

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of April 13, 2016**

<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	E	P	E	X	X	P	P	P	P	X	E	Mayor Jim Cason
Israel Reyes	P	E	P	P	X	X	-	E	P	E	X	P	Vice-Mayor Frank Quesada
Carolina Rendeiro	E	P	P	P	X	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Comm. Patricia Keon
Nancy Sanabria	E	P	P	P	X	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Comm. Vince Lago
Volker Anding	P	P	P	P	X	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Comm. Jeannett Slesnick
Steve Edelstein	E	P	P	E	X	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark, City Manager
Enrique Monasterio	P	P	P	P	X	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Council-at-Large Appointment

**Country Appointed Liaisons:**

Pending – Ms. Rendeiro  
 Quebec, Canada – Mr. Edelstein  
 Cartagena, Colombia – Ms. Cuzan  
 Aix-en-Provence, France – Mr. Anding  
 Antigua, Guatemala – Ms. Sanabria  
 Pavia, Italy – Mr. Monasterio  
 Granada, Spain – Mr. Reyes

**A = Absent**  
**P = Present**  
**E = Excused**  
**X = No Meeting**

**Staff in Attendance:**

Evelyn Paz, Secretary, IACC

**Guest:**

Mayor Jim Cason  
 Alma Kadragic, Chamber of Commerce liaison  
 Rafael Gavarrete, Resident  
 Dunia Miranda-Mauri, Guatemala Trade Commissioner

Ms. Rendeiro called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Anding made a motion to approve the minutes of the IACC meeting on March 15, 2016 and Mr. Reyes seconded the motion. All in favor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

Ms. Sanabria said they spent almost 2 years with the idea of donating fire trucks to our Sister City of La Antigua, Guatemala. Ms. Sanabria is happy to say that through the Denton program, who did not charge for the delivery, the truck has finally arrived to Antigua. Ms. Sanabria thanked Ms. Miranda-Mauri for her efforts; Mr. Edelstein through the Foundation was able to pay the duties and custom fees. Ms. Sanabria

said that the fees that were charged should be discussed with the new administration in Antigua because there is another truck being delivered which did not fit on the original aircraft. Ms. Sanabria thanked Mr. Gavarrete for all his efforts in building the shoring kits at the last minute. Ms. Sanabria asked Mr. Gavarrete how much pounds of wood was used. Mr. Gavarrete said that about 4,000lbs of wood was used to build the shoring kit so that the truck could board the aircraft. Ms. Sanabria said that unfortunately she was unable to see the plane off but the pictures were beautiful. Ms. Sanabria said that the CGTV will be preparing a video to be posted on the Coral Gables website of the truck being secured on the plane and taking off. Ms. Sanabria said that she had a draft letter commending Chief Tony Rodriguez from the Air Force, who cut his vacation short to see the shipment of the fire truck through.

Ms. Sanabria said that they do not have a set day for the shipment of the second truck. Mr. Anding asked if the truck was being housed at the Air Force Base. Ms. Sanabria said no and that only one truck had been towed to the base. Ms. Sanabria said that they will be able to use the shoring kits that Mr. Gavarrete provided for the second shipment. Chief Tony Rodriguez would redesign the existing shoring kit to be used once it returns from Guatemala.

Ms. Sanabria said that she saw pictures of the truck in Guatemala and reported that they have already been painted and added their logo to it. Vida Amor de Paz and Lex Cargo produced clips of the truck for a television show. Ms. Sanabria said that we may never know how many lives the truck may help save but just knowing that it will support life is so wonderful. Mr. Monasterio asked if they would receive training. Ms. Sanabria said that the Mayor has set up some training. Ms. Miranda-Mauri said that Mayor Cason could provide more information since he was in Antigua. Ms. Sanabria said that Mayor Cason and Mrs. Cason went to Antigua when the trucks arrived and met with Alcalde Susana and attended a formal reception and parade featuring the fire truck donation.

Ms. Paz received a message from Mr. Matt Boker, a long time reporter and previous resident of Coral Gables, who ran into Mayor Cason at the airport and was sad that he would miss this presentation. Mr. Boker advised the news outlet he works for to send coverage for the truck presentation. Mr. Boker provided pictures that Ms. Paz would share. Mr. Reyes called for a round of applause for Ms. Sanabria who worked so hard on this project.

