

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

Minutes of the Meeting of May 17, 2016

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
Lourdes Cuzán	P	E	P	E	P	X	P	P	P	P	X	E	Mayor Jim Cason
Israel Reyes	P	E	P	P	E	X	-	E	P	E	X	P	Vice-Mayor Frank Quesada
Carolina Rendeiro	E	P	P	P	E	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Comm. Patricia Keon
Nancy Sanabria	E	P	P	P	E	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Comm. Vince Lago
Volker Anding	P	P	P	P	P	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Comm. Jeannett Slesnick
Steve Edelstein	E	P	P	E	P	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark, City Manager
Enrique Monasterio	P	P	P	P	P	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Council-at-Large Appointment

Country Appointed Liaisons:

Pending – Ms. Rendeiro
 Pending – 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: Alma Kadragic, Chamber of Commerce liaison

Mr. Edelstein called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Anding made a motion to approve the minutes of the IACC meeting on April 13, 2016 and Ms. Cuzan seconded the motion. All in favor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA

Ms. Cuzan said that not much has taken place with Cartagena because there is a very unreliable person in Cartagena that has stood up Mayor Cason every time a meeting is arranged. Ms. Cuzan has tried to reach out to the contacts there so that the Mayor can visit in August. Ms. Cuzan said that at the local level she reached out to the gentleman that wanted to donate a sculpture to Coral Gables as well as a contact with the Columbian Chamber of Commerce to see if they can develop a business or cultural relationship at that level. Ms. Cuzan said if they are not able to get a serious commitment from the government of Cartagena, then they can reach out to other organization that will help with cultural programs.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE:

Mr. Anding said he and Ms. Kadragic had a meeting with Mayor Cason discussing the internship opportunity with Aix-En-Provence either with the City or the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Anding said that they seemed to be interested in a more business relationship therefore the Chamber might be better equipped to have an intern. Mr. Anding said that he spoke with Mr. Mark Trowbridge who showed enthusiasm. However, Mr. Trowbridge also spoke to Ms. Kadragic and expressed concern after having so much trouble with the obtaining the visa for their current Spanish intern. Mr. Anding said that Mayor Cason welcomed the idea of having an intern with the City. Mayor Cason also mentioned that there was a business school in Aix that he had a contact at. He said that they may have a program for a visiting student from the City.

Mr. Anding said that Mayor Cason suggested possible short term internships with the City's police department and fire department because it is world champion in car extraction. The police department has the highest classification. Mr. Anding said it might be interesting for their fire and police departments because it could bring perspective from the French.

Mr. Anding said that Mayor Cason believed the internship did not have to be limited to the Chamber or the City; it could be with companies such as Bacardi that would benefit from an English speaking foreigner. Mr. Edelstein added that there was another way to go about the internship program. Mr. Edelstein thought instead of using the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce they could partner with the French American Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Edelstein said that for years Miami Dade County Schools has had French school teachers come over to teach under a J-Visa (Fulbright Exchange Program). There are only certain organizations that are allowed to request these types of visas. The French American Chamber is one of the organizations. The main office is located in New York. The chapter in New York has authority to issue those visas. Ms. Kadragic added that the Mayor would like to see more events and interactions with our Sister Cities. Ms. Kadragic said the Mayor mentioned a program where the French government pays for a business person to go somewhere where there could be business. Mr. Anding asked for the contact information for the French American Chamber of Commerce chapter here in Miami. Mr. Edelstein said he would be happy to forward the information to Mr. Anding via email.

Ms. Kadragic said that the relationship with Western European cities is much different than the relationships with South American cities. Ms. Kadragic said that Aix has an Arts Festival every year. Ms. Kadragic suggested that the City participate in the festival and learn from them how to put together an arts festival in our City. Mr. Edelstein said that in the past they hosted Merrick Festival which included performing arts. Mr. Edelstein said that they have tried for years to recreate a festival but it has not been successful in its planning stages. Mr. Edelstein said that the Museum helps with bringing art to the City and host events just not performing arts. Mr. Edelstein said that if Ms. Kadragic wanted to look into the idea that the board would be open to considering it and putting it on an agenda. Mr. Anding said that if the IACC could facilitate such an event that would be good however, it should not be the board's main concern. Mr. Edelstein said that in the past the board and its members have facilitated the exchange of art. Mr. Anding clarified that they should focus on cultural exchanges not just one large festival.

GRANADA, SPAIN:

Mr. Monasterio said that he met with the Mayor and Vice Mayor of Santander as well as University personnel. Mr. Monasterio said that the Mayor of Santander does not believe in having Sister Cities without there being a business exchange first. Santander only has one Sister City. Mr. Monasterio said that Spain is going through a big turmoil because they could not complete their elections in November so they are doing them now. Spain is run by political parties and the commissioners are of different parties so many of the Mayor's items will take significant efforts to be approved. The Mayor of Santander would like to develop a relationship before becoming official Sister Cities.

Mr. Monasterio then travelled to Avila and met with the Mayor. The Mayor of Avila was facing the same problem with political parties. The Mayor was very interested in having a relationship with Coral Gables. The Mayor, however, was interested in having some sort of relationship before making it official. They suggested a cultural exchange. Mr. Monasterio suggested having an art show depicting the history of Avila here in the Coral Gables Museum. Mr. Monasterio said that they also have a university as well. Santander has two universities that are interested in engaging in cultural exchanges.

