

Alexandria-Caen Sister City Committee

Meeting Minutes for Approval

Monday, February 12, 2024
Alexandria City Hall – Room 1101

I. Welcome and Call to Order

ACSCC Chair Angelique Moss called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. when there was a quorum.

II. Approve Minutes from December and January

Angelique had emailed drafts of the December 11, 2023, and the January 8, 2024, meeting minutes to committee members for review prior to the February 12, 2024, meeting. At the January 8 meeting, committee members deferred voting to approve the December minutes until the February meeting in order to give members more time to review them. ACSCC member Eric Trimble introduced a motion to approve the December minutes, which were approved unanimously as distributed. ACSCC member Alex Jevgrafov introduced a motion to approve the January minutes, which were approved unanimously as distributed.

III. Au Revoir Karen McKeon

Angelique announced that Karen McKeon resigned from the committee, and Wesley Thomas did not reapply for another term. There are now two vacancies on the committee.

IV. Ongoing Business

A. Volunteer Hours and Event & Program Planning

Angelique reminded committee members to go on Google Docs and update their hours volunteering for the committee each month. Also, she said we should start preparing again, as we have done in the past, the Event and Program Planning forms for each of our events.

B. Cancelled-Crepes & Galettes 2.8.24

The consensus of committee members was that it was unfortunate that this event had to be cancelled because of a broken elevator at the Lyceum after all the hard work that ACSCC member Elodie Guillon undertook in planning the event. However, committee members agreed that this event may be something to try again next February, especially since the detailed plans were already made and could be replicated again without difficulty.

C. Middle School Exchange

ACSCC member Jennie Reading said she was excited to report that after a hiatus of several years, the middle school exchange will be happening during the 2024-2025 school year under the auspices of George Washington Middle School (GWMS) in Alexandria, in conjunction with St. Paul's College in Caen. GWMS French teacher Jessica Krantz is the point-of-contact for the program. Alexandria students will be going to Caen in October 2024, and French students from Caen will be coming to Alexandria in

March/April 2025. Jennie and Angelique attended a program information session for parents and students at the school, which was very well attended. Because this is one of the programs ACSCC fundraising is targeted for, the committee will decide the amount of our donation as further information is available. This program will have an exhibitor table at the D-Day commemoration on June 2, 2024.

D. Intern Exchange

Angelique reported that Gretchen Bulova, Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria, has still not heard back from her contacts with Caen government about reinstatement of the intern program between our two cities for this summer.

E. D-Day Subcommittee

Jennie provided an update on the 80th anniversary of D-Day planning.

- **D-Day Movie 5.30.24**

Jennie explained that we have scheduled this date to show a movie at the Lyceum. She said we were hoping that the Mémorial de Caen would let us show their movie, but they declined. Alex is contacting PBS to see if we could show their D-Day movie.

- **D-Day Commemoration 6.2.24**

Jennie said that we are ahead of previous years in the planning process. She thanked new committee members, Beth Reister and Sydney Johnson, for volunteering to handle community tables and sponsors, respectively.

- **D-Day Lecture 6.6.24**

As in previous years, Dr. Kim Holien will be delivering a lecture. This year's topic is "How Patton's 'Ghost Army' Beat Hitler in Normandy."

F. Lafayette Bicentennial

Angelique provided a short overview of the components of this commemoration:

- **Lafayette Walking Tours 10.5-6**, which will be given by historian Elizabeth Reese.
- **10.16- reception** given by the present-day owners of the house where Lafayette stayed when he visited Alexandria in 1824, followed by a lecture and book signing by Ms. Reese.
- **10.17 dinner at Gadsby's Tavern**. ACSCC members Stephen Hartka, Ashlee Harper-Johnson, and Eric Trimble said they would volunteer to help with this event.