Ms. Rendeiro said that at the Sister City International Conference they would be showcasing cities that have done a lot and Coral Gables has been selected as one of the cities to be showcased. Ms. Rendeiro said that she would like a package done on Guatemala. Ms. Rendeiro said that she was going to ask the mayor to sign a proclamation for a day in July declaring it Sister Cities Day. Ms. Rendeiro said that the conference is July 13<sup>th</sup>- July 16<sup>th</sup> in Washington DC at the Mayflower Hotel. Ms. Miranda-Mauri asked if they could schedule a Coral Gables delegation to visit the Guatemalan Embassy. Ms. Rendeiro said that would be possible.

Mayor Cason said that they had a great example of the Sister Cities project. He said that it took a long time with the new procedures like then Denton program and the military would fly it on the available flight. Mayor Cason said it was amazing to watch the truck being loaded and 4 hours later it was in Antigua. Mayor Cason flew over and had a nice reception from the city authorities and the community of Antigua that welcomed them and the whole city came out in front of city hall. Mayor Cason said that there is a tradition to put a fire hose and they raised the ladder to show they knew how to use it. Mayor

Cason said they used the truck the next day to rescue a drone from a tall tree. Mayor Cason said it was probably one of the only hook and ladder trucks in Antigua. Mayor Cason said that the military is very enthused with helping because they use this as training exercise.

Mayor Cason was able to meet with the volunteer firefighters and expressed that they needed help. He suggested that the volunteer firefighters visit Miami and take a look at our used vehicle lot that range from dump trucks to garbage trucks and street sweepers. The Mayor said that if they can show that they can use them then we could load them on a plane.

He said that they have two other fire trucks cued for delivery, one a water truck and a fire rescue truck. They are interested in a school bus that can be converted it into an ambulance. Mayor Cason said they are also interest in gurneys. The Vice President of Doctor's Hospital said they would be helpful in donating them. Mayor Cason said that the reservist washed and waxed the truck.

Mayor Cason presented Ms. Sanabria with a key to the City of Coral Gables. Ms. Sanabria said that she was truly grateful and honored. Ms. Rendeiro informed Mayor Cason that they were going to apply for the award presented at the Sister Cities International Conference. Mayor Cason said that was an excellent idea and that this project was well worth over a million dollars that they could never buy with their resources. Mayor Cason said that there is still a lot of programming to be done with the use of the funds from the Foundation.

Ms. Miranda-Mauri thanked Mayor Cason again for his efforts and their success. She also added that they learned a lot along the way and what are capable of doing. Ms. Miranda-Mauri said that she would like to coordinate a trade visit from Antigua to Coral Gables in that last trimester of the year. She said that it could be in three parts: trade, culture and social. Mayor Cason said that one aspect that would be very useful is if the delegation was interested in any specific training. Mayor Cason said that this is the same concept of an internship program. Ms. Miranda-Mauri said in the past she brought middle school students from Carver so that they could practice their Spanish and take them around the City. Mr. Reyes said they could also train judges and law enforcement from Antigua.

Mayor Cason said it is important to remember the Foundation, which is separate from the City, that it could be used as a tool to accept donations from other cities. He added that a city that would be discarding vehicles that could be useful to our sister cities, could donate it through the Foundation and we can ship it through the Denton program.

Ms. Sanabria said that the Farmer's Market was a huge success. Ms. Miranda-Mauri said it was such a great event and one that should continue to take place.

### CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA

Mayor Cason said he would be willing to go to Cartagena to resuscitate the relationship. He asked for someone to contact their Mayor and advise him that a trip is being planned.

### PAVIA, ITALY:

Mayor Cason said Pavia had their election over a year ago. He believes that they are just not interested. Mayor Cason said that they should pick a city, quickly, that is willing to engage.

### AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE:

Mr. Anding said that he wrote a letter to his new counterpart in Aix. Mr. Anding spoke with the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce president Mr. Mark Trowbridge about the internship idea. He also asked Mr. Trowbridge for his input on expected duration, time of year and the expectation of the program. Mr. Anding is waiting for a response from Mr. Trowbridge. Mr. Anding asked Ms. Kadragic if there is already something in the works. Ms. Kadragic spoke with Mr. Trowbridge that they currently have an intern from Spain which was a lot of trouble and paperwork to approve. Ms. Kadragic said that the specifications Mr. Anding showed her were for a mid-level business person and that would be a different person entirely. Ms. Kadragic said that the Chamber could not do anything in terms of housing expenses. Essentially, she understood Mr. Trowbridge's position that an intern might be more beneficial to a department in the City of Coral Gables.

