

# CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, January 23, 2023

Location: City Hall Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
<b>Raul Valdes-Fauli</b>	A												Mayor Vince Lago
<b>Volker R. Anding</b>	P												Vice Mayor Michael Mena
<b>Brett Gillis</b>	P												Comm. Rhonda Anderson
<b>Richard Montes de Oca</b>	P												Comm. Fors Jr./Comm. Jim Cason
<b>Sadia M. Raja</b>	P												Comm. Kirk Menendez
<b>Alejandra Collarte</b>	E												Peter Iglesias, City Manager
<b>Rafael Gavarrete</b>	E												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 4:07 p.m.

Vice Chair Volker R. Anding welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ms. Leticia Perez informed Board members that she had received calls from Rafael Gavarrete asking to be excused for medical reasons and from Alejandra Collarte who asked to be excused as she had the flu.

- **A motion was made by Dr. Brett Gillis to excuse today’s absence of Board members Rafael Gavarrete and Alejandra Collarte and the rest of the Board members voted in favor.**

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (December 19, 2022)**

Dr. Gillis mentioned that there were some scrivener’s errors. Vice Chair Anding stated he did not have any comments on the minutes that were substantial.

- **A motion was made by Dr. Gillis to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2022, International Affairs Coordinating Council. Richard Montes de Oca seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

**COUNTRY REPORT**

**CITY OF STELLENBOSCH, SOUTH AFRICA**

- Dr. Gillis informed Board members that although he had reached out the office of the Mayor of Stellenbosch, he had not heard back from anyone since the New Year. He hoped to have more information for the next IACC meeting. Dr. Gillis said he had received a very nice phone call from Zelda Jensen from the Jensen family in South Africa, she is also in communication with Hugh Simon who was mentioned previously as a contact in South Africa. He also reached out to the

Office of International Affairs at the Florida Department of State who should be in contact with Mr. Simon. Dr. Gillis is trying to establish additional contacts. He added that the City of Stellenbosch is in the process of joining the Sister Cities International (SCI) organization. He is waiting for them to finalize their initial setup documents with SCI to move forward with the official agreement and signing ceremony.

#### QUITO, ECUADOR

- Mr. Montes de Oca informed the Board members that he received an introduction email from the International Affairs Council in Quito, Ecuador which stated that they are prepared and interested in following up with the Sister Cities agreement. He added that he sent a copy of the Stellenbosch invitation letter to Quito to be used as a template to send a letter to Mayor Vince Lago. He added that some of the key topics they are interested in discussing and collaborating on include smart cities, cultural exchanges, and hospitality.

#### AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

- As per Vice Chair Anding, there are no updates to report on Aix-en-Provence.

#### OPEN DISCUSSION

- Vice Chair Anding told Board members he attends the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce's Global Business Affairs monthly meetings. During last month's meeting, he learned that Deirdre Nero, Committee Chair, was planning a trip to Cartagena, Colombia at the end of April or beginning of May. Vice Chair Anding believes it would be a good idea for Chairman Raul Valdes-Fauli to join Mrs. Nero on this government / business trip.
- Vice Chair Anding and Board members discussed the draft document with criteria and guidelines for selecting a Sister City. Board members reviewed the document and provided edits. Ms. Leticia Perez asked Board members to email her any additional comments/edits. A new version of the document would be reviewed at the next IACC meeting.
- Ms. Leticia Perez informed the Board that the Consulate of Paraguay had recently moved to the City of Coral Gables. They are located at 2655 Le Jeune Road, Coral Gables. She added that Mrs. Belkys Perez and she met with Mr. Rodrigo Esquivel, Consul of Paraguay and discussed mutual collaboration between the City of Coral Gables and the City of Asuncion and possible cultural events.  
Ms. Leticia Perez is also assisting the Consulate of St. Lucia with their 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence and Flag Raising Ceremony which is scheduled for February 22 at 10 a.m. at the George Merrick House. Mayor Lago has been invited as the guest of honor and would be providing welcome remarks.  
Ms. Leticia Perez is working very closely with the Consulate of Colombia on their second annual Carnival of Barranquilla. The date and venue have not been determined yet.  
Vice Chair Anding requested that Board members receive information for these events. Ms. Perez assured the Board that she will inform the Board of the events once plans have been confirmed.
- Dr. Gillis asked if Enterprise Florida has had any involvement with the IACC. Mrs. Belkys Perez responded that, to her knowledge, they are not involved with the IACC, but that they had been involved with the Economic Development Board during the stakeholder meeting for the Department's forthcoming Economic Development Study.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.

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

DRAFT