

**MINUTES OF THE SISTER CITIES PROGRAM COMMITTEE
OF THE CITY OF GALVESTON
REGULAR MEETING - JANUARY 13, 2026**

1/13/2026 - Sister Cities Program Committee Minutes

1. Declaration Of A Quorum

Meeting was called to order at 11:30 am.

2. Roll Call

**Present: Chair Cappadona, Vice Chair Tregre, CM Donlon, CM Adams,
CM Bolton-Legg, Ex-Officio Council Member Sharon Lewis**

3. Consider Approval Of Meeting Minutes

3.a Draft Minutes - December 10, 2025

Motion by CM Bolton-Legg

Second by Vice Chair Tregre

Motion carried to approve minutes from December 10, 2025.

4. Public Comment

N/A

5. Ex-Officio Council Member Sharon Lewis

Ex Officio Council Member Lewis stated that she had an applicant for the open vacancy. Administrative Assistant Martha provided the Committee with a copy of the applicant's application.

6. Asst. City Secretary Update

Asst. City Secretary Nellie wished everyone a Happy New Year and asked the Committee if they were going to discuss whether they were going to make any of our Sister Cities dormant or give them another chance to see if they will communicate or participate with us. CM Bolton-Legg asked which of our Sister Cities she was talking about; she said, "Veracruz".

7. Update on Sister Cities

7.a Niigata

Vice Chair Tregre spoke on Niigata visits and she thinks we need to come up with a different system and we need to pick the dates depending on what events are taking place here in Galveston; that way we can take them to those events as part of our exchange with them. She spoke on Houston Visits. She stated that any Houston business needs to be completed before coming to Galveston. We should not be shuttling back and forth to Houston. Once they arrive in Galveston it should

be Galveston Business only. Vice Chair Tregre went on to say that the "Equal Exchange" is not equal at all. Niigata comes down almost every year expecting Galveston to host in some way whether its the Tiagurama Group or the Political Citizens Group. Galveston does not have the space, time, nor the budget to be hosting them all the time; reason being we need to focus on our other Sister Cities. The Vice Chair said that she had the stats as to when we went to Japan unofficially and officially. They are as follows: Gilbert went in 2014; Gilbert and Joe went in 2017, Leah and her husband went in 2020 and the current 6 person group went in 2025. Therefore, we have 3 and 5 year gaps as to when we go to Niigata, Japan. Vice Chair Tregre recommends that we no longer host the Tiagurama group every year.

7.b Macharaviaya

CM Donlon stated that Katie (Mayor's Asst.) and her have been communicating back and forth. She stated that they have an Art Gallery in their little town and they host Artists all the time. They would like to have an Art Exchange and they would like to host an Artist from Galveston but they would have to get themselves to Malaga, then Katie or her staff would pick them up from the airport, have a place for them to stay, feed them, and have an Art Gallery Event. This is creating a bond with the Artist. CM Donlon brought this up for discussion for the Committee to consider as a start for us to bond and communicate with Macharaviaya. CM Donlon asked the Committee to also think about a good time to go to Macharaviaya. Chair Cappadona stated we need a little more communication with them and to keep that going and we will continue to discuss Macharaviaya in the next coming meetings.

7.c Stavanger

CM Adams stated that she bought them a Christmas Card to mail to them but when she emailed them they misunderstood and wished us a Merry Christmas through email instead. They told CM Adams that they are ready to get things rolling and start the New Year with Sister Cities. CM Adams stated that there are a lot of Off Shore Technologies things in Houston that more and more people are coming for the Off Shore Technologies and there will be a presence there in Houston.

7.d Veracruz

Chair Cappadona stated that Donna Williams stepped down from the Committee. Chair Cappadona told the Committee that he was going to email Veracruz and let them know she has stepped down and we are in the process of filling that position.

8. Additional Input from the Committee, Staff, and Guests

Chair Cappadona mentioned that Aci Trezza, Italy is besides themselves wanting to be a Sister City with us. This is a consideration for us as a Committee to take into account. CM Donlon and Chair Cappadona have been in contact with them. Asst. City Secretary Nellie mentioned that if Veracruz does not respond to Chair Cappadona's email we should consider making Veracruz dormant and bring on Aci Trezza, Sicily aboard. CM Adams

asked if there was a limit to how many Sister Cities we can have; the Asst. City Secretary Nellie answered her and said that there was no limit. Ex-Officio Lewis introduced Ms. Foreman and stated that Ms. Foreman applied to be on the Sister Cities Committee. She is looking for some volunteer work and she speaks Spanish and is highly educated. Ex-Officio Lewis said that she would be a great fit for this Committee. Ms. Foreman spoke and told the Committee that she loved kids and was looking forward to give back to her community. Chair Cappadona asked about Ms. Hindman's application whether it no longer counted and the Administrative Assistant Martha told him it did not because she never re-applied for a position on the Committee. The first time she applied her application was declined because at the time they gave Pam Williams the position. Therefore, the system did notify Ms. Hindman that she was not chosen and she still had the opportunity to re-apply. Chair Cappadona tabled the question.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting is on February 17, 2026 at 11:30 am in Room 204

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Manuela 'Nellie' De La Fuente". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly legible, and the middle name in quotes.

Manuela "Nellie" De La Fuente
Assistant City Secretary

Date Approved: 02/17/2026