



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
[www.cityofmadison.com](http://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, December 8, 2025

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](mailto: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: 815 6074 7437

### Call to Order/Roll Call

**Present:** 8 - Frank L. Alfano; Carolyn A. Gantner; Daina P. Zemliauskas-Juozevicius; Jo E. Drury; Salvador A. Carranza; Bill Tishler; Sarah J. Warner and Rahel Desalegne

**Absent:** 3 - Josephine H. Oyama-Miller; Jon F. Heinrich and Jennifer C. Johnson

### Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Warner, seconded by Alfano, to approve the minutes from the October 6, 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.

### Regular Business Reports

2. [91002](#) Sister City Program Reports - December 2025

**Arcatao, El Salvador (Carolyn Gantner) – Gantner reported that the Madison-Arcatao group attended Madison Far Trade Holiday Festival last Saturday and were very pleased with the event. They sold about \$1500 worth of artisan items from Arcatao. The group will have two delegations going to Arcatao next year: one April 6-14, which currently has four slots left, and one in June with West High students and Spanish teachers. The group also will be hosting a Pupusa-making workshop in February.**

**Mantova, Italy (Frank Alfano) – Alfano reported that this meeting will be his last, after more than twenty years with the committee. His replacement from the Madison-Mantova group will be Jim LaTurno, a member of the Italian Workmen's Club and a retired professor who has also taken groups to Italy before. Alfano also reported that the group is not planning any trips at the moment, but are waiting for the political and travel climate to calm down. Alfano said farewell and many members honored him with much appreciation of his long service to the committee.**

**Vilnius, Lithuania (Daina Zemliauskas-Juozevicius) – Zemliauskas-Juozevicius also reported that the UW-Madison basketball team has a new Lithuanian player. Zemliauskas-Juozevicius reported that the Madison-Vilnius group held their annual Christmas celebration yesterday at a great new event space called Aubergine (across from Willy St Co-op). She also reminded members to fill out their statements of interest for City committees (sent out by staffperson D'Costa).**

**Freiburg, Germany (Jo Drury) – Drury reported that the Madison-Freiburg group is slowly getting ready for their annual meeting on March 14 at Essen Haus. She will send out more info when it is available. She also reported that she attended the Obihiro event at Edgewater, which was very nice.**

**Bahir Dar, Ethiopia (Rahel Desalegne) – Desalegne reported that the security situation remains the same in Bahir Dar, and that her repeated attempts to connect with the mayor have been unsuccessful.**

**Tepatitlán, Mexico (Salvador Carranza) – Carranza reported that the Madison-Tepatitlán group's trip to Tepatitlán, with Mayor Rhodes-Conway and two alders, plus representatives from UW Madison and UW Madison Hospital, and four members of the group (including himself), was fun and super successful. It was also productive, with a lot of meetings, including with the Tepatitlán Tourism Council; Mayor Rhodes-Conway will be connecting with them further. The group met with fifteen heads of different associations, generating many ideas for future partnerships. They also visited a Tepatitlán**

university, where Mayor Rhodes-Conway gave an address in Spanish, and a Tepatitlán high school that is sister schools with Madison East High School. They discussed an idea for reciprocal Summer Camps. They also visited two tequila factories, and took part in a Dia de los Muertos celebration. The group had so many gifts to pack for their return to Madison that they had to use an extra suitcase.

### Items for Possible Action

3. [91003](#) International Festival Applications and Engagement Ideas

The committee's contact from Overture Center has asked for applications, saying they hadn't gotten many yet. Alfano said his group's treasurer tried several times and didn't have theirs accepted. He encouraged everyone to check their application status. The date is Sat, March 7. Carranza resent the link to the application page. Gantner noted a phone call to Overture might be helpful too.

Additionally, Drury shared an idea for advertising International Fest's sister city tables: stamp sheet at central table to allow visitors to 'stamp their passports' at each respective sister city table, motivating members of the public to visit each table. Zemliauskas-Juozevicius noted that the feasibility of the idea might depend on where the tables are placed in the event; Alfano reminded that the Overture Center staff have been made aware that SCCC members didn't like where they were last located time.

4. [91007](#) 2026 Meeting Dates

The committee agreed, at chair Carranza's suggestion, to mimic the 2025 meeting schedule for 2026 – that is, to not meet in Aug, Nov, or Jan (Jan 2027), and to plan to meet in-person in June and July, but keep the meetings in the remaining months to a virtual (Zoom) format.

### Adjournment

Alfano made, and Carranza seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 6:23 pm.