Ms. Kadragic said that she did not believe it would be possible for the Chamber. Mr. Anding asked if it would be a paid position and that would be a visa problem. Ms. Kadragic said that she believes that the current intern is paid and that made a difference with the visa. She also added that it might be difficult to have a mid-level person in the position rather than a college student. Mr. Anding said that it did not have to be a mid-level person; it could be any level. Mr. Anding said that Commissioner Slesnick might have an opportunity for low cost housing. Ms. Kadragic said that it is important about the duration of time.

Mr. Anding asked that if the internship were to be with the City, would the Mayor be amenable to that. Ms. Paz said that she would suggest that Mr. Anding gather all the information and talk with the Mayor to gauge his thoughts. Ms. Paz said that the Mayor has talked and thinks about the possibility but knows the conflict and costs. Ms. Rendeiro said that it could be a joint effort and both the Chamber and the City should meet to go over what can and cannot be done then speak with Aix-en-Provence and explain what can and cannot be done.

### GRANADA, SPAIN:

Ms. Rendeiro said there had been updates on Granada from Al Cueto. Mr. Cueto was visiting Granada. He reported that the Mayor of Granada had been imprisoned for embezzlement. Ms. Rendeiro said that she hopes that something will finally be able to get done. Mr. Reyes said that believes that their lack of responses and inactions make sense. Ms. Rendeiro said that he had survived every election with his party or not.

Mr. Reyes asked if they will wait for the new administration or just move on to another city. Ms. Rendeiro said she was unsure, but she would like to see who the new administration would include. Ms. Rendeiro added that they have always had a good relationship with Granada that the current mayor had just made it difficult. Mr. Reyes said he would not like to lose it either.

Mr. Reyes asked if he and Mr. Monasterio could meet with the Consul General of Spain together. Ms. Paz said no because of the Sunshine Law. Ms. Rendeiro advised that they could call a special meeting to be held for both of them to be there as long as the public could attend. Ms. Paz said that they could announce a special meeting a week in advance and post it.

## QUEBEC, CANADA

Mayor Cason asked about the progress with Quebec. Ms. Rendeiro said that she had a meeting with the Consul General and a representative from Quebec. Mayor Cason asked Ms. Rendeiro to try to gauge if they are interested. Ms. Rendeiro said that Quebec is a good city to partner with because the exchange of work with them is phenomenal. Ms. Rendeiro said that the Governor of State of Canada arriving May 26<sup>th</sup> at the Beacon Council. The new consul general takes office July 1<sup>st</sup>.

## NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Rendeiro said that she believes that the City of Coral Gables could win the award at the national level. She asked Ms. Sanabria to put together a packet to present to the Sister Cities International Board. Ms. Sanabria asked what the guidelines were for the packet. Ms. Rendeiro said that there really is no set guideline the basic information on what was it that was done, how did it benefit the Sister Cities program, and was it a humanitarian or gift exchange. Ms. Rendeiro said that Ms. Miranda-Mauri could give the impact on the Guatemalan side and the impact was on the City of Coral Gables. Ms. Rendeiro said to include how the residents helped from building the shoring kits and the government helped.

Mayor Cason asked about the progress on the cities in Portugal. Ms. Rendeiro said that Avero and Coimbra have both accepted. Ms. Rendeiro is going to set a meeting with Mayor Cason to discuss the history and details of each city. Ms. Rendeiro said that her first choice would be Avero because it is businesslike like the City of Coral Gables.

Mayor Cason asked about the progress with Spain or Italy. Mr. Monasterio said he exchanged email with the Vice Mayor from Santander. Mr. Monasterio said that he is planning on going to Spain in May and would try to meet with the Vice Mayor then. The Mayor said if he should plan on asking how long the administration will be in place since the turn of governments is important to the relationship.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Ms. Rendeiro said that they were impressed by the reception back in March. Ms. Rendeiro said that they raised about \$26,000 for Sister Cities International that is distributed throughout. Ms. Rendeiro said that it was one of the best received donations.

Ms. Rendeiro said that the University of Florida puts out a Latin American Study that is very comprehensive. The writers will be presenting at Books & Books on April 15<sup>th</sup> in the morning. Ms. Rendeiro said that everyone would get a copy of the report and that it would be showcased.

## Announcement:

The next meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2016.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:26 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Paz

Secretary, International Affairs Coordinating Council