

Alexandria-Caen Sister City Committee

Minutes

Monday, January 13, 2025

The Lyceum

I. Welcome and Call to Order

ACSCC Chair Angelique Moss called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. when there was a quorum present.

II. Approve December Minutes

Prior to the meeting, Angelique sent out the draft minutes from the December 9, 2024, meeting to committee members for review. ACSCC member Eric Trimble made a motion, seconded by ACSCC member Beth Reister, that the committee approve the minutes as distributed. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Ongoing Business

A. Recap of Alumni Reunion Party

Beth said that the party was well-attended with great drinks and food, especially the galette. She said it was fun talking with former committee members, who were Francophile kindred spirits. She applauded ACSCC member Jennie Reading for hosting the party in her beautiful home and for her prepared remarks. Other committee members echoed similar sentiments about the reunion and Jennie's hospitality.

IV. New Business

A. 2025 Budget for Activities

ACSCC Treasurer Stephen Hartka called in to the meeting and discussed the committee's budgeting process, especially for the new committee members. The highlights of his remarks were:

- Every year the committee is asked to provide to Gretchen Bulova, Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA), an amount that we intend to spend for the year. The goal is to be self-sustaining and not to exceed the amount we indicate to her.
- This year (FY25) we estimated \$15,900, but we will come in under budget because unlike in previous years, we have fewer winter events. Also, we budgeted \$2,500 to support the Middle School Exchange and Internship Program but only awarded one \$500 scholarship.
- Consistent with previous years, Beaujolais Nouveau turned a profit. This year it was \$2,300 and the Lafayette walking tour brought in \$350 in profit.
- Based on the FY25 spending, he would recommend setting the FY26 budget at \$15,000.

ACSCC member Kristi Washull made a motion, seconded by ACSCC member Michael Bianco, that the committee approve \$15,000 for our budget for FY26. The motion passed unanimously.

Jennie raised as a matter of discussion the difficulty of getting sponsorships for D-Day. Although she has been able to secure more sponsorships in the past few years, it has been very difficult. Several of the sponsors can be counted on every year, but beyond that, it is very time

consuming and does not always result in donations. ACSCC member Sydney Johnson, who worked on donations last year, said cash is harder to get than in-kind donations, which are not always as useful to us. She did, however, point out that many companies and organizations plan their donations way in advance during their budgeting process and cannot make changes during the year when we belatedly approach them. Kristi added that each of the committee members knows people and organizations they might be able to approach to see about sponsorships. Jennie asked Stephen what the “magic” number should be for sponsorships for D-Day, and he responded \$2000 was a good figure to set as a goal.

B. Open Floor

There was a discussion about programs for the remainder of FY25, one program for the beginning of FY26, and an ongoing initiative being launched.

1. D-Day Commemoration and Lecture

Jennie reminded members that Sunday, June 1, will be our D-Day commemoration and the lecture will be on Thursday, June 5. She said that in addition to herself and Eric, other ACSCC members Alex Jevgrafov and Leslie Tourigny, were on last year’s subcommittee. They all agreed to serve again. ACSCC member Candace Harmon also volunteered to be on the subcommittee.

2. Lafayette Event

Jim Holloway, OHA liaison to the committee, said that OHA will be holding another Lafayette activity on February 21. It is a wine challenge to commemorate Lafayette’s 1825 visit to what is now Gadsby’s Tavern. Jim said he would be asking for volunteers.

3. International Francophonie Yoga Class

ACSCC member Sydney Johnson discussed the *Event & Program Planning Worksheet* she developed proposing that on March 20 or 22 the committee sponsor a French-inspired yoga class to celebrate International Francophonie Day with a French-inspired playlist. Following the class, there will be some wine sips. The consensus of the committee was that we should go ahead with planning this event for March 22.

4. Collaborations Between Alexandria’s Two Sister City Committees

ACSCC member Eric Trimble said that Eric Compton, Chief of the Alexandria Sister City Committee (Dundee and Helsingborg), invited him to their February 3, 2025, meeting to talk about his *White Paper* outlining potential ways the two committees can work together. Angelique suggested that Professor Jennifer Paxton, Catholic University, who has presented several lectures for ACSCC, might be able to present a lecture that topically would fit both Sister City committees. Michael suggested that on March 15, 3 pm, the two committees could informally get together at a restaurant to be determined to watch the Six Nations Rugby Championship when France and Scotland play.

5. Fall Lecture

Jennie mentioned that she was contacted by a local author whose newest book about the French Resistance comes out this summer and who was interested in collaborating with the committee in some capacity. Because his book is not coming out until after this year’s D-Day commemoration, the committee consensus was that Jennie could ask him if he would be amenable to delivering a lecture in September.

V. Public Comment

There were no comments from members of the public.

VI. Adjournment

Angelique adjourned the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

ACSCC Member Attendees in Person:

Michael Bianco
Candace Harman
Sydney Johnson
Angelique Moss
Jennifer Reading
Elizabeth Reister
Leslie Tourigny
Eric Trimble
Kristi Waschull
Karen Fassi Wilbur

ACSCC Member Participating by Phone:

Stephen Hartka

City of Alexandria Government Liaison:

Jim Holloway, Office of Historic Alexandria

2025 Calendar

January – Alumni Party 1/11

February –

March –Six Nations Rugby Tournament (France vs. Scotland) 3/15; International Francophonie

Yoga Class 3/22

April –

May –

June – D-Day Commemoration 6/1; D-Day Lecture 6/5

July –

August –

September –

October –

November – Beaujolais Nouveau 11/20; Cider Festival 11/22

December – Scottish Walk Parade 12/6

Leslie Tourigny
ACSCC Secretary