

Alexandria-Caen Sister City Committee

Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 12, 2023

Alexandria City Hall – Room 1101

- I. **Welcome and Call to Order** ACSCC Chair Angelique Moss called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm when there was a quorum.
- II. **Approve Minutes from May.** Angelique had distributed a draft of the May 8, 2023, meeting minutes to committee members to review prior to the June 12, 2023, meeting. At the meeting ACSCC member Kyly Larriviere said that she saw in the draft minutes that several committee members had excused absences and wondered whether her absence from the May meeting met the criteria for an excused absence. After some discussion, Angelique determined that Kyly's absence would be changed in the minutes and on the official log maintained by Jim Holloway, liaison to ACSCC from the Office of Historic Alexandria, to reflect that it was an excused absence. The committee voted to accept the minutes as changed. Angelique reminded committee members to log their volunteer hours online in google drive.

III. Resignations from the Committee

Angelique announced that there will be four resignations from the committee for a variety of work-related and other personal reasons: Kerem Bilge, Dan Morrison, Walter Nicklin, and Michael Skardon. She went on to recognize their contributions to the committee. ACSCC member Jennie Reading suggested that there still might be some opportunities in the future for these individuals to help the committee even though they won't be committee members.

Because of these resignations, Jennie started a brainstorming discussion about the ways the Committee could support the City Council selection process for new members to ensure that selectees understand the work of committee members and have the skills and experience to contribute to the Committee's activities. Also, there was discussion about whether the committee could review applicants and recommend quality candidates to City Council. There was a consensus among Committee members about following up on some of the suggestions.

IV. Ongoing Business

A. Recap of D-Day Lecture – Women Spies of D-Day 6/1/23

The consensus was that this was a great event. The topic was very popular, and it sold out several days in advance. Even though there were Sold Out signs on the Lyceum doors on the night of the lecture, people still turned up and tried to get last minute tickets. ACSCC member Leslie Tourigny, who was one of the ticket takers, said some people were successful because there were several no shows. As usual, Dr. Kim Holien's lecture content and presentation were superb. Once again, C-Span filmed the lecture for broadcast at a future date and time to be announced. The reception following the lecture was also very popular—it lasted for an hour and a half! Committee members thanked Kyly for her professional setup of the reception.

B. Recap of D-Day Commemoration 6/4/23

The consensus of Committee members was that the D-Day commemoration was great and Kerem's leadership of the event over the years was outstanding. ACSCC member Alex

Jevgrafovs provided a recap of the D-Day commemoration, using Kerem's notes as a basis, and including some observations and suggestions of his own.

- The success of sponsorships—especially new sponsors-- was a huge factor this year, thanks to Jennie's efforts. In addition to the financial support they provided, in the case of Ting, not only did they provide financial support, but they also sent employees to help with the set-up of chairs and tables. In response to a question by Jennie, Jim is checking to determine if all the sponsors have paid.
- Treasurer Stephen Hartka indicated that he does not have all the information yet to provide the final financial report for the D-Day lecture and commemoration. He also said that he was working with Jim to see how we can coordinate future purchasing through him so that committee members do not have to purchase items for events and then file reimbursement requests.
- The advance publicity was great. Former ACSCC member Walter Nicklin's press release and Angelique's flyers, which included the QR code that ACSCC member Antoine Dula Lopez generated, were very successful.
- The table and chairs were sufficient, and the diagram that was prepared showing their placement around Market Square was very helpful. Angelique's insistence on moving reenactors to the front of Market Square helped attract people walking by on King Street. The exhibitors and the reenactors were very well received, and many of them expressed how much they enjoyed the event and would be participating in the future.
- Alex suggested that in the future we should place more VIP seats in the audience and include two additional chairs on stage for the commanders of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars.
- Committee consensus was that the content and length of the formal program were very good. Special mention was made of the Town Crier, the Mayor's speech, the readings, and the Alexandria City Swing Band; and there were a lot of compliments about the United States Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps.
- As for the sound support, the biggest problem was that some of the presenters could be heard better than others because they were able to project. ACSCC member Laura Withers suggested that perhaps we could locate some of the sound system speakers as far back in Market Square as the fountains. Alex suggested that maybe the fountains could be turned off until after the formal program.
- Permitting access to City Hall during the event was deemed very helpful.
- Angelique expressed that she liked that the D-Day Proclamation was read by the Mayor at the commemoration, rather than at a City Council meeting, as in previous years.
- Alex said that it would have been nice to have put the agenda on the chairs, but they were blowing off. He suggested that next year we might want to put the agenda in plastic bags to hold them down.
- Next year will be the 80th Anniversary of D-Day and our commemoration will be on June 2, 2024. Alex said that the 29th Infantry, 116th Regiment Reenactors, said they would send more reenactors next year, and the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia, will try to participate in next year's commemoration. Leslie said that Jan Maas of the Alexandria Radio Club said that the commemoration was a great day and he looks forward to participating again next year.
- Jennie reminded committee members that for the 75th Anniversary we held the commemoration event at Waterfront Park and suggested for the 80th we do the same. There was a short discussion about the pros and cons of doing so.

C. Mailchimp Training

ACSCC committee member Elodie Guillon asked for the names of committee members who would be interested in attending Mailchimp training. Stephen and Kyly expressed interest. Elodie said she would try to get it scheduled sometime at the end of August.

D. Summer Cookout – 8/12/23

Angelique reminded members that ACSCC committee member Laura Withers will be hosting the summer cookout at her home on August 12, 2023.

V. New Business

A. Open Floor

Laura discussed that the Alexandria City Council has started a process to rename three streets per year that were renamed in the 1950s to honor Confederate leaders. She said that Council members John Chapman, Alyia Gaskins, and Sarah Bagley will be leading the renaming process and will be soliciting community input. Laura suggested that ACSCC participate by suggesting some potential street names that would reflect our Sister City relationship with Caen and France. Committee members were supportive of Laura's suggestion and there was some initial brainstorming. Leslie brought up that there was already one street that reflected our relationship with France, i.e., Fayette Street. Laura asked that committee members submit any suggested street names to her.

VI. Public Comment

Two members of the public, Ted Janis and Marc Ross, attended the meeting to find out more about the committee. Angelique and Jennie gave them an overview of the major activities of the committee, and the process for applying to become a member of the committee if they were interested.

VII. Adjournment

Angelique adjourned the meeting at 8:44 p.m.

2023 Calendar

January –

February – Cocktails & Confections 2.9.23

March – France and the Gauls: From Caesar to Astérix Lecture 3.30.23

April – An Evening of French Classical Music 4.14.23

May –

June – D-Day Lecture 6.1.23, D-Day Commemoration 6.4.23

July –

August – Summer Cookout 8.12.23

September –

October –

November – Beaujolais Nouveau 11-16- 23

December –

ACSCC Member Attendees:

Stephen Hartka

Alex Jevgrafovs

Kyly Larriviere

Angelique Moss

Jennifer Reading
Michael Skardon
Leslie Tourigny
Eric Trimble
Laura Withers

Non-ACSCC Members

Ted Janis
Marc Ross

Leslie Tourigny
ACSCC Secretary