



GHIC Monthly Meeting Minutes

April 29, 2026

5:30pm – 6:30pm (Virtual Meeting)

- I. Welcome & roll call:
The meeting started at 5:34pm. In attendance were Hani Nassar, Ed Tashjian, Victoria Morales, Eric Brandon, Nancy Greiner, Tracey Trimble, Thomas Shao, Connor Dowdle, and Anne-Sophie DaCosta.
- II. March meeting minutes were approved.
- III. GHIC financials as of 4/27/26:
 - a. Checking (Bank of America): \$14,622.00
 - b. RWISA Business CD (First Horizon): \$21,128.55. CD (3.25%) start date 11/7/25 for 7 months
 - c. City funds assigned to GHIC: \$11,700 (7/1/25 – 6/30/26)
 - d. Expenses 7/1/25 through 4/27/26: \$9,883.10
- IV. Old Business
 - a. RWISA – Subcommittee plan: Connor suggested to have the members of the subcommittee meet in the same room before the regular GHIC meeting. We need to check availability of the Maple Room. Tracey will head the subcommittee. Hani, Donna Wright, Connor, Anne-Sophie and a Great Decisions participant will be on the subcommittee. We discussed making a donation to the YMCA to thank them for letting us use the Maple Room.
 - b. Model United Nations Conference – [NCSSM](#) update: Hani met with John Zimmerman (Chair of Humanities at NCSSM). It will cost \$120 per room, per day to have MUN there.
 - i. GHIC brochure will be updated when we finalize MUN plan.
 - c. International Film Showcase 2026: more films are added to Film Freeway every week, so judges should keep screening and rating those. [Footcandle Film Festival](#) will take place September 18-27, 2026. Deadline to review all international films is end of July, 2026.
 - d. GHIC events/Grants update:
 - i. STEM TREK: four of our youth council members (Avangelina, Connor, Chance, and Thomas) helped make this event a success, with almost 300 attendees. Here are some photos of the event: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HOlaQdPbXz8vvdmseUb-Hkww2sTU4tAV>
 - ii. [Challenger High School International Festival](#): This event is open to the public, with a 50/50 raffle, dances and numerous booths. To be considered a solid contender for RWISA, we should talk to the organizers and ask them how they plan to reach the community and spread the word about their event.
 - iii. [Hickory Ballet & Performing Arts](#)' International Dance Day: About 100 visitors came through the studio to attend the free dance classes. This event is gaining momentum every year. It should become a good program if it is promoted along with the multicultural festival that takes place later on the same day.
 - iv. Hickory Community Relations Council's Multicultural Festival: despite the rain, a lot of food vendors showed up for this event that seems to have a lot of potential.

- e. Corning Foundation Grant: the GHIC should receive a grant of \$7,000 this year. The grant money is not earmarked for any particular GHIC-sponsored event.
- f. [GHIC website](#): If you have an event to promote or if you hear of any international event of interest, send Ed (ed.tashjian@gmail.com) the information and/or flyer so that it can be added to the website.
- g. Sister Cities: Tracey will have more information to share at our next meeting (May 21).
- h. Marketing items: Hani has received the flashlights and will bring them at the next meeting. We discussed the need for a darker table cover as well as a tradeshow stand to take to events.

V. New Business

- a. [TEDxCatawba](#) collaboration: Christine Gagnon joined us to discuss the plans for this year and our financial involvement. The main event will take place on November 21, 2026, at Lenoir Rhyne (PE Monroe auditorium) with the pre-event the evening before at Grace Chapel. Three TEDx speakers are foreign nationals, which fits our mission.
- b. [NoCo ARTS](#): The event planned by creative director Kat Evans to host a new culture every year was rescheduled to Thursday, May 28. She is partnering with Alan Jackson's [New State Cinema](#) and with [CIAO Hickory](#) to show an Italian movie followed by Italian food at the Arts Studio across the street from the New State Cinema.
- c. Tracey suggested adding a list of local foreign language instructors to our website.

VI. Adjourn

There being no more topics of discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40pm.

Anne-Sophie DaCosta, recorder

Next meeting will be on May 21, 2026 from 5:30pm to 6:30pm at the YMCA Maple Room

Greater Hickory International Council

Mission Statement

"The mission of the Greater Hickory International Council is to act as a forum for the local and global international community and to act as a liaison between that community and the local governments in order to promote goodwill, mutual understanding, cooperation, education, and respect among citizens."