Alexandria Sister Cities Committee – June 2026 Meeting Minutes

Location: Lloyd House
Date: Monday, June 22, 2026
Time: 7:01 PM – 8:30 PM

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1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM.

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2. Attendance

Present: Dale Medearis, Whitney Umarov, Katelyn Bellus, Carter Rice, Paul Anderson, Alina Launchbaugh, Lauren Smith, David Mitchell, Kate McMahon, Phil Dawit, Eric Compton, Vanessa Simpson, Elisabeth Poppen

Absent: David Anderson

Excused: Alejandro (Alex) Perez-Reyes

Guest: Pat Scherchel, John Hinman

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3. Approval of Previous Minutes

The May 2026 meeting minutes were approved.

- **Motion:** Paul Anderson
- **Second:** David Mitchell

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4. Treasurer's Report

- Phil reported a current committee balance of **$781.23**.
- Whitney reported a remaining City balance of approximately **$13,000**.

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5. Sister Cities Updates

Committee Partnerships (Eric)

- The committee discussed opportunities to collaborate with local institutions, including George Mason University, the new Virginia Tech Innovation Campus, and NOVA.
- Potential partnerships with universities in Alexandria's sister cities will be explored.
- Dale has initiated outreach with Virginia Tech.
- The committee agreed to develop a clear proposal before approaching additional institutions.
- Future planning will continue under the Strategy Subcommittee.

Helsingborg

- Students from Helsingborg are expected to arrive this fall.

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6. Subcommittee Updates

Music of the Revolution Concert

- Approximately 60 attendees participated.
- Ticket sales did not cover event expenses.
- The committee discussed the amount of leftover food and noted that the event promotion did not advertise that food would be available, which may have contributed to the excess.

Dundee Trip

- Eric and David Mitchell will attend the Dundee Rugby Trip and related networking events.

Strategy Subcommittee

- Work is underway regarding the broader development of a strategy for collaboration for the Committee and City
    - Continued discussion regarding partnerships with local colleges and universities.

Social Media

- Vanessa encouraged committee members to continue sharing photos and videos from events for social media promotion.

Gyumri / Sports

- No updates.

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7. Events

Swedish Marching Band Concert (Eric)

- Sunday, July 5, 11:00 AM–12:00 PM at John Carlyle Square.
- The committee will provide lunch for band members.
- Eric will distribute promotional materials to committee members.
- Planning meeting scheduled for **Sunday, June 28 at 3:00 PM** with Kate, Eric, Paul, Elisabeth, and Pat.

Sister City Dinner with Caen (Elisabeth)

- Event at Lloyd House postponed to **October 3**.
- Dinner will feature dishes representing Alexandria's Sister Cities.

Washington Tattoo

- Scheduled for **July 17–18**.
- Eric will contact the event organizer and distribute additional information.

Fika Event (Carter)

- Scheduled for **October 25, 3:00–5:00 PM** at Buzz Bakery.
- The grant application was not approved but may qualify under the donation category in a future funding cycle.
- Carter is finalizing the venue contract, bakery pricing, and guest speakers.

NBA Event (Phil)

- Scheduled for **Saturday, November 7** at Lloyd House.
- Subcommittee members: Phil, Alina, Kate, and David Mitchell.

Cider Festival

- Scheduled for **Saturday, November 21** at Lloyd House.

Scottish Christmas Walk

- Scheduled for **December 5**.
- Sister City Dinner also planned.

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8. New Business

Juneteenth Program

The committee discussed developing a Juneteenth program highlighting the historical connection between Frederick Douglass and Dundee.

Motion to pursue a Juneteenth event in 2027:

- **Motion:** Eric Compton
- **Second:** David Mitchell

Trivia / Pub Night

A subcommittee was established consisting of:

- Katelyn
- Kate
- Alina
- Lauren

Arts Commission Collaboration

The committee discussed opportunities to support:

- An Artist-in-Residence at the Torpedo Factory Art Center
- An Alexandria Tapestry exhibition

Motion to establish an Arts Commission subcommittee:

- **Motion:** Eric Compton
- **Second:** David Mitchell

July Meeting Schedule

The committee discussed the summer meeting schedule.

Motion approved to:

- Cancel the **July 27** meeting.
- Hold the **August 24** meeting virtually.
- **Motion:** Vanessa Simpson
- **Second:** Katelyn Bellus

Vote: 7 in favor, 3 opposed, 2 abstentions.

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9. Reminders

- All committee communications must go through the Office of Communications.
- Notify Eric if you will be absent and require an excused absence.
- Meetings will continue to be held at Lloyd House.
- Regular meetings are scheduled for the fourth Monday of each month.

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10. Next Meeting

Monday, August 24, 2026
7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

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11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at **8:30 PM**.

Submitted by:
Katelyn Bellus, Secretary
June 25, 2026