

# CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 15, 2023

Location: Coral Gables Police & Fire Headquarters  
2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables, FL 33134

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
	A	-											Mayor Vince Lago
<b>Volker R. Anding</b>	P	P	P	P	A								Vice Mayor Michael Mena
<b>Brett Gillis</b>	P	P	P	P	P								Comm. Rhonda Anderson
<b>Richard Montes de Oca</b>	P	P	P	A	P								Comm. Fors Jr./Comm. Jim Cason
<b>Sadia M. Raja</b>	P	E	P	P	P								Comm. Kirk Menendez
<b>Alejandra Collarte</b>	E	P	P	P	P								Peter Iglesias, City Manager
<b>Rafael Gavarrete</b>	E	P	P	P	A								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 4:00 p.m.

Ms. Alejandra Collarte welcomed everyone to the committee today and led today’s meeting as the acting Chair. Introductions were made amongst Board members and guest Ann Goodman. Ms. Goodman was invited by Board member Gillis to explore a possible partnership with the Coral Gables Music Club.

- Mrs. Belkys Perez was asked to give an update on Fink Studio. Mrs. Perez told the Board that Fink Studio is now open. The historic area of the property has not been occupied by the department as there is currently no furniture. She added that the Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables is holding their Founder’s Day Ceremony at the Fink in June.

Board member Gillis asked if we could plan the next IACC meeting at the Fink, and Mrs. Perez responded that the Fink is not equipped to handle Board meetings at this time, but that IT is working on getting the Fink ready for future public meetings.

- Acting Chair Collarte gave the floor to Ms. Goodman to talk about the Coral Gables Musical Club. Ms. Goodman said that the Club is part of the National Federation of Music Clubs, which was founded in 1898. The Club came into existence in Coral Gables in 1939. Ms. Goodman informed Board members that she would like to start planning next year’s

musical program so she can properly advertise. Her main goal is to increase attendance. Since international is a big part of Coral Gables, she would like to make the theme “Music Makes the World Go Round”. Ms. Goodman would like to partner with the Coral Gables’ Sister City Committee so they can assist in bringing some of their artists to perform in her next musical program.

Mrs. Belkys Perez provided Mrs. Goodman with information about the Cultural Grants Program. Some board members gave Ms. Goodman suggestions and ideas, such as contacting the Consulates that are part of the Sister Cities program, the school of music at the University of Miami, the Sanctuary of the Arts, and to contact international local artists. Board member Gillis also informed Ms. Goodman that there will be a new IACC Board, starting in June and perhaps she should come back and talk to them about this musical program.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (April 17, 2023)**

**A motion to approve the minutes of April 17, 2023, was made by Board member Gillis. Board Member Montes de Oca seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.**

### **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Board Member Raja shared with members that recently she has been working with the Consul General of Japan through the Coral Gables Community Foundation. She announced she is co-sharing the Gala for the Coral Gables Community Foundation this year and it happens to have a Japanese theme. She met with the Consul General of Japan and among the topics they discussed was to have one of the cities in Japan become a Coral Gables Sister City. She asked how members felt about this possibility.

Acting Chair Collarte suggested to the Board that they work together with the Miami-Dade County Sister City International Program (MDCSCIP) since they already have 32 Sister Cities and perhaps select other international cities that are not part of this program.

### **THE SISTER CITIES CRITERIA**

Some board members suggested the topic be brought up for discussion at a future IACC meeting. Board member Montes de Oca said there was no reason not to vote on the criteria today. Board member Gillis agreed with Mr. Montes de Oca and went ahead and commented on item number three under Political Factors and gave a suggestion; all members agree to change it to “What is the degree of cooperation/opportunity between the US and the foreign country”. Board member Gillis also suggested that historical ties should be considered. Acting Chair Collarte suggested the topic should be placed under the section “Cultural/Civic/Educational”. After some discussion, board members agreed to add it to the section: Historical/Cultural/Civic/Educational.

Board member Montes de Oca also suggested that on the introduction, second paragraph after, “The following is a composite of different factors....”, to add “Not all factors should be required to be considered as a sister City”.

**The motion to approve all these changes was made by Board member Montes de Oca and seconded by Board Member Gillis, the rest of the Board members voted in favor.**

### **COUNTRY REPORTS**

#### STELLENBOSCH, SOUTH AFRICA

Board member Gillis said that Stellenbosch is still working on becoming a member of the Sister City International Organization. He added, they need to go through their budget cycle to see if there are any funds available for this activity.

#### SAN ISIDRO, ARGENTINA

- There are no updates to report

#### QUITO, ECUADOR

- There are no updates to report

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.

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