



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, June 7, 2021

5:30 PM

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; Salvador A. Carranza and Musa Jallow
- Absent:** 1 - Nasra Wehelie
- Excused:** 1 - Rahel Desalegne

Other Attendees:

Jerreh Kujabi and Lamin Drammeh, Madison-Kanifing
Samba Baldeh, Wisconsin State Assembly and former SCCC Common Council representative
Victor Villacrez, Rene Heiden, Monica Wahlberg, Jack Whayland and Missy Tracy, representing Mundo Esperanza LLC.

Meeting called to order by Chair, Charles James, at 5:35 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Oyama-Miller, seconded by Carranza, to approve the minutes from the March 2, 2020 Sister City Collaboration Committee meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- 1 [65730](#) Public Comment - June 7, 2021

There was no public comment.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

No disclosures or recusals.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

James provided the following updates:

- Nasra Wehelie, representing Madison's 7th District, is the SCCC Common Council member succeeding Samba Baldeh.
- Lamin Drammeh is the new Madison-Kanifing SCCC representative replacing Musa Jallow and Jerreh Kujabi is the new head of the Madison Kanifing Sister City organization.
- Jonathan Solari has stepped down as the at-large SCCC representative. James requested recommendations from committee members for a replacement.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 2 [65725](#) Thanking Samba Baldeh for his service on the Sister City Collaboration Committee

James read a proclamation from the SCCC in appreciation of Samba Baldeh's participation on the committee, his leadership and the support he has shown for our organizations. James also offered his congratulations for Rep. Baldeh's election to the state assembly.

Rep. Baldeh thanked the SCCC for the efforts they have made to connect Madison residents with a diverse outside world, indicated that a very good Common Council replacement has been named and gave an open invitation to visit him at his office in the state capital.

REGULAR BUSINESS REPORTS

- 3 [65726](#) Sister City Program Reports

Obihiro - Japan has struggled to provide vaccinations to contain Covid 19 and this has put into question the success of the Summer Olympics to be held in Tokyo this August. Although the sister city organization has remained busy they cancelled their anniversary celebration and have not hosted any visiting delegations for over a year which Oyama-Miller said they hope to initiate again later this year.

Tepatitlán - Carranza said that they have continued communicating with individuals in Tepatitlán but like others the pandemic has halted travel to and from their sister city. They hope to host visitors at the World Dairy Expo at the end of September and the Latino Art Fair in October.

Mantova - The Lombardy Region, where Mantova is located, was the European hotspot for Covid 19. Mantova was under a complete lockdown with dog walking one of the few outdoor activities permitted. Alfano said they have kept in touch through Zoom meetings. No visits are planned this year. A 2019 Mantova visitor to Madison is now a school principal. During her Madison visit

she made a connection with a Madison school principal. Principals and students in both cities have since connected via Zoom.

Kanifing - Africa Day at O'Keefe Middle School was held last month - one of the few activities that has occurred in the recent months. Jallow said that Madison-Kanifing will start meeting again soon. Jallow thanked committee members for the relationships he has established during the time he has served on the committee and gave his appreciation for the support shown to Madison-Kanifing.

Arcatao - Gantner said they have cancelled many planned activities over the past year. Their local group continues to meet monthly and they have had contact with Arcatao every 3 months. They participated in the U.S. El Salvador Sister Cities Annual Conference by Zoom which Gantner said was a worthwhile event. They hope to resume travel to El Salvador next year.

Camagüey - Cuba has developed five COVID-19 vaccines with two in final clinical trials as of April 2021. Cuba has 11.3 million people, but plans to produce 100 million doses of vaccine to assist developing countries to address the pandemic. Syringes are a critical need to meet this commitment as well as vaccinate the Cuban people. Madison-Camagüey has provided funds to support that need. The Wisconsin Medical Project, the companion organization to Madison-Camagüey, sent a shipping container of medical goods to Cuba in May.

Vilnius - Their last in person event was March 11, 2020 - a celebration of Lithuania's independence. Limited activities have occurred since. Zemliauskas-Juozevicius mentioned the possibility of establishing a joint street camera portal like Vilnius and Warsaw have done.

Freiburg - The City of Freiburg was established in the year 1120. In 2020 it was supposed to celebrate its 900th birthday. There was going to be a major festival to include its 12 sister cities, including the City of Madison. Our mayor was invited to attend. All of this came to an abrupt stop in mid-March. The festival was called off. Invitations were rescinded. All travel to Germany was interrupted. Students from UW studying in Freiburg were stranded. We in the Madison-Freiburg Sister City Committee contributed funds to help our students return to the US. All activities here in Madison were also suspended.

There was hope that we could celebrate the 900plus1 birthday of Freiburg this year, but initial optimistic plans were also shelved. Madison-Freiburg is hoping for 900plus2 in 2022. Meanwhile, Madison-Freiburg held organized gatherings of their membership last summer in June, July, August and September at the Capital Brewery in Middleton and are planning them again for this summer. The Madison-Freiburg board met monthly via Zoom. Freiburg was going to organize an exhibition of art works from their sister cities. A year ago in January we purchased two paintings from ArtWorking to send to Freiburg last summer. In March this year Freiburg told us that, yes, they wanted to go ahead with the art exhibition this coming July. We shipped the paintings to them, but apparently the planned exhibition is being postponed until the fall.

On March 20, Madison-Freiburg held their annual meeting. Normally this would be a dinner and program at a location like the University Club on the UW

campus. This year it was done virtually and set up so that friends in Freiburg could attend, which is why it was scheduled for noon on Saturday. In addition to our own members, we were honored with the presence of five members of our counterpart organization, the Freiburg-Madison Gesellschaft. Elections were held at the meeting. James was re-elected president; Jonathan Gillette, the German teacher at West High School, was elected vice-president.

James informed the group that with the news that the Farmers Market is planning to return to the Square on June 19, Madison-Freiburg members hope to be there every Saturday through September to staff an information table. With the pandemic, they were not able to do this in 2020.

ITEM FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

- 4 [65727](#) Cusco, Peru Sister City Application

Attachments: [Cusco Peru Sister City Application 3- 2021.pdf](#)

A formal presentation was provided by Mundo Esperanza, LLC in support of their interest in having the Madison Common Council recognize a formal sister city relationship between Madison and Cusco, Peru. Victor Villacrez, the organization's president, provided an overview of the relationship they have established with Cusco and the surrounding community. They have applied for federal 501c3 nonprofit status and expect to have that status confirmed soon.

Initially they approached the SCCC in 2004 about this interest. Their relationship with Cusco has evolved significantly since that time including establishing connections with two community organizations and the Cusco mayor.

The SCCC heard from board members and officers of the organization, including Rene Heiden, Steve Whayland and Monica Wahlberg. Many joint projects have been initiated including waste management and community sustainability projects. Local organizations including Sustain Dane, the Latino Chamber of Commerce of Dane County and Ho-Chunk Gaming of Madison are actively involved in their efforts.

SCCC members had several questions which were answered and Villacrez said he would provide D'Costa with a link to the video to share with the SCCC that was discussed in his presentation. This video provides details about their current relationship with the Cusco community. James thanked Mundo Esperanza, LLC for their comprehensive presentation and stated that the SCCC will decide on our recommendation to the Common Council at our next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alfano, seconded by Gantner, to adjourn. The motion passed by voice vote/other. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.