

CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

International Affairs Coordinating Council (IACC)
Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 13, 2023

Location: City Hall Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134

Members:	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Commissioners
	A	-											Mayor Vince Lago
Volker R. Anding	P	P	P										Vice Mayor Michael Mena
Brett Gillis	P	P	P										Comm. Rhonda Anderson
Richard Montes de Oca	P	P	P										Comm. Fors Jr./Comm. Jim Cason
Sadia M. Raja	P	E	P										Comm. Kirk Menendez
Alejandra Collarte	E	P	P										Peter Iglesias, City Manager
Rafael Gavarrete	E	P	P										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 4:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (February 27, 2023)

A motion to approve the minutes of February 27, 2023, was made by Board member Collarte. Board member Gavarrete seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

U. Desmond Alufohai, Miami International Airport Protocol & International Affairs Director of the Miami Aviation Protocol and International Department made a presentation at the meeting.

Mr. Alufohai introduced himself to the Board and provided a brief history and description of the Miami Aviation Protocol and International Affairs Department. He informed the Board that he had worked in Coral Gables for 11 years at the Junior chamber International World Headquarters. He also worked on international trade under the Office of the Mayor for Miami-Dade County for 16 years before transitioning to the airport in April of 2019.

Mr. Alufohai says the airport office receives an average of 15 to 25 dignitaries per day. He believes the airport office is busy due to the area's geographic proximity to the Caribbean and Latin America.

Mr. Alufohai informed Board members of the mission of the Protocol and International Affairs Department, which is to facilitate the movement of dignitaries, elected officials,

first ladies, foreign delegations, and VIPs that travel through the airport. They also provide support to the international affairs programs offered by the airport.

Miami International Airport was the first airport in the US with a Protocol Office and a Diplomatic lounge. The lounge originated in 1994, when they hosted the Summit of the Americas.

Mr. Alufohai expressed an interest in finding opportunities to collaborate and looked forward to a meeting with staff for further discussion.

Vice Chair Anding thanked Mr. Alufohi for his presentation and Board member Alejandra Collarte congratulated him for the work he has done since he took the lead at the airport's Protocol Office.

COUNTRY REPORT

STELLENBOSCH, SOUTH AFRICA

- Board member Gillis said he has had several communications with Hugh Simon and with former mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli who provided him with the contact information for the new International Affairs Coordinator at the University of Stellenbosch. He reached out but has not heard back from the International Affairs Coordinator. He will inform the Board when he has contact with her.

CARTAGENA DE INDIAS, COLOMBIA

- Ms. Leticia Perez explained to Board members that the City would like to donate a fire truck to Cartagena de Indias. Staff presented the Board with the draft resolution which would be presented at the next Commission meeting taking place on March 28, 2023. Once approved by the Commission, the fire truck would be ready for pick up by representatives from the government of Cartagena de Indias.

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed Board members that the city was also donating three gas detectors to Villa Elisa, Paraguay. This donation came about after a meeting the staff had with representatives of the Consulate of Paraguay. The consul explained that the country's fire rescue organization is made up of volunteers and they were in need of all fire equipment. Ms. Leticia Perez contacted the City's Fire Department, which agreed to donate three gas detectors which had been retired for at least a year.

QUITO, ECUADOR

- Board member Montes de Oca did not have any updates but informed Board members that he sent an email to the City of Quito today with a copy to Ms. Leticia Perez. He will continue to follow up with the City of Quito to reactivate the Sister City relationship between Quito and Coral Gables.

SAN ISIDRO, ARGENTINA

- As per Board member Collarte, there are no updates.

LA ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

- Board member Gavarrete informed the Board that Guatemala is preparing for their general elections taking place at the end of April 2023.

SANTA TECLA, EL SALVADOR

- As per Board member Gavarrete there are no updates to report.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

Vice Chair Anding informed Board members that he has had several phone calls with former mayor Valdes-Fauli who suggested contacting Police Chief Ed Hudak, a former football player. Despite several attempts to reach the Chief, he has not been successful. Vice Chair Anding spoke to Mr. Valdes-Fauli today, who suggested contacting the football trainer at the University of Miami.

OPEN DISCUSSION

There was a discussion regarding term limits. Vice Chair Anding informed the Board that his term with the IACC would end in May.

Board member Collarte mentioned that the Board should wait to fill the upcoming vacancies before electing a Chair; and in the meantime, Vice Chair Anding should continue as Vice Chair.

Mrs. Belkys Perez asked Board members if they would like to make a motion on the donation of the City's three gas detectors to the Consulate of Paraguay. A motion was made and seconded to support the donation of the Fire Department's three gas detectors to Villa Elisa, Paraguay. The motion passed (Yays: Raja, Gavarrete, Anding, Collarte, Montes de Oca / Nays: Gillis - due to the city's financial issues).

Board Member Raja asked the Board to be excused from the last meeting. She stated she was unable to attend due to an urgent matter at work.

Board member Montes de Oca made a motion to excuse Board member Sadia Raja. Board member Gillis seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.

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