

Sister Cities of Salisbury and Wicomico County
Room 4 at Paul S. Sarbanes Branch of Wicomico Library
August 6, 2024, 4:00 p.m.

Present: Mary Bargion, Aurelio Giannitti, and George Whitehead. John Hickman (chair) was unable to attend because of another commitment in Princess Anne.

1) Minutes:

Mary Bargion took the minutes of our June meeting. We reviewed them and suggested several edits. We will send them to the committee for their review with these minutes.

2) Fall Intern:

Our fall intern is Ella Messick. She is majoring in Communication Arts and minoring in Marketing & Business Administration. She will be editing a newsletter for our committee and working on several other projects.

3) Treasurer's Report:

Balance remains the same.

4) Maryland Estonian Exchange Updates

A delegation traveled to Estonia in June. George was a member and visited Tartu (see below).

There are two upcoming MEEC meetings. There is a lunch on August 27 at 12:30 at Bertucci's in Columbia and the annual BBQ at Erik Puskar's house in Rockville on September 14 at 3:00 p.m.

Mary asked if they published a newsletter. George said that he would ask.

5) Reports and updates: John sent the newsletter about Salisbury/Wicomico to our sister and friendship cities. He heard back from Dalian and Tartu.

a) Dalian, China: The Deputy Division Chief of American and Oceanic Affairs responded to John. He said that "there is a big potential for collaboration in culture, business, and education at all levels between us in addition to our existing exchanges in primary education. Therefore, we suggest Dalian and Salisbury sign a friendly cooperative agreement for the purpose to strengthen our partnership under the framework accordingly." This is the mayor's call. John and George plan to meet with the mayor but wanted the committee's input first. The connection members present responded positively indicating that this would be an active sister city relationship.

b) Tartu, Estonia: Iris responded to the newsletter indicating that she would be meeting with the delegation in Tartu in June. George and the delegation members met with the mayor of Tartu and several staff. He presented the mayor with a gift and letter from the mayor of Salisbury affirming continuing collaboration. They also met with the group from Parnu to discuss plans for the mental health conference. After that conversation they attended a performance of The Forgotten People, one

of the programs as part of Tartu being the Cultural Capital of Europe in 2024.

George also visited the U of Tartu and met with several people who coordinate the exchange programs. He gave them a letter and gift from Brian Stiegler. One of the discussion points was providing students coming to SU with resources, such as housing and food.

George has a wonderful trip visiting Tallinn and several other area of Estonia.

- c) Salinas. Ecuador: When sending the newsletter, we learned that Salinas has a new mayor, Dennis Cordova.
- d) Salisbury, England: No report
- 6) Other business:
We acknowledged the passing of board member and former chair of Sister Cities, Marion Keenan. George suggested we write an appreciation of Marion to provide a context for the pictures of an event at her home when a delegation from Salisbury, UK visited here. The members thought that was a good idea.
- 7) Next meeting
At the June meeting we decided to meet in August rather than September. Aurelio will be traveling in September and the first Tuesday is after Labor Day. So, the next meeting will be October 1.

Respectfully Submitted,

George Whitehead