



**City of Coral Gables  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**ITEM TITLE:**

Presentation of excerpts from the International Affairs coordinating council meeting of February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008, requesting the following action.

**ACTION REQUESTED BY THE BOARD/COMMITTEE:**

That the City Commission approve a \$1,500. sponsorship from the Sister City Account for one (1) student from Carver Middle School in Coral Gables to travel to La Antigua Guatemala as part of a cultural summer excursion organized by the Spanish International Parents Association.

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE CITY MANAGER:**

This office does not recommend that funds from the Sister cities trust be spent on and on international internship program. A private sponsorship is more appropriate for this type of expenditure.

**BACKGROUND:**

Dunia Miranda Maury, Trade Commissioner of Guatemala, informed the group of the upcoming summer trip to La Antigua Guatemala with students from Carver Middle School in Coral Gables scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>, 2008. She explained that the program which is organized by the Spanish International Parents Association (SIPA) was created to promote the Spanish language and culture amongst middle school students. She submitted a detailed itinerary of the 10-day excursion which included visits to the Constitution Plaza, the National Palace, the Metropolitan Cathedral, the Pacaya Volcano, a coffee plantation, and Tikal. Students will also attend one of the local schools, and an official welcoming by the Mayor of La Antigua where he will present each of the students with “Distinguished Guest Certificates”. Ms. Miranda Maury stated that the trip is a unique experience which will familiarize the children with Guatemalan history and culture. She reported that the cost of the trip is \$1,500.00 per person which includes: all hotel accommodations, meals, excursions, ground transportation, and airfare. She noted that TACA Group offered a very competitive airfare of \$500.00 which includes Mia/Gua/Tikal/Gua/Mia. Ms. Miranda-Maury thanked the Board for supporting the 2007 program and shared with them a video of the students during their trip to La Antigua last summer. She also thanked the City of Coral Gables Mayor’s Office for the ceremonial gifts which the group presented on his behalf to the Sister City Mayor, and the Recreation Department for providing Youth Center t-shirts for the students and

parents which they wore to visit the Mayor of La Antigua in City Hall. Ms. Miranda-Maury asked the Board to consider sponsoring one student from Carver Middle School. She also encouraged a representative from the IACC joined the group in La Antigua. Mr. DeNunzio asked if they had determined the qualifications for the student to be sponsored. Ms. Miranda Maury replied that the student selection is based on financial need and superior academic performance. She also informed the group that SIPA contributes a total of about \$5,000. which covers the cost of a student, a teacher and the cost of some of the events in Guatemala. Vice Chair McGaughey asked if the child would travel with a parent. She said they could at the parent's own expense. Mr. McGaughey said that if the Board believed this to be a meritorious activity they could make a motion to support the effort and agree to explore with City Management the feasibility of such expenditure.

**REVIEWED BY:**

BOARD/COMMITTEE SECRETARY	City Attorney (If Applicable)	City Manager

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

1. Excerpts from the International Affairs Coordinating Council Meeting of February 28, 2008