

Richmond-Shimada Friendship Commission
Wednesday, July 9th 2025
– (In-person + Zoom call (for non-Commissioners) –
MINUTES

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84890870671?pwd=LEyDcQArT7Rg8JdOK7HzKhe8Fc5fQZ.1>

Meeting ID: 848 9087 0671

Passcode: 699159

1. Call to Order and Attendance: **6:14 p.m.**
(Highlighted yellow or checked in attendance)
 - Jamie Brown, Chair
 - Valerie Snider, Vice Chair-Treasurer
 - Maryann Maslan, Secretary (on leave)
 - Arianna Rodriguez, Commissioner
 - Esther Takeuchi, Commissioner
 - Mindy Pines, Commissioner
 - Liana Ngo, Commissioner (Secretary pro tem)
 - Connie He, Commissioner
 - Evan Sirchuk, volunteer to the Commission - via Zoom
 - Ana Speros - of the Hercules Sister City Association - via Zoom
 - Cesar Zepeda, Vice-Mayor/City Councilmember

2. Reading and approval of May minutes : **Valerie motioned and Arianna seconded - All approved.**

3. Agenda Review (to amend or remove but not to add)

4. Treasurer's Report : **\$15,401.21 from the June 30th statement. It will change further after Lola cashes in her check and reimbursements to Jamie, Liana, and Valerie are distributed.**

5. Other Commissioner Reports
 - a. SCI Online Workshop (Jamie) : **The workshop involved programs across the country and discussed the sister city meet up scheduled in Japan in September. Jamie will send out information to those interested.**

 - b. **Arianna's commission term is expiring and will change to volunteer status till March or April, and she will reach out for clarification from the city about how leave of absence works for commission members.**

6. Old Business (to be actioned or archived)

- a. 2025 Outbound Richmond Delegation
 - i. Refund to withdrawn Ambassador Lola's family
 - 1. A refund check was issued to Lola's family June 17th. : **The check has been mailed, but has yet to be cashed as of June 30th.**
 - ii. Ambassadors return July 11th; scheduled to land at 9:45am. : **Jamie and Mindy will go meet the ambassadors.**
- b. Updating the richmondfriendship website
 - i. Evan currently manages this. He is willing to create training materials and walk through the process of updating the website.
 - 1. Meeting to be scheduled in July : **Connie and Evan had a one-on-one meeting where Evan taught Connie how to log in, how to change the site, and how to add pictures. The website uses HTMC coding.**
 - 2. Website update to include information about the annual timeline for application, process, and estimate of cost. : **Connie believes that creating a new website will be better and easier for everyone to manage collectively, and Evan is willing to help us transition if we decide to do so. Connie will research the cheapest options for a new website.**
- c. Fundraising Subcommittee
 - i. Fundraising subcommittee (Arianna, Liana, Jamie)
 - 1. Fundraising Letters drafted for the Commission to review : **Jamie will send out pdf versions to the rest of the commission to review.**
 - 2. **EBMUD has not replied to Arianna.**
 - 3. **Arianna will send out a Doodle poll to schedule a July meeting.**
- d. Getting the word out about our programs for 2026
 - i. **List of groups we can contact:**
 - 1. **Janna Coverston who works at Republic Services**
 - 2. **City municipalities**
 - 3. **Teacher's union**
 - 4. **CCC Foundation**

- ii. Upcoming Tabling opportunities
 - 1. August 2nd: East Richmond Heights Art and Music Festival :
Liana will bring supplies for tabling, and poster boards will be made to showcase the work the commission does.
 - a. We are registered - thank you Valerie!
 - b. Commission volunteers & Past Ambassador/ other volunteers : **Jamie, Valerie, Liana, Connie, and Arianna should be available.**
 - c. Two or Three shifts (11-2 & 2-5) or (11-1, 1-3, 3-5)
 - 2. September: Pt Richmond Music Fest and/or Sycamore Bazaar :
Mindy will contact the head of the Pt. Richmond council for information.
 - 3. October: Richmond Fall Festival at Nicholl Park
 - 4. List of Tabling Opportunities: [Tabling & Community Events](#)
 - e. 2025 Adult Delegation to Obi Festival
 - i. Please send Jamie your dates in Shimada & accommodation preference
 - f. Inviting Adult Delegation from Shimada - 2026 65th Anniversary
 - i. Discuss possible itinerary for adult delegation - **postponed**
 - g. 2026 Adult Ambassador Application
 - i. We did not get any applications during the open period. : **We will try again in the fall.**
 - h. 2025 Volunteer Appreciation Picnic
 - i. Confirmed for August 16th at Shimada Park. We have both the park and the parking lot (no conflicting neighborhood event) : **Arianna will fix last year's flyer for the picnic and Liana will bring the sandwiches.**
7. New Business
- a. Phone call with Trina : **Jamie and Trina came up with a list on how to do things in the future once Trina retires.**
 - b. **Jamie, Trina, Lashonda White, and Ui Bal will meet to discuss transportation for the Shimada ambassadors in March.**
 - c. **Jamie and Trina will have a meeting with the finance director to discuss credit card donations.**
 - d. Travel Insurance plan

- i. An ambassador needed to visit the hospital for digestive issues possibly relating to food sensitivities. The cost for the visit and medication was 15000 yen; the hospital only accepted cash, which John paid.
- ii. It seems unreasonable to expect the adult ambassador/chaperone to pay out-of-pocket for students' medical expenses, especially if more than one student is sick. Should we ask students' families to send cash in case? :
Jamie will see what Sister Cities International says regarding this and will see what our travel agent says as well.

8. Calendar Look-ahead (note absences if any)

- a. July 11th - Ambassadors return; 9:45 @ SFO : **Jamie and Mindy will go.**
- b. August 2nd - East Richmond Heights Art & Music Fest : **Jamie, Valerie, Arianna, Liana, and Connie will go.**
- c. August 6th - Ambassadors report to the Commission
- d. August 16th - 3rd Annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic
- e. September 3rd - Commission Meeting

9. Good of the Order: **7:56 p.m.**