

Richmond-Shimada Friendship Commission
Wednesday, March 5th
– (In-person + Zoom call (for non-Commissioners) –
MEETING 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: **6:06pm**
(Highlighted yellow or checked in attendance)
 - Jamie Brown, Chair
 - Valerie Snider, Vice Chair-Treasurer
 - Maryann Maslan, Secretary
 - Arianna Rodriguez, Commissioner
 - Esther Takeuchi, Commissioner
 - Zelda Holland, Commissioner
 - Mindy Pines, Commissioner
 - Liana Ngo, Commissioner (Secretary pro tem)
 - Connie He, volunteer to the Commission
 - Trina Jackson-Lincoln, Staff Liaison
 - Mary Marable, Staff Liaison
 - LaTonnia Johnson, Staff Liaison
 - Evan Sirchuk, volunteer to the Commission - via Zoom
 - Ana Speros - of the Hercules Sister City Association - via Zoom
 - Cesar Zepeda, City Council Member
 - Ann Hotta, volunteer to Commission - via Zoom
 - David Kamil, volunteer to the Commission - via Zoom
 - Tony Tamayo, chief of staff for the Mayor's Office

2. Reading and approval of February minutes - **Mindy motioned, Valerie seconded:**
Approved.

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

4. Treasurer's Report - **Currently no change to the \$13,436.20 total. The commission will pay NTA on March 20th.**

5. Other Commissioner Reports

- a. Consul General's reception for the Emperor's 65th Birthday (Jamie) - **A well-attended event. Jamie was able to talk to Cesar about commission issues and ideas for the future.**
 - b. **The Mayor's Office received the official invitation from Shimada about the Obi Festival.**
 - i. **The Mayor, 1 staff member, and 2 city council members will attend. And 5-8 commissioners and volunteers are interested in attending as well.**
 - ii. **The city will send a formal response to Shimada, and Jamie will send an informal response to Takashi about the attendees' information.**
6. Old Business (to be actioned or archived)
- a. RSFC Living History Project
 - i. Hajimari Project: Update on interviews. Jamie will contact Esther, Valerie will contact Steve Pinto and Janna Coverston, and Liana will contact Marilyn Lee
 - ii. Schedule subcommittee meeting for April - **The subcommittee consists of Jamie, Valerie, and Liana. There has been no change, and a meeting still needs to be set.**
 - b. 2025 Outbound Richmond Application
 - i. Tickets have been booked for cost of \$2,264 to each Ambassador
 - 1. Deposits are due Monday March 3rd; 2nd payments are due Tuesday March 11th - **All ambassadors have paid the deposit or the full amount.**
 - 2. **The city accepts money orders and cashier's checks, but does not accept credit, Venmo, etc.**
 - a. **The commission will add this information to next year's application. The commission also wishes to recommend that next year's ambassadors will mail their checks to the city due to city council office hours.**
 - ii. Next steps
 - 1. Coordinating payment to NTA (Jamie & Valerie with City Council Office) - **Valerie paid the deposit and the travel insurance and**

will turn in the receipt for reimbursement. Mary will deposit the checks into our city account and Trina will send the check to NTA.

2. Schedule orientation sessions - Arianna, Liana, Connie, Jamie and? When and where - **Starting in April, the commission will schedule 2 orientations, and a 3rd if necessary. The 1st orientation will be held at Valerie's house and the 2nd orientation will be held at the Richmond Museum of History and Culture.**

c. Inbound Shimada Planning

i. Host Family Update

1. All host families have been identified, two background checks pending. - **Connie He's family will replace Arianna Rodriguez's family.**

ii. Schedule Planning Update

1. School visits - set
2. Other activities - **A visit to the El Cerrito Ping Pong Club has been scheduled for Monday, March 24th, from 1:00-2:30pm.**
3. Logistics update (van, venues, etc)
 - a. Meet & Greet and Sayonara will take place at the Whittlesey Community Room at Richmond Main Library.
 - b. **Van & Driver are booked for 3/20 only.** Waiting to hear if the van will be available for other days. Jamie asked Cesar to assist with finding City Employees to drive the van. As of now, we must assume that chaperones will be transporting students. - **Cesar will talk to the City Manager to find us a driver for the rest of the visit. The commission will have to schedule at least 3 chaperones per day to drive the ambassadors if necessary.**
 - c. Sharolyn Babb, Ui's Supervisor, is retiring, and the DPCC activities are increasing. Need to plan for alternate transport in the future.

7. New Business

- a. Getting the word out about our program for 2026
 - i. Tabling - when & where? - **Events the commission can possibly attend/table at: Sycamore Church, El Cerrito 4th of July, Spring Fling in Pt. Richmond, East Richmond Heights Music Festival(?).**
 - 1. **Someone from the commission should attend some of the neighborhood council meetings to find out about events. And sign up for the City Manager's newsletters to also hear about future events.**
 - 2. **The commission will try to get in contact with whoever organizes the events to try to take part.**
- b. Useful Document Links Doc
- c. **Jamie showed the commission the business card she made and brought to the Emperor's birthday party celebration.**

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

- a. March 20th - 28th - Shimada Friendship Ambassadors visit Richmond
- b. April 2nd Commission Meeting
- c. May 7th Commission Meeting
- d. June 4th Commission Meeting

9. Good of the Order **8:20pm**