

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

**Minutes of the Meeting of March 15, 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	E	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	-	X	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Comm. Jeannett Slesnick
Steve Edelstein	E	P	P	P	X	X	P	P	P	P	X	P	Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark, City Manager
Enrique Monasterio	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:** Alma Kadragic, Chamber of Commerce liaison

Norma Gavarrete, Special Projects Coordinator

Rafael Gavarrete, Resident

Ms. Rendeiro called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mr. Anding made a motion to approve the minutes of the IACC meeting on February 16, 2016 and Mr. Monasterio seconded the motion. All in favor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

**ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA**

Ms. Sanabria thanked Mr. Gavarrete for being at the meeting. Ms. Sanabria said that Mr. Gavarrete recently travelled to La Antigua and met with Susana Asensio the new Mayor of La Antigua. Ms. Sanabria thanked Ms. Gavarrete for facilitating the Farmer's Market participation. Ms. Sanabria stated that Ms. Dunia Miranda Mauri has gathered companies to represent La Antigua at the first Sister Cities

booth at the Farmer's Market. Ms. Sanabria said that the booth will be Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Gavarrete said she spoke with Ms. Miranda Mauri about providing electricity but told them that they would not be able to cook under the roof because it is a fire hazard. Ms. Gavarrete said that there would be provided 3 tables to set up. Ms. Sanabria and Ms. Gavarrete said that for next year they have reserved a spot to cook typical cuisine from La Antigua. Ms. Sanabria said that they will need volunteers to help set up the tables. Ms. Gavarrete said set up would be from 5AM-7AM. Ms. Gavarrete asked for Ms. Sanabria to approve the parking reservation signs for the vendors. Ms. Cuzan asked if the standing banner was still displayed. Ms. Paz said it was not because there were Sister Cities that were no longer active. Ms. Paz said she would be there early to set up and bring down the flags. Ms. Gavarrete said that if they left the flags in the conference room they would have them set up earlier. Ms. Gavarrete asked how many flags would be set up. Ms. Paz said that there would be 5 flags to set up. Ms. Sanabria said that she received from the Coral Gables Museum postcards to form a collage. Ms. Sanabria asked Ms. Gavarrete to share a PDF version with Ms. Miranda Mauri so that she can show the vendor. Ms. Gavarrete said that she already had 5 parking spots reserved by the Code Enforcement building. Ms. Cuzan asked if they would decide if they would put information from other Sister Cities. Ms. Sanabria said that they should provide everything that they had and they could print further information from the website. Ms. Sanabria said that they have reserved a date for La Antigua (March 4<sup>th</sup>) to showcase next year as well as a date to have a large Sister Cities event (March 25<sup>th</sup>). Ms. Rendeiro said that the international council at the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce could help with.

Mr. Gavarrete said that La Antigua is an amazing city. He was there to see the new mayor. Ms. Sanabria said that the Mayor's background is in architecture. Mr. Gavarrete said that he had pictures to share and she was received very well as the new Mayor. Ms. Sanabria asked how long her term was. Mr. Gavarrete said 4 year but she can be reelected. Mr. Edelstein asked when she was elected. Mr. Gavarrete said she had taken office January 14<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Gavarrete said that she is willing to come to visit Coral Gables. Ms. Sanabria said that she has reached out via email and they have a good relationship. Ms. Sanabria said that Mayor Asensio might be able to save them on funding for customs once the fire trucks arrive.

Ms. Sanabria said that the fire trucks had been measured by air base personnel. Ms. Sanabria said that they are waiting on shoring kits to actually load the trucks on to the air craft. Mr. Edelstein said that because of their weight they need to be tested to make sure the aircraft can withstand the weight. Ms. Sanabria said that they are waiting on a date for the trucks to be towed to the Homestead Air Base. Mr. Edelstein said that Mayor Cason to get the date because he would like to be there when the planes take off. Mr. Edelstein also has been working with Ms. Sanabria on the shoring kits to find someone to build them. Mr. Edelstein said that they had received an email stating that the foundation would have to pay for the shoring kits. Ms. Sanabria said that they are waiting on further instructions from the air base personnel. Mr. Gavarrete said that about 10 years ago they participated in a garbage project for La Antigua. They built garbage picker in La Antigua that is still in operation. Ms. Sanabria said that Mayor Asensio had offered to find accommodations for Mayor Cason to visit the La Antigua.

### CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA

Ms. Cuzan said that she met with a native of Cartagena who provided some memorabilia for the Farmer's Market booth. There has been no update from Cartagena. However, Ms. Cuzan is hopeful that her contact will be helpful in the relationship.

#### PAVIA, ITALY:

Mr. Monasterio said that there has been no contact from Pavia. Ms. Rendeiro said that there needs to be a decision about Pavia on whether to keep them as a Sister City or a Friendship City. Mr. Anding said that last meeting the Mayor would like to contact the Italian Consul General to see if they could be of assistance. Ms. Rendeiro said that Mayor Cason had already done so and nothing happened. Mr. Monasterio called the motion. Ms. Cuzan seconded the motion. Ms. Rendeiro asked all in favor. It was a unanimous decision. Ms. Rendeiro said that now Pavia would be placed as a Friendship City. Mr. Anding asked if they could take that decision. Ms. Rendeiro said it did not have to go to the City Commission because they are staying as a Friendship City.

#### AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE:

Mr. Anding asked Ms. Paz to forward to the committee an email he received from his counterpart in France. The email stated that they were interested in having an internship within the city government and business interests with the City. Mr. Anding asked Ms. Kadragic if she could keep in touch with the Chamber on this item. Mr. Anding said that he had spoken to Mr. Trowbridge from the Chamber and he seemed to be in favor of forming further relations with Aix and maybe hosting an intern. However, Mr. Trowbridge expressed that there seems to always be a problem with securing a visa.

Mr. Anding asked what would be the ideal period of time to host an intern. Mr. Edelstein said that it was a bit premature to be speaking about this without deciding what type of internship they would be creating. Mr. Edelstein said they had to decide whether the internship would be directly with the Chamber. He said that if the Chamber does decide to host an intern then they should be the ones to decide for what period of time. Ms. Rendeiro said that it would be a Chamber decision. Mr. Edelstein said that there are other factors that need to be considered. He mentioned one of the other points that involved sharing the cost of housing for the intern. He said there is a very important legal matter to this; interns cannot be used for day to day operations unless they receive a salary. Mr. Anding said that Commissioner Slesnick might have some ideas as to housing an intern.

Mr. Anding shared Mr. Edelstein's thoughts about not losing the cultural and traditional aspects of our Sister Cities. Mr. Anding said that he would write back to his French counterpart letting him know that they do not have a problem expanding the relationship. He would also ask what could be a traditional aspect to incorporate into the relationship. Mr. Edelstein said that in the past that they have brought people from their conservatory come and perform here.

Ms. Rendeiro said that all the information for the intern would need to be presented to Mr. Trowbridge along with the qualifications to come up with a job description. Ms. Rendeiro said they would have to find a mutually beneficial exchange between the Chamber and Aix. Ms. Rendeiro said that she knows that the Chamber will not approve costs for the exchange such as travel and visa costs. Ms. Rendeiro said that any decision would have to be approved by the City Commission. Mr. Anding asked Ms. Rendeiro to speak to the Chamber if they could prepare a memo indicating the duration of the internship, if there would be a salary and the duties needed to be performed.

Mr. Kadragic asked if she could have a copy of that email. Ms. Paz said she would provide one. Ms. Kadragic also asked if there could be a reciprocal intern in Aix. Ms. Rendeiro said they should get a description of a job as well as bring this subject back to discussion so that other parties are aware of the responsibilities. Ms. Kadragic said that Mayor Cason they should intern mid-level experience so a student would not be ideal. Mr. Monasterio said that this should be like a normal student exchange program where the person has to pay their own way.

### GRANADA, SPAIN:

Ms. Cuzan said that she spoke with Alfonso Cueto who would be travelling to Granada. Ms. Cuzan said that Mr. Cueto was the one that was able to rekindle the relationship in the past with Granada. Ms. Cuzan said that he was going to speak to the Mayor in Granada to gauge the interest of whether they would like to continue a partnership.

Mr. Reyes said that he met with the Consul General on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Reyes said he was aware of the past situation with the Granada because Mayor Cason had mentioned it. Mr. Reyes said that Consul General Creis would be reaching out the Mayor's office in Granada to see what other contact, other than the Mayor of Granada, could be assigned to be our liaison. Mr. Reyes said that the Consul General said that unless the consul comes up with ideas, not to expect Granada to do anything. Mr. Reyes said that they have too much going on and that the ideas would have to come from here.

