

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

**Minutes of the Meeting of June 18, 2019**

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

**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

**Special Guest:**

Raimundo Rodulfo, Coral Gables Director of Technology

Chairwoman Lourdes Cuzán called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. A quorum was present.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Committee members reviewed the minutes of the IACC meeting of May 29, 2019. Mr. Anding made a motion to approve the minutes. Gabriel Garay seconded the motion. All in favor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Ms. Cuzán opened the meeting by greeting the members of the committee and introduced Gabriel Garay who was appointed to the committee by the new Coral Gables City Commissioner Jorge L. Fors. Alejandra Collarte a new member appointed by City Manager Peter Iglesias was unable to attend due to a death in her family. Mr. Raimundo Rodulfo, Coral Gables Director of Technology was also present. Beatriz Rangel joined the meeting in session.

Ms. Cuzan made a brief presentation of the goals and accomplishments of our committee to our new board member. Other members joined and presented updates of their activities on behalf of their Sister City.

### JOINT MEETING WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP and IACC: (JUNE 12, 2019)

The Mayor expressed the importance of the relationship of the committees for the City of Coral Gables for the preservation of existing businesses and to foster new business connections. He encouraged all members to continue their participation in these committees. Olga Ramudo, chairperson of the Economic Development Group presented their mission to identify new markets and developing programs for retaining existing businesses. Lourdes Cuzan, chairperson of IACC described the mission of the Sister Cities program as a partnership with international cities which mirror the City of Coral Gables and provides exchanges and business initiatives. Mr. Volker Anding reported on the success of the Smart City partnership between Coral Gables and our sister city Aix-en-Provence; he had informed the French Consul General on June 10<sup>th</sup> about this active partnership.

### AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE:

Mr. Anding reported on his successful interaction with his counterpart in Aix-en-Provence regarding the “Smart City” relationship with the City of Coral Gables. There has been an exchange of comprehensive programs between the two cities and our IT director. Mr. Raimundo Rodulfo, our IT director was present and reported that the program is now in various Sister Cities besides Aix-en-Provence. The other cities are as Santa Tecla, El Salvador; Cartagena, Colombia and Sevilla, Spain. He stated that many of these cities are very advanced in Smart City technology especially in Sevilla which impressed him for their combined usage of low tech and high tech (e.g., a paper map mobile application used without internet connection). Mr. Rodulfo will be invited for updates every six months.

### LA ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA:

Mr. Gavarrete reported there is a new Mayor of La Antigua and he will report once he is officially sworn into office. A congratulatory and introduction letter will be sent to the newly appointed Mayor with information regarding the function and mission of the Sister Cities organization.

### CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA:

Ms. Cuzan reported that elections are taking place in October. Their last visit to Coral Gables was in August of 2018. The next project will be the visit of seven firefighters which will be participating in training with our Coral Gables Fire Department.

SANTA TECLA, EL SALVADOR:

Mr. Gavarrete reported that our Sister City Santa Tecla has finally obtained assembly instructions and they are finally in the process of building the playground. Ms. Cuzan reported that a delegation will travel to Santa Tecla the second week in July. More information to follow as dates are confirmed.

QUITO, ECUADOR:

Gabriel Garay, the new member of the IACC committee has agreed to become the liaison with Quito, Ecuador.

SEVILLA, SPAIN:

Ms. Cuzan gave a brief report on her visit to Sevilla in January 2019 where the Sister City agreement was signed by the Mayor of Sevilla. We are currently waiting for confirmation of their visit to Coral Gables to formalize the relationship. Communication with Sevilla, Spain has been difficult due to the re-election and swearing-in of the Mayor of Sevilla. However, a letter of invitation to Coral Gables has been issued. The visit will be scheduled in the next few months.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS:

By code of the City of Coral Gables the following reappointments were made:

Mr. Anding made the motion to re-appoint Lourdes Cuzan as Chairwoman. Mr. Pastor seconded the motion. All in favor the motion was approved.

Mr. Pastor made the motion to re-appoint Mr. Anding as Vice Chairman. Mr. Gavarrete seconded the motion. All in favor the motion was approved.

Ms. Kadragic made the motion to re-appoint Mr. Gavarrete as member-at-large of the committee. Mr. Anding seconded the motion. All in favor the motion was approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Pastor reported on the request to add Sardinia as a new Sister City. This request will be explored for further update and development.

Ms. Kadragic discussed Turkey and its dormant communication due to the political situation of the country.

Mr. Raimundo continued with details of other IT projects that include Smart City programs in other cities within the United States using innovative technology. He reported on the ongoing projects with various cities such as, but not limited to, the City of Miami, EMERGE and Smart Cities conferences, national connectivity to leverage the project to bring more technology to the US1 corridor, a channel of connectivity was created between Miami-Dade County and the city of Coral Gables to exchange Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, and an initiative with the Florida International University to create a committee with all the I.T director in the region. More specifically, Mr. Raimundo reported on the organization called Florida Government

Information System Association (FGISA) where they meet twice a year. He further reported on the mutual collaboration with the University of Miami and the Smart City competition initiative.

Ms. Rangel expanded on the Smart City program discussed by Mr. Raimundo. She explained that in the case of France an exchange project could be created and possibly funded by the French International Council Board. Ms. Cuzan suggested reaching out to the French Consulate Generals in Miami to request their assistance in the project. A brief discussion ensued by Mr. Anding regarding the necessary procedure that must be taken in order to get supported and funded by the proposed French organization for the exchange project. Additionally, Ms. Cuzan suggested a time frame to gather all the information for the exchange program. Ms. Rangel agreed.

Ms. Rangel suggested that the IACC explore the opportunities when Sister Cities come to Coral Gables following on the success of the Giralda Art Installation which increased the city revenue and brought business to local restaurants. She explained that the City could encourage the local vendors to promote the food, art and books from the visiting city. For example, the local restaurants in Coral Gables could feature lunch and dinner menu items from the visiting Sister City. The same can be done with the art installations in the museum and the local galleries as well as with book stores offering titles that correspond with the visiting country.

Ms. Rangel suggested hosting the launching of the book “Por Que o Brasil É Um País Atrasado?” by Prince Luiz Philippe of Orleans-Bragança. Members unanimously agreed to defer the vote till the next meeting. Ms. Cuzan suggested discussing the proposed project with the Consul General of Brazil in order to hear his opinion.

Ms. Kadragic updated the group on her conversation with Carolina Rendeiro, board member of Sister Cities International, regarding the possibility of the IACC to sponsor events such as the annual “Global Groove” reception of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce. However, Ms. Rendeiro explained that the Coral Gables International Affairs Foundation (CGIAF), which was instituted by Mayor Cason, is unable to sponsor events due to insufficient funds. The board members shared their opinions and discussed possible solutions. Mr. Pastor volunteered to sponsor a reception once a year for a Sister Cities event. Mr. Garay proposed the idea of hosting a Gala reception where various individuals and organizations could sponsor, and funds could be raised during the event for various projects of the IACC committee. Ms Cuzan reminded the members that in years past the City would host the Consular Corps reception and however the event was taken over by the Chamber of Commerce. She also requested that the scope of Articles of Incorporation of the CGIAF be reviewed by the committee. More discussion ensued regarding various possibilities for the committee to consider.

There being no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 9:48 a.m.

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