



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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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, April 7, 2025

5:30 PM

Virtual

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

- Present:** 9 - Frank L. Alfano; Josephine H. Oyama-Miller; Carolyn A. Gantner; Daina P. Zemliauskas-Juozevicius; Charles J. James; Jon F. Heinrich; Nikki Conklin; Sarah J. Warner and Jennifer C. Johnson
- Excused:** 3 - Salvador A. Carranza; Rahel Desalegne and Lamin Drammeh

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Oyama-Miller, seconded by Gantner, to approve the minutes from the March 3, 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

No disclosures or recusals.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New resident member Sarah Warner introduced herself to the committee. Vice Chair Heinrich and staffperson D'Costa also announced that members should get any items they want to save out of the City-County Building display case, and that the next meeting in May will be in-person at the Pinney Library.

REGULAR BUSINESS REPORTS

2. [87660](#) Sister City Program Reports - April 2025

Obihiro, Japan (Jo Oyama-Miller) -- Oyama-Miller reported that the five-student tour from Obihiro went well and the weather was perfect for them to visit outdoors attractions in Madison, as well as high schools. The Madison-Obihiro group is working with the Mayor's office on planning an event for the 25th anniversary of the sister city relationship between Madison and Obihiro. As of

May, there will be a new Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago, and the group is anticipating new funding for Japan-Wisconsin organizations to coordinate sister cities in Wisconsin to do more events together. On April 17, the Oregon Public Library and the Oregon School District are holding an event to promote relationships with Japan, as well as taking about 20 students to Japan this summer; the Madison-Obihiro group is working to connect to them to support them.

Freiburg, Germany (Charles James) -- James reported that a group of students from West High School will be going to Freiburg at the end of June, and a group of students from Freiburg will be coming to Madison at the end of September. James also shared notes about accompanying the Madison-Arcatao group on their trip to El Salvador. From March 21 to 31, a delegation of eight from Madison visited first San Salvador, then Arcatao, then El Papaturo. They are planning to get together again in August to talk more about our experiences. "Arcatao" means "cave of the serpent" in Nahuatl, the local indigenous language.

Arcatao, El Salvador (Carolyn Gantner) – Gantner reported that the delegation to Arcatao returned and reported to the Madison-Arcatao group that they had a great trip; the highlight was visiting another sister city there, El Papaturo. The delegation took donated drugs to a clinic there, as well as items for a youth center. The group is planning to have a follow-up meeting to share information and highlights from the trip with the community.

Cusco, Peru (Jennifer Johnson) -- The Madison-Cusco group is hosting a poetry reading, with an Indigenous focus, on April 26th, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm, at the WEI building on UW Campus, room 1115.

Camaguey, Cuba (Jon Heinrich) – Nothing new to report.

Vilnius, Lithuania (Daina Zemliauskas-Juozevicius) – Zemliauskas-Juozevicius reported that she is stepping down as president of the Madison-Vilnius group, but will be staying on the board of the group, and staying on the Sister City Collaboration Committee.

ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

3. [87662](#) International Festival 2025 Report

Gantner reported that her contact from Overture Center told her that they had no vendors on the first floor last year; one of the reasons they were placed where they were. Oyama-Miller reported that another reason was that many of the sister city orgs applied late and Overture staff were concerned about wasted space. Warner noted that she used to work at Overture and is happy to help in the conversations with current staff.

4. [87661](#) Discussion of Upcoming SCCC Election

Staffperson D'Costa made members aware that they needed to schedule the committee's election for chair and co-chair, noting that the in-person meeting next month might be a good opportunity.

ADJOURNMENT

Alder Conklin moved, Oyama-Miller seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 6:09 pm.