Mr. Edelstein said when he spoke to Mayor Cason, he had mentioned Granada. Mayor Cason said that Mr. Cueto's visit to Granada will be the last act of good faith. **If after that meeting Granada still does not want to participate then they should be put on emeritus status.** The Mayor does not believe anything will come of the meeting. Mayor Cason suggested looking at other cities in Spain or Portugal. Mr. Edelstein said that the Mayor had mentioned Coimbra. Ms. Rendeiro said that she has spoken to Mayor Cason about Coimbra. Ms. Rendeiro is finishing her report so that she can provide it to the Mayor. Mr. Reyes said that he would reach out to the Consul General before the next meeting to speak and gather any updates.

Ms. Paz asked if they are going to wait until Mr. Cueto goes to Granada with a letter from Mayor Cason to proceed with the information from Spain. Ms. Cuzan said that we can work on other cities while they wait for Mr. Cueto to get back. Mr. Edelstein said that they still have one totally open Sister City spot.

### QUEBEC, CANADA

Mr. Edelstein said that Quebec City had requested a letter that was sent January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Mr. Edelstein has not heard anything about the letter. Mr. Edelstein contacted the person he had previously spoken to in Quebec City. Mr. Edelstein said the person was no longer there and the new representative had no idea of the letter. This new representative asked Mr. Edelstein to resend the letter. Mr. Edelstein resent the letter along with the City of Coral Gables accomplishments. Mr. Edelstein said that the representative received the letter and would contact him with a response from the Mayor of Quebec City. Mr. Edelstein has yet to receive a response after reaching out to them again.

Mr. Edelstein spoke with Mayor Cason about this matter. Mayor Cason said that they might not want to enter a Sister City partnership with us because of the size difference and there interests might be different than ours. Mr. Edelstein said that he will continue to wait on their response. Ms. Rendeiro asked if Mr. Edelstein had spoken to the Consul General of Canada. Mr. Edelstein said that he spoke to her assistant who claimed that she did not believe the Consul General could be of assistance in this matter because there will be a change of Consul Generals in July. Ms. Rendeiro said that the Consul General is very much in favor of this partnership and she would speak to her about the relationship.

### NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Anding said that after speaking with Commissioner Slesnick the Ambassador of Australia has mentioned to have a relationship with a city in Australia. Mr. Anding said that the Ambassador recently visited City Hall and made mention of this idea. Ms. Rendeiro said that Commissioner Slesnick also

mentioned that to her and that currently because of the distance and because it is not a large trade partner with the City then it is not being considered right now.

After the decision made about Pavia, Mr. Edelstein said that now they had another vacancy. Ms. Rendeiro asked the Council to compile a list of potential Sister Cities in Latin America, Europe, the Middle East and China. Ms. Rendeiro said that they could look at a city in Brazil such as Fortleza.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Ms. Rendeiro said that she would not be able to attend the next meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>. The council felt it was best to move the meeting so that everyone could be present. The Council decided on April 13<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Edelstein said that if Quebec City does not want to go through with the partnership than they can look at other cities in Canada. One city is Victoria. However, it is quite the distance to get there.

Ms. Rendeiro thanked those from the Council that were able to attend the Sister Cities International event at the Coral Gables Museum. Ms. Rendeiro said that there was a great turn out from the Consular Corps and the trade commission. Ms. Rendeiro said that she had good feedback from the Board of Directors of Sister Cities International as well as the Consular Corps. Ms. Rendeiro thanked the Foundation for their donation that will also help with the Sister Cities 60<sup>th</sup> annual event in Washington DC July 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Rendeiro said that she encouraged the Council to attend and look at the online registration. Ms. Rendeiro said that in January there will be a diplomatic gala which coincides with the 60<sup>th</sup> year. The gala would be chaired by President Obama and the Secretary of State.

Ms. Rendeiro said that because of the success from the other night, they will be filling out a proposal to host the 2018 Sister Cities Annual Meeting in Coral Gables. Ms. Rendeiro gave them a tour and a majority of them had never been to Coral Gables. Ms. Rendeiro is waiting for the paper work from Washington DC to reserve the Biltmore Hotel. Ms. Rendeiro said that this would all be discussed and decided in the Sister Cities International event in July.

Ms. Rendeiro printed out the articles of incorporation for Sister Cities International which are perpetual.

#### Announcement:

The next meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2016.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Paz

Secretary, International Affairs Coordinating Council