

**MINUTES OF THE
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2026
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MONTCLAIR COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES COMMISSION**

**MONTCLAIR CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5111 BENITO STREET, MONTCLAIR, CALIFORNIA
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Rangel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Commissioner Escalante led those present