



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Meeting Minutes - Approved SISTER CITY COLLABORATION COMMITTEE

*Consider: Who benefits? Who is burdened?
Who does not have a voice at the table?
How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?*

Monday, February 2, 2026

5:30 PM

Virtual

The City of Madison is holding the Sister City Collaboration Committee meeting in virtual format.

Written Comments: You can send comments on agenda items to SCCC@cityofmadison.com

Register for Public Comment:

- Register to speak at the meeting
- Register to answer questions
- Register in support or opposition of an agenda item (without speaking)

If you want to speak at this meeting you must register. You can register at <https://www.cityofmadison.com/MeetingRegistration>. When you register to speak, you will be sent an email with the information you will need to join the virtual meeting.

Watch the Meeting: If you would like to join the meeting as an observer, please visit <https://www.cityofmadison.com/watchmeetings>.

Listen by Phone: (877) 853-5257 (Toll Free) Webinar ID: 832 8917 4335

Interpretation and Accessibility

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 10 - Josephine H. Oyama-Miller; Carolyn A. Gantner; Daina P. Zemliauskas-Juozevicius; Jo E. Drury; Jon F. Heinrich; Salvador A. Carranza; Bill Tishler; Sarah J. Warner; Alieu Jallow and Jennifer C. Johnson

Excused: 1 - Rahel Desalegne

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Oyama-Miller, seconded by Heinrich, to approve the minutes from the December 8, 2025 Sister City Collaboration Committee meeting.

The motion passed by voice vote/other.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. [70299](#) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staffperson D'Costa shared that the committee will soon have two new members, the new representatives from the Madison-Kanifing group and the Madison-Mantova group.

Staffperson D'Costa also let committee members know that a review of the City's new Code of Conduct for members of City committees and boards, which she forwarded to committee members, will be included on the March meeting agenda.

REGULAR BUSINESS REPORTS

2. [91649](#) Sister City Program Reports - February 2026

Arcatao, El Salvador (Carolyn Gantner) – Gantner reported that the Madison-Arcatao group will have a 40th Anniversary delegation traveling to Arcatao in April, with about 12 people going. They will also travel to another Salvadoran city near the Pacific. Festivities are planned for while the group is there, plus a celebration in Madison sometime later in year, perhaps in summer. In addition, students from West High are planning to go down to Arcatao in June. The Madison-Arcatao group has a lot of embroidery items from the women's co-op in Arcatao to bring to International Festival. Finally, they are hosting a pupusa-making workshop on Saturday, February 21, which will be family oriented.

Vilnius, Lithuania (Daina Zemilauskas-Juozevicius) – The Madison-Vilnius group will not be at International Festival. They are under new leadership, with Zemilauskas-Juozevicius no longer being the president. The group held their annual Christmas Eve event at Aubergine, a Willy Street Co-op community event space. On March 15, they will be holding their Independence Restoration Day celebration, which may include a class on making kugelis (a traditional Lithuanian dish with potato, bacon, and sour cream). Invites to this event for committee members are forthcoming.

Freiburg, Germany (Jo Drury) – The Madison-Freiburg group's annual dinner is coming up on Sunday, March 15, in the afternoon, at Essen Haus. Invitations will be sent to committee members. Students from West High will be giving a presentation. Drury and former SCCC member Charles James are also working on a 1 page flyer for the Freiburg-Madison group, with maps, pictures, and background, history, and other sister city information. They anticipate the flyer

will be ready for International Festival. The group is also sending a delegation to Freiburg for Freiburg's Sister City Fair in June.

Tepatitlán, Mexico (Sal Carranza) – Carranza reported that the Madison-Tepatitlán group is working on a possible academic summer camp for students from Tepatitlán to improve their English and see Madison. They are still working on a curriculum. The plan is to alternate years with a parallel camp in Tepatitlán. In addition, the student exchange continues between students from East High and students from a prepa (high school) in Tepatitlán visiting each others' schools, with the next group from East High traveling March 19-23. They will also visit the University of Guadalajara.

Cusco, Peru (Jennifer Johnson) – Johnson reported that the Madison-Cusco group's water project is starting this summer with Engineers Without Borders' Madison chapter, bringing clean running water to a village near Cusco. The group is also planning a diplomacy trip, possibly with other SCCC members, or possibly even Madison Mayor Rhodes-Conway. But the group does not have a date for this trip yet. The group is also planning an Earth Day event for sometime in April.

Obihiro, Japan (Jo Oyama-Miller) – Oyama-Miller reported that the Madison-Obihiro group had a great celebration of 20th anniversary of the relationship between the two cities in November, with about 80 people in attendance. On February 11, three farmers and a researcher from Obihiro will be touring an organic farm in Spring Green. Visiting high school students from Obihiro will be arriving in Madison on March 6; they will help at International Festival. Mayor Yonezawa of Obihiro recently announced he will be running again. The Madison Symphony Orchestra is having a 100 year celebration and invited the Madison-Obihiro group to be a partner (with a stipend), creating origami with the paper of used scores from the symphony; Oyama-Miller is organizing participation. The group also has new members of its board. The group is working towards making a website, and looking at those of the Madison-Cusco group and the Madison-Vilnius group as examples. The group has also made a first draft of a safety protocol for student exchanges, with their attorney, which the Obihiro city government asked for; the group's insurance agent also said it was an excellent idea.

Camaguey, Cuba (Jon Heinrich) – Heinrich reported that Camaguey is in the middle of a disastrously bad time right now. The Madison-Camaguey group's travel to Cuba is limited to being only with the Wisconsin Medical Project, only being 5 days or less, and only being to the city of Camaguey. The group was able to send a medical container via Wisconsin Medical Project in December.

ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

3. [91650](#) Election of Second Vice Chair

After a brief discussion, the committee members agreed to postpone the election until the March meeting, due to there being no nominations yet.

4. [91651](#) Public Relations Subcommittee

Drury, Carranza, Johnson, and Warner volunteered to make up the Public

Relations Subcommittee. All committee members present agreed.

5. [91652](#) Sister Cities Celebration Event

The idea of reviving the past Sister Cities Celebration event was discussed. In the past, it had included a dinner at Madison College to promote the sister cities, and had featured guest speakers.

A second subcommittee was formed to handle the creation of this event, made up of Henrich, Oyama-Miller, and Zemliauskas-Juozevicius.

6. [91653](#) International Fest

Members discussed the previous and upcoming International Festivals. Discussion points included difficulty registering and problems with space and location within the event.

ADJOURNMENT

Johnson moved, Drury seconded, a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:26 pm.