



# City of Madison

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

## Meeting Minutes - Draft 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, November 7, 2022

5:30 PM

Via Virtual Meeting

---

### CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

- Present:** 8 - Frank L. Alfano; Josephine H. Oyama-Miller; Carolyn A. Gantner; Daina P. Zemliauskas-Juozevicius; Charles J. James; Jon F. Heinrich; Nasra Wehelie 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 October 3, 2022 Sister City Collaboration Committee meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

[70299](#) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

### DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

No disclosures or recusals.

### REGULAR BUSINESS REPORTS

[74489](#) Sister City Program Reports - November 2022

**Mantova (Frank L. Alfano)** - Madison Mayor Rhodes-Conway met virtually with the Mayor of Mantova. They discussed plans for Mantova's Mayor to visit Madison next year. Developing a conference devoted to lake contamination that could include participation of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the University of Wisconsin-Madison was discussed. Alfano wondered if any other sister city groups would be interested in participating. Oyama-Miller expressed interest.

**Arcatao (Carolyn Gantner)** - The Madison Arcatao Sister City Project (MASCP) Core Group continues to meet on a monthly basis, and have resumed meeting in person. They are considering plans for a spring delegation to Arcatao.

Arcatao participated for a third time this year at the Farmer's Market on October 22nd. James posted photos on Facebook with credit provided, and MASCP members are looking forward to participating again next year.

MASCP will participate in the Fair Trade Holiday Fest to be held December 3rd at the Monona Terrace, and members are also planning to participate in the International Fest at the Overture next year and have provided an application.

Gantner said they participated in the US-El Salvador Sister Cities annual gathering on October 8th and 9th via Zoom. Their colleagues in El Salvador provided an update on the continuing human rights violations of their current administration. The group also discussed a proposal to restructure the network of US- El Salvador Sister Cities including creating a sistering council with a representative from each sister city. Other ideas were discussed, and are being considered, in order to strengthen the association with their partners in El Salvador.

Arcatao was one of three applicants selected for this year's Madison Public Library Living History Project: <https://www.madisonlivinghistory.org/>. Selected applicants will receive \$1,000. The naming of the Madison Arcatao Sister City Project by the Common Council in 1986 as Madison's first sister city was the proposed historical document. The follow-up involves the preparation of an oral history. Gantner indicated that they will be interviewing five people about the run up to the Common Council naming Arcatao, including a person active in the Sanctuary Movement (a religious and political campaign in the United States that began in the early 1980s to provide safe haven for Central American refugees fleeing civil conflict), Madison community activists working in solidarity with people in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua and two common council members, serving at that time, including the first Latino council member who was the main sponsor.

Interviews should be completed by Dec 15th and provided to the library team who will complete the oral history. The interviews will be available on the Living History Project website, but not until well into 2023. That website is connected to the Wisconsin Historical Society's Wisconsin Recollections site: <https://recollectionwisconsin.org/>, and the Digital Public Library of America site, <https://dp.la/>.

Obihiro (Jo Oyama-Miller) - Oyama-Miller spoke with her counterpart in Obihiro. The city will not be able to have visitors until Spring of 2023. Members of the Obihiro group were able to attend a recent Hmong celebration in Madison and discuss collaboration amongst Asian American communities. Oyama-Miller plans to attend a luncheon hosted in her honor on December 6th in Chicago. She was also please to report a new Japanese conversation group in Madison. She reported that the Obihiro group probably will not meet in December.

Freiburg (Charles J. James) - The Madison-Freiburg Sister City Committee set up their information table at the Farmers Market for the last time this year on October 29th. In previous years James indicated that they participated only through September, but next year they will again request a permit from the beginning of June till the end of October near the Colonel Heg statue.

Their committee held an informal gathering of members ("Stammtisch") on

October 23rd at the Prost, the new beer bar on East Washington Ave. It was a success and the next gathering is scheduled at the Prost for November 27th.

The most significant recent event was a visit of three representatives of the Bertelsmann Foundation, based in Washington, DC. Jan Gruenhagen, Minister for Political Affairs in the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, along with his colleagues Irene Braam and Sarah Leming, were in Madison on October 26th and 27th. They met with various professional and civic groups here in Madison and Milwaukee. In addition to Madison-Freiburg, they met with Mary Bottari, Mayor Rhodes-Conway's Chief of Staff, as well with members of the Wisconsin State Legislature.

#### ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE DISCUSSION

##### 74474

##### 2023 Meeting Format

James raised the question of meeting format: should the committee continue the virtual format or should they return to in-person meetings? Staff person D'Costa indicated that a hybrid approach wasn't yet possible and several members expressed interest in perhaps having several in-person meetings annually or conducting virtual meetings in the winter months only. The outcome of the discussion was an agreement to revisit the meeting format question next spring.

A motion was made by Oyama-Miller, seconded by Wehelie, to continue virtual committee meetings and to revisit the question of meeting format in the Spring. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

##### 74477

##### Discussion of Chair & Vice-Chair Elections

The current committee chair and vice-chair have been in place since 2018. James indicated that it was time for a leadership change. Historically, the current vice-chair has been elected chair and that position is currently held by Zemliauskas-Juozevicius. Other members that should receive consideration include Desalegne, Drammeh and Heinrich, as their cities' reps have not yet held that position. Staff person D'Costa recommended making a decision at the February 2023 meeting. Oyama-Miller felt that it might be useful to provide a history of whom and when others have served in these positions before an election is held.

Current Chair James plans to send out additional information on how the elections have traditionally worked for the SCCC in the past.

##### 74478

##### Celebrate Sister Cities Event

Oyama-Miller and Gantner expressed their opinion that spring 2023 was too early to resurrect this event at MATC. It was concluded that fall would be better and further discussion about scheduling should occur at an upcoming meeting, possibly February next year.

##### 74479

##### International Day 2023

James encouraged members to sign-up for this event scheduled for April next

year. Universally members did not like the previous location the committee was provided and James noted he had indicated to the Overture their strong interest in returning to the prior location.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Gantner, seconded by Johnson, to adjourn. The motion passed by voice vote/other. The meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.