G. Petanque (Boules/Bocce) Tournament and H. Francophone Music Event

ACSCC member Antoine Dula Lopez said that he was back in touch with Gustave from the Gustave Boulangerie in Del Ray about the Petanque Tournament, which the committee has been considering. Antoine said that it might be difficult to have an actual tournament during the weekend of July 13-14, Bastille Day, because of space considerations and all the other activities happening that weekend. There was a discussion among committee members about this, and whether we should have a cultural event

instead of an actual tournament, although attendees could play petanque. It was suggested we could combine it with the Fête de la Musique, which is an annual French event held on June 21. No decisions were made, and Antoine said he would be back in touch with Gustave in April.

V. **New Business**

A. Northern Virginia Regional Commission-Dale Medearis

Mr. Medearis said he was not attending the ACSCC meeting as a representative of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, but as a private citizen, to share some of his observations about the underutilization of sister cities worldwide. He described his years of experience as an environmental planner with interactions with cities around the globe, including Stuttgart and Berlin, Germany. According to Mr. Medearis, sister cities are marginalized. Even though they can be drivers of foreign investment, he said cities rarely take advantage of this. He cited Charlotte, North Carolina, as a city that has maximized its sister city relationships to spark foreign direct investment in their city.

Mr. Medearis pointed out that France is second only to Japan in foreign investments in Alexandria. For this reason, Mr. Medearis suggested that the sister city relationship between Caen and Alexandria needs more city support through budget and staff; he even suggested full-time staff.

B. Liberation of Paris Anniversary Event Proposal-Peter Pennington

Peter Pennington, Royal Navy, Retired, and President of the [British Officers Club of Washington, DC](#) (BOC) had requested time on the ACSCC agenda to introduce the BOC to our organization and to request our consideration of ACSCC co-sponsorship of an event with them. He described that:

- The club was founded in 1946 to ease the way for British officers coming over to the United States for training and other duties. It seeks to "...foster and promote friendship between the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and the United States."
- Among their many activities, they sponsor fun social events, visits and dinners.
- As an example, in the past, they had sponsored a celebration of the Monarch's Official Birthday, which is the second Saturday of June, at the Lloyd House.

Mr. Pennington explained that because this year will be the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Paris, which occurred on August 25, 1944, his organization would like to sponsor a garden party at Lloyd House, on either September 7 or 14, and would like ACSCC to co-sponsor the event with them. He said there would be a French meal, suitable French café music, dancing, and maybe attendees could wear 1944 attire.

Angelique thanked Mr. Pennington for the presentation and said that the committee would consider his proposal and get back to him.

C. Open Floor

Alex, who has handled committee swag, reported that he had followed up on a previous committee conversation and had ordered some aprons with the committee logo that committee members could use when working at some of our events like Beaujolais Nouveau, Cocktails and Confections, and similar events when we are serving food and drinks. The aprons cost \$20 each and some members purchased them from Alex.

VI. Public Comment

There were no additional comments from members of the public that were not scheduled as agenda items.

VII. Adjournment

Angelique adjourned the meeting at 8:51 p.m.

ACSCC Member Attendees:

- Elodie Guillon
- Ashlee Harper-Johnson
- Stephen Hartka
- Alex Jevgrafovs
- Sydney Johnson
- Kyly Larriviere
- Antoine Dula Lopez
- Angelique Moss
- Jennifer Reading
- Elizabeth Reister
- Leslie Tourigny
- Eric Trimble

City of Alexandria Government Liaison:

Jim Holloway

Public Attendees:

- Dale Medearis
- Peter Pennington

2024 Calendar

- January – Alumni Party 1/6
- February –
- March –
- April –
- May –
- June – D-Day Movie 5/30; D-Day Commemoration 6/2; D-Day Lecture 6/6
- July –
- August –
- September –

October – Lafayette Bicentennial Walking Tours 10/5-6; Reception & Book Lecture 10/16;
Dinner 10/17
November – Beaujolais Nouveau 11/21; Cider Festival 11/23
December – Scottish Walk Parade 12/7

Leslie Tourigny
ACSCC Secretary