



# 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?*

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Monday, March 3, 2025

5:30 PM

Virtual

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### CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

**Present:** 10 - Josephine H. Oyama-Miller; Carolyn A. Gantner; Daina P. Zemliauskas-Juozevicius; Charles J. James; Jon F. Heinrich; Salvador A. Carranza; Nikki Conklin; Rahel Desalegne; Lamin Drammeh and Jennifer C. Johnson

**Absent:** 1 - Frank L. Alfano

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

James moved, Gantner seconded, a motion to approve the minutes from the February 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

Staffperson D'Costa let the committee members know that they will soon have a new committee member at large. She also informed committee members that she spoke to Karin Wolf about the issue of art on utility boxes.

### REGULAR BUSINESS REPORTS

2. [87367](#) Sister City Program Reports - March 2025  
Freiburg, Germany (Charles James) – The Madison-Freiburg group held their annual meeting at Forward Club. There were about 40 attendees, including most of the group's board. They invited journalists from The Capital Times, who had previously visited Freiburg, to attend, and had a very successful meeting. The group will be at the International Festival on March 8. A group of

students from West and Memorial high schools are going to Freiburg near the end of June, and James is hoping to take the trip as well.

**Bahir-Dar, Ethiopia (Rahel Desalegne) – The Madison-Bahir-Dar group is planning to meet sometime in the next two weeks to plan how they can manage meeting more regularly despite difficult circumstances.**

**Tepatitlán, Mexico (Salvador Carranza) – No news to report.**

**Obihiro, Japan (Jo Oyama-Miller) – A delegation of students and teachers from Obihiro is arriving Saturday. Their itinerary will include visiting Madison high schools, taking ESL classes for an afternoon at Madison College, and assisting with Japanese classes. The Madison-Obihiro group is also now part of the Jazzy program. Some group members will also be attending a celebration of the Emperor of Japan's birthday.**

**Kanifing, The Gambia (Lamin Drammeh) – The Madison-Kanifing group is hoping to set up a scholarship in The Gambia.**

**Arcatao, El Salvador (Carolyn Gantner) – The Madison-Arcatao group is getting ready for International Fest and have been promoting it on social media. Their delegation to Arcatao will be leaving in a couple of weeks, with Charles James joining, and the group is taking donations of over-the-counter drugs to bring with to Arcatao. They will report on the trip to the community later in the spring.**

**Cusco, Peru (Jennifer Johnson) – The Madison-Cusco group will be at International Festival on March 8. They are also planning a trip to Cusco with Engineers Without Borders in May, with a focus on water issues.**

**Camaguey, Cuba (Jon Heinrich) – Cuba was named a state sponsor of terrorism by the US federal government on January 30, which limits the Madison-Camaguey group's ability to plan visits. However, they are still able to send medical aid through Wisconsin. Heinrich reported that he wrote a letter to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio to encourage more thoughtfulness on effects the policy has on the Cuban people.**

**Vilnius, Lithuania (Daina Zemliauskas-Juozevicius) – The Madison-Vilnius group has their board meeting tomorrow. They are finalizing their plans for International Fest, which will include Lithuanian folk dancers. The group also has a banquet with the consul general from Chicago coming up soon.**

### ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

3. [87369](#) Achieving Quorum

**Staffperson D'Costa answered questions about alternate members, indicating that the City attorney was not in favor, and about attendance policy. She posed the possibility of not meeting certain months, or every other month. Alternate times of meeting were also discussed. Alder Conklin noted that the months of August, November, and January might be good candidates as months to not hold meetings, aligning well with the Common Council's schedule. Oyama-Miller made a motion, Charles seconded, that the committee not meet in the months of August and November of 2025 and January of 2026. The**

motion passed.

4. [87368](#) Meeting Mode

The committee discussed meeting in-person for the April 6, 2025 meeting and/or the May 5, 2025 meeting. Oyama-Miller volunteered to check with the Lakeside and Pinney branches of Madison Public Library for availability.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Johnson made, and James seconded, a motion that the meeting adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:09 pm.