

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

Zoom Meeting of October 26, 2020

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
Lourdes Cuzán	E	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	P	-	-	Mayor Raúl Valdés-Fauli
Claudio Pastor	P	E	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	P	-	-	Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Alma Kadragic	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	P	-	-	Comm. Patricia Keon
Gabriel Garay	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	E	P	-	-	Comm. Jorge L. Fors, Jr.
Volker Anding	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	P	-	-	Comm. Michael Mena
Alejandra Collarte	P	E	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	P	-	-	Peter Iglesias, City Manager
Rafael Gavarrete	E	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	P	-	-	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
 Venice, Italy – Mr. Pastor
 San José, Costa Rica -

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:

Raúl Valdés-Fauli, Mayor of the City of Coral Gables
 Mark Trowbridge, President & CEO, Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce
 Leticia Perez, Coral Gables Economic Development Department
 Deirdre Nero, Vice Chair, Global Affairs Business Committee, Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce
 Beatrice Rangel, Innovation Consultant

Chairwoman, Lourdes Cuzán called the meeting via zoom to order at 3:00 p.m. A quorum was present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Committee members reviewed the minutes of the IACC meeting of September 21, 2020. Ms. Kadragic made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Anding seconded the motion. All in favor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

UPDATES

Ms. Cuzàn called the meeting to order and introduced Mark Trowbridge, President & CEO of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce (CGCC), who reported on new initiatives addressed by Mayor Valdés-Fauli during a previously scheduled meeting.

Mr. Trowbridge thanked the members for their support with the “Flags on Ponce” program. He further elaborated on his meeting with Mayor Valdés-Fauli and Ms. Cuzàn where several projects were addressed such as the Mayor’s effort to continue expanding the Sister Cities relationships as well as a pending visit to San José, Costa Rica in 2021. Mr. Trowbridge briefly explained that through Deirdre Nero, Vice Chair of the Global Affairs Business Committee, the chamber has developed robust relationships with other organizations such as the Miami World Trade Center and is looking to bolster the chamber’s relationship with Miami-Dade County and the International Trade Consortium in order to work as a conduit between the chamber and IACC. Additionally, he informed the board members of their conversation with Julian Perez, Coral Gables Economic Development Director, regarding a new initiative with multinational organizations.

Mayor Valdés-Fauli expanded on their conversation regarding past efforts by the city to address multinational corporations. He explained that when he was first elected as Mayor, the city organized bi-monthly luncheons with multinational companies to expose them to developments in Latin America and other places of interest. He clarified that initiating a similar project will encourage multinational corporations to participate since it will bring programs of interest to these companies. Ms. Cuzàn briefly expressed her support on this initiative.

Mr. Trowbridge added that the new offices for the chamber are now located on Alhambra Circle, and are shared with Enterprise Florida and other partners whose focus is on trade and foreign investments. He explained that the chamber will continue collaborating with these various platforms and is also considering inviting the Ambassador of Spain, Santiago Cabanas Ansorena to Coral Gables to talk about his goals as well as the close relationship between the Consulate General.

Mr. Anding suggested that during the November 3rd meeting between the Global Business Committee and the French Consulate General, Mark Trowbridge used the opportunity to emphasize the “Flags on Ponce” program in order to ask the Consul General to consider sponsoring the French Flag. Mr. Trowbridge agreed and also extended an invitation to the members.

Ms. Collarte reminded the members that the International and Consular & Trade Committees will be hosting a webinar on November 12th at 10 A.M. **Information was provided to members via email.**

Ms. Kadragic updated the members regarding a possible Sister City relationship with Poland. More information will be provided soon.

Ms. Cuzàn reported on her conversation with Dunia Miranda-Mauri who has return to the Consulate General of Guatemala in Miami. She will be coordinating a meeting with the Mayor to explore new initiatives.

SAN ISIDRO, ARGENTINA:

Ms. Collarte informed the members that Argentina reopened but soon after it closed again due to a surge in cases.

VENICE, ITALY:

Mr. Pastor explained that the Consul General of Italy in Miami has been briefed on current developments and is extremely supportive of our new relationship. However, he informed the members that Italy has also gone back into lockdown which clearly delays the process of moving forward with the Sister City relationship.

CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA:

Ms. Cuzàn reiterated that the newly appointed Mayor of Cartagena is still interested in resuming projects such as the extrication training and education which needs to be re-scheduled with the Coral Gables Fire Department and firefighters from Cartagena.

There being no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

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