

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

**Minutes of the Meeting of October 15, 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	P	P	P	P	-	-	Mayor Raúl Valdés-Fauli
Claudio Pastor	P	E	E	P	E	P	P	E	E	E	-	-	Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Alma Kadragic	P	P	E	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	Comm. Patricia Keon
Gabriel Garay	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	P	P	P	E	-	-	Comm. Jorge L. Fors, Jr.
Volker Anding	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	Comm. Michael Mena
Alejandra Collarte	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	E	P	P	P	P	-	-	Peter Iglesias, City Manager
Rafael Gavarrete	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	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 Guests:**

Belkys Perez, Coral Gables Economic Development Department  
Leticia Perez, Coral Gables Economic Development Department  
Beatrice Rangel, Innovation Council Consultant  
Steven Edelstein, President of the Coral Gables International Affairs Foundation

Chairwoman Lourdes Cuzán opened the meeting by welcoming Steven Edelstein, President of the Coral Gables International Affairs Foundation, and Beatrice Rangel, an Innovation Council Consultant. Chairwoman called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Ms. Collarte made a motion to approve the August 20, 2019 minutes. Motion was seconded by Mr. Anding. All in favor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Ms. Kadragic made a motion to approve the September 17, 2019 minutes. Motion was seconded by Mr. Anding. All in favor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE:

Mr. Anding had no update for Aix-en-Provence. However, he is requesting an update from Mr. Rodulfo from the Coral Gables IT department.

LA ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA:

Mr. Gavarrate reiterated that the new mayor will be sworn in as the mayor of La Antigua in January 2020. Once this takes place we will carry on with the relationship.

Ms. Cuzán announced that after 20 years, Duna Miranda-Mauri Trade Commissioner of Guatemala in Coral Gables, has completed her term and will be presented with a key to the city. She was instrumental to the city and IACC in promoting programs and activities between Coral Gables and La Antigua. She asked that those members who have a personal connection with Ms. Miranda-Mauri participate in the City Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 22 where she will be recognized.

CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA:

Ms. Cuzán informed the members that the relationship with Cartagena is on hold until their elections are concluded.

SANTA TECLA, EL SALVADOR:

Mr. Gavarrate reported that a date to visit Santa Tecla on the month of November is being considered.

Ms. Luzarraga shared with the members information regarding a small group from Santa Tecla who will visit Coral Gables. The visit will consist of meetings with the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Coral Gables Fire Department and the director of Historic Preservation of the City of Coral Gables. Mr. Anding reiterated the importance of the committee participation during these kinds of visits. Ms. Luzarraga explained the request was recently received but she will keep the committee informed as the details are confirmed.

QUITO, ECUADOR:

No update on Quito, Ecuador

SEVILLA, SPAIN:

Ms. Cuzán reported on her conversation with the Mayor's Office in Sevilla regarding his visit to Coral Gables. A tentative date is being considered and will be shared with the committee when confirmed.

SAN ISIDRO, ARGENTINA

Ms. Collarte reported on the success of the visit to San Isidro where a Sister City agreement between Coral Gables and San Isidro was signed. She provided the members with an overview of the successful trip which

included meeting with various companies and a meeting organized by the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) which was attended by many companies who want to do business with us.

Ms. Kadragic shared two informational brochures from San Isidro: Naturaleza, Diversión, Historia y Deportes and 8 Circuitos Turísticos. She also discussed an event that will take place in Miami with a friend of the Mayor of San Isidro who is a talented singer. More information will be sent to members of the committee.

Belkys Perez of the Economic Development department shared her perspective of the trip by highlighting the vibrancy of downtown San Isidro. She explained that Coral Gables should emulate how their downtown area has enhanced their atmosphere due to the residential community which is very much part of the downtown.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Cuzan discussed the Flags on Ponce resolution which was placed on the October 22, 2019 City Commission meeting. The resolution was presented on behalf of the Sister Cities program for the allocation of funds for the participation in the Flags on Ponce program of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce. She further expressed her appreciation for Mark Trowbridge, President and CEO of the Chamber, who was instrumental during the process. Additionally, Ms. Cuzan thanked Ms. Rangel for finding a sponsor for the Brazilian flag.

Ms. Cuzan discussed a letter received by Mayor Valdés-Fauli from a prominent attorney in Costa Rica who is part of a consortium that includes Central American countries. The letter is inviting the City of Coral Gables to engage in a new agreement with the City of San Jose, Costa Rica. She said the administration of San Jose will visit Coral Gables in the near future and Mayor Valdés-Fauli will visit San Jose, Costa Rica in October 2019. She briefly discussed the commonalities between the two countries, specifically their historical background. The Mayor would like to have the support of the board members to execute the request.

Mr. Anding suggested the possibility of reaching out to the former president of Costa Rica, Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, who moved to Miami and is currently a professor at Florida International University (FIU). Ms. Cuzan requested that once the relationship is confirmed the Mayor's Office follow up to establish a dialogue.

A discussion ensued regarding the procedure of the International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC) and Sister Cities International (SCI).

Ms. Kadragic made a motion to defer the request until a discussion with the former president is established. The motion did not pass. Ms. Collarte expressed her opinion regarding the deferral of vote which she stated that if no one is opposed to the request then the committee should vote. Ms. Collarte made a motion to approve the relationship between the City of Coral Gables and San Jose, Costa Rica, Mr. Anding seconded the motion, and the motion was approved. Additionally, Ms. Kadragic made a request to have the Mayor's Office inform the committee of any potential Sister Cities request with advance notice.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Edelstein, President of the Coral Gables International Affairs Foundation (CGIAF), reported that the tax returns for 2018 are pending. Additionally, he explained the purpose of the foundation and its role with regard to the IACC committee. He explained that IACC is completely separate from the functions of the CGIAF even though the foundation's primary purpose is to allocate funds for the committee. The board also addresses future requests to sponsor events. He reiterated that the foundation was created in an effort to assist the committee with funds for programs and activities between Coral Gables and its Sister Cities. Ms. Collarte asked for a

report from the foundation with information of previously allocated funds. Ms. Cuzan suggested that Ms. Luzarraga provide a request from the IACC to the Mayor in order to obtain records of financial disclosure to include allocation of funds. Mr. Edelstein asked the members of the committee to submit a list of projects with funding request which the foundation will review and determine what qualifies for funding. Ms. Kadragic made a request to hear from the foundation at the next meeting in order to continue fostering a relationship.

Ms. Rangel gave an update on an event which is being organized with the Consul General of Brazil in Miami. They will host a cocktail reception at the museum of Coral Gables for the book launch of *Por Que o Brasil É Um País Atrasado*, they are in the process of choosing Brazilian movies and by the end of next year they will start on the furniture proposal. However, the planned exhibition by Guayasamin will not be taking place.

Additionally, Ms. Rangel informed the members on the Fundación Internacional Para la Libertad (FIL) created by the Nobel Mario Vargas Llosa has three major events each year. The City of Coral Gables has agreed to host the 2019 International Forum. The City of Coral Gables has agreed to host the 2019 International Forum which will take place December 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Kadragic requested that partnership agreements with Sister Cities be translated in English.

There being no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

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