are underway, including renovations for a key event space expected to be ready by February. Road closures and logistical details are being finalized, with updates to follow.

Chair Ramudo added on duplicating successful partnerships with institutions like the museum, Beacon Council, and Chamber of Commerce. For the Spain delegation, the Mayor of Sevilla and 14-16 dignitaries will attend, with plans for a reception at the Spanish Consul General's residence. The poster contest winner has been selected, and coordination is ongoing for the Mayor's meetings.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

- Belkys Perez informed the Board of the upcoming French delegation and events being planned for February 24–28, 2025. Denis Coutagne, President of the Paul Cezanne Society, will attend a confirmed presentation at the Coral Gables Museum on February 25 before departing to New York. A dinner or ceremony with the delegation is under consideration. Efforts are underway to connect with Coral Gables-based companies through the French American Chamber of Commerce, and potential sponsors include local French businesses.

Plans for a French Market in February 2025, led by Corinne Engel, include a croissant contest and other activities, with further details to be finalized and updates to follow on the next IACC meeting. Sponsorship remains a challenge, prompting suggestions to enhance outreach to French companies and local businesses. Next steps include finalizing arrangements for the French delegation, confirming events, and securing sponsors for upcoming activities.

Some additional proposed activities mentioned by Chair Ramudo, Victoria Rua and Vice Chair Montes de Oca, included a private dinner at Bouchon, through sponsorships are required before confirming venues. Air France was identified as the primary target for sponsorship, with other options like the French American Chamber of Commerce and Sofitel Hotel was considered. French Bee sponsorship was deferred to avoid competition with Air France.

Belkys Perez provided a conclusion and added, the broader French Month from February 15-27, will feature a French Market, Art Cinema activities, city tour and involvement from Denis Coutagne, a Cezanne expert from Aix-en-Provence. Action items focused on securing sponsorships, finalizing the city tour, and aligning events with the delegation's schedule to ensure they have a successful visit.

OPEN DISCUSSION

- The board discussed the need to replace Rafael Gavarrete, a member no longer meeting residency requirements, and encouraged suggestions for candidates with ties to sister cities such as Guatemala, Santa Tecla, and San Isidro. The process for approval was clarified, emphasizing residency compliance.

Sister cities were reviewed, with San Isidro highlighted for its equestrian culture, university, and historical character. The board discussed guidelines for selecting new sister cities and

considered deactivating inactive ones while exploring potential partnerships, including Portugal.

To address inactive cities, members proposed sending letters to confirm their interest in maintaining ties. Other discussions included updating the sister city room and preparing for upcoming delegations. Action items were outlined, including filling board vacancies, evaluating sister cities, and planning updates for the next meeting in January.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.

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