Mr. Edelstein asked Mr. Monasterio of the two which he thought would be the better or more advantageous relationship. Mr. Monasterio said Avila is a small city like Coral Gables, with a lot of history but does not offer much business opportunities. The University is not at the same level as the University of Miami. Avila only has to offer culture. However, they are more willing to start something faster. Santander was the Mayor's choice because of the proximity to the ocean. Santander has a lot to offer but their Mayor is skeptical. The Mayor of Santander is on his third term but has had to realign his political agenda because of the different parties. Mr. Monasterio said that is why he suggested starting something cultural that is less expensive. Mr. Anding asked if the elections coming up were national or local. Mr. Monasterio said that they are national. Mr. Monasterio said that in order for their respective governments to agree that they should think of something budget friendly. Mr. Monasterio said that the Mayor of Santander has a personal relationship with Miami.

Mr. Anding asked if these cities expect Coral Gables to send something to them and take the initiative or are they willing to work with us in having a cultural event. Mr. Monasterio responded that they were willing to bring something here as well as host an event over there. Mr. Edelstein said that it seems that both cities have benefits but the Mayor of Santander is more aloof because of the political situation. Mr. Monasterio said that he did not think it was the case with the political parties but rather the fact that he has tried to have sister city relationships in the past and they have not come to fruition. Mr. Edelstein said that his concern is that Santander is very hesitant. Mr. Anding said that it was really hard for him to believe that Santander only had one Sister City since Europe is very proactive with cultivating these types of relationships. Mr. Edelstein said that Wikipedia lists the Sister City relationships. Ms. Cuzan said that she believes the Mayor of Santander understands what it takes to have a successful relationship and wants to know if the relationship will be active. Mr. Edelstein said the way that understands that Avila is more inclined to have a relationship. Mr. Monasterio said that the Consul General is from Santander so he was pushing the relationship with Santander. Mr. Monasterio also suggested that they could try to establish relationships with both and see which responds first and is more receptive. Mr. Monasterio said that they could come up with a cultural event with both cities and our other sister cities.

Mr. Anding asked what type of funding would this need. Mr. Edelstein explained that the Foundation has a whole new board. The procedures for funding have been that the IACC votes on an issue, and if approved, it then goes to the Mayor. After the Mayor approves the funding request of the IACC, he will contact Mr. Edelstein or the treasurer. The Foundation board members then vote and issue the check. Mr. Edelstein does not know what would happen with the cities both being from Spain. Mr. Monasterio said that it did not have to be looked at as a Sister Cities event but rather a cultural exchange between two cities in Spain. Mr. Edelstein said that the foundation was created to assist the IACC and Sister Cities

relationships. However, the Foundation is not limited to Sister Cities; it can be used for friendship cities as well as for foreign missions with the approval of the IACC, Mayor and the Foundation board.

Mr. Monasterio is going to meet with Mayor Cason to speak about his trip to Spain and report his findings. Mr. Monasterio said then at the next meeting they can discuss what the Mayor thinks about his findings and make decisions from there. Mr. Edelstein suggested that Mayor Cason attend the next meeting where all members of the board will be present to discuss which city would be preferable. Mr. Edelstein told Ms. Paz to let Ms. Rendeiro know about the Mayor's attendance to next meeting so that she can present him with the countries in Portugal she has been looking into. Mr. Anding said that the council should try not to look into Sister City relationships that are too close in terms of geography. Mr. Anding said that if the most promising relationship comes from Portugal then we should pursue that more actively and put Spanish cities on hold. Mr. Edelstein said that all cities should be pursued until there is an ultimate decision. Ms. Paz added that the Mayor believes that even if they are not a Sister City they could always be a Friendship City.

Mr. Monasterio said that he believes there are cultural differences in both cities that could be beneficial. Ms. Paz said Mayor Cason will not be available for June's meeting. Ms. Paz suggested that she will take notes and present them to the Mayor after the meeting. Mr. Edelstein said that nonetheless they should still discuss Avila and Santander at the next IACC meeting.

QUEBEC, CANADA

Mr. Edelstein said that the letter to Quebec was sent out January 8th. Mr. Edelstein has been following up once a month to check on the progress. In May Mr. Edelstein received an email that stated they were sorry for not getting back to their request sooner but the file is still at the executive level and they had not received any word on their intention. The contact in Quebec said that she would get back to Mr. Edelstein as soon as she had an answer and would stay on top of the matter. Mr. Edelstein said that after he discussed this with Mayor Cason he did not believe they were going to come back favorably.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Mr. Edelstein said that when he joined the IACC they started off with 6 Sister Cities and should consider what is happening that they are losing Sister Cities. Mr. Edelstein said that they should reevaluate the relationships and what is happening between them. Mr. Monasterio said that they need to develop more cultural exchanges that will spark interest. From there, they can work on business exchanges and relationships between universities from there. Mr. Edelstein said that we should maybe look into Great Britain or Ireland. Mr. Anding said that the council should try to adjust their emphasis to more exchanges. Mr. Edelstein said that if Quebec would not work then they could look into Victoria or Regina Saskatchewan.

Announcement:

The next meeting is scheduled for June 21, 2016.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Paz

Secretary, International Affairs Coordinating Council