

International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)
Sister Cities Committee
Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 27, 2022



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

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
Raul Valdes-Fauli	P	P	X	P	P	E							Mayor Vince Lago
Volker R. Anding	P	P	X	P	P	P							Vice Mayor Michael Mena
Brett Gillis	P	P	X	P	P	P							Comm. Rhonda Anderson
Richard Montes de Oca	P	E	X	A	P	P							Comm. Jorge L. Fors, Jr.
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Alejandra Collarte	P	A	X	P	P	P							Peter Iglesias, City Manager
Rafael Gavarrete	P	P	X	P	E	P							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 4:05 pm.
- Vice Chair Anding welcomed everyone to the International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC). He announced that the first item on the agenda was the approval of the May 16, 2022, meeting minutes.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (May 16, 2022)

- Before the approval of the minutes Vice Chair Anding had a brief comment about the IACC minutes from May 16, 2022. He mentioned that at the bottom of page 2 and on the top of page 3 he had suggested to invite to this meeting, Raymundo Rodulfo, Director of Information Technology to make his semiannual presentation on the IT cooperation between Coral Gables and Aix-en-Provence and stated that this suggestion was approved by all the members of the IACC Committee. But since the item was not in today’s agenda, Vice Chair Anding then asked Ms. Perez, who in turn informed him that due to some medical issues Mr. Rodulfo was not available to come today and had nothing substantial to report about this cooperation at this time. Alejandra Collarte made the motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Richard Montes de Oca seconded the motion, as amended, which passed unanimously. There was no further discussion regarding the minutes.
- Before we start with the country report Mr. Perez informed the board that Mr. Raul Valdes-Fauli requested to be excused from today’s meeting. **Volker Anding made a motion to excuse Mr. Valdes-Fauli. Richard Montes de Oca seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

COUNTRY REPORT

SANTA TECLA, EL SALVADOR

- The Mayor of Santa Tecla is planning to visit Miami at the end of July, beginning of August.

LA ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

- No updates as of today.
Mr. Gavarrete informed the board members that The Archeologist Richard Hansen, professor at Utah State University, known for his great work in the last 40 years on the project of El Mirador in Guatemala, an ancient Mayan ruins- is planning to do an event in the City of Coral Gables this year around the third week of September. The main purpose of this event is to harvest donations for his work in El Mirador, Guatemala.

SAN ISIDRO, ARGENTINA

- Mrs. Alejandra Collarte reported that she did not have any updates on San Isidro, but she did have some news about the Miami Dade County Sister City Program. She informed all the board members that today the Miami Dade County International Trade Consortium signed a Sister City agreement with Madrid. The President of *Comunidad de Madrid*, Isabel Diaz Ayuso came to Miami for this event and had a presentation at the Mandarin Oriental regarding investments and opportunities between Miami and Madrid, followed by the Sister Cities signing ceremony at the Miami Dade County Commission Chambers with Mayor Daniella Levine Cava and the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners Jose “Pepe” Diaz.

Also, last Friday the International Trade Consortium hosted a delegation from the United Arab Emirates, some of the special guest included the Minister of State for Foreign Trade, Dr. Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi. Mrs. Collarte also informed the members that she is now the new Group Chair for the International Business at the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. She also announced that the first International Business meeting will take place on July 13, she extended an invitation to all the board members to participate.

QUITO, ECUADOR

- Mr. Montes the Oca gave a brief report on a follow up meeting that took place a few weeks after the initial introductory meeting between Mayor Lago, Mario Fiorentino Coello, Consul General of Quito and Leticia Baquerizo, Consul Adjunct. He reported that on June 16, Julian Perez, Leticia Perez, and himself met with Mr. Fiorentino Coello and Ms. Baquerizo. The meeting went well and was very productive, we were able to discuss and provide updates on the initiative for having a sister city agreement with Quito, Ecuador and basically discussed some of the collaboration and other copromotional initiatives that we could undertake.
These collaboration and initiatives include, Quito’s Independence Day, which is taking place on August 10th and Ms. Baquerizo would like to coordinate an event in the city of Coral Gables to show case some of the country’s finest artists and musicians. They also celebrate the International Chocolate Day, which takes place on September 13, and it is a much-celebrated day in the country since some of the best chocolates in the world originate from Ecuador. They would like to bring a chocolatier from Ecuador to do a tasting in one of the Coral Gables facilities.

Some other highlighter areas that were discussed was the importance of cultural and technology exchanges among the two cities.

The next steps will be to contact the office of the Mayor in Quito to reactivate the Sister City relationship with the City of Coral Gables.

Mr. Perez clarify to the board members who were discussing whether there was an active Sister City agreement with Quito, that if indeed we need to do a new Sister City agreement, we would have to receive a formal communication from the Mayor of Quito.

STELLENBOSCH, AFRICA

- Before Mr. Gillis provided his report, he asked the board members if they had a chance to review the letter that was sent by Ms. Geraldine Mettler, Municipal Manager for the City of Stellenbosch. He added that the letter indicates their interest in pursuing a sister city relationship with the City of Coral Gables and asking us to submit a formal request letter regarding the agreement, objectives, etc. for them to present it to their Council for approval.

Mr. Perez informed Mr. Gillis that the letter we received was from the Municipal Manager and that we will need a letter from the Mayor of Stellenbosch addressed to Mayor Vince Lago consistent with Sister City International requirements. He added, once we received this letter, we will then respond to them, and this is how the process for establishing a sister city relationship begins.

Mr. Gillis then requested for the city to write the letter to the Municipal Manager explaining the Sister City process. Mr. Perez emphasized and explained the importance of the correspondence between both Mayors to initiate the Sister City relationship.

Mrs. Perez agreed to elaborate a letter to send to the Municipal Manager of Stellenbosch that will include the request for a letter from the Mayor of Stellenbosch to Mayor Lago. Once the letter is finalized, a copy will be sent to Mr. Gillis for his review.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

- Nothing to report on Aix-en-Provence at this moment.

CARTAGENA DE INDIAS, COLOMBIA

- Mr. Perez reported that we received a correspondence via email from Sophia Archbold informing us that the elections in Colombia are now over, and they would like for us to begin the process of reviving the Sister City relationship. He added that before we write a response to Ms. Archbold, he would like to have a discussion with Chairman Valdes-Fauli, to see how we should proceed. As you may all know there was an issue with the Mayor of Cartagena de Indias which resulted on his suspension as Mayor until the issue is resolved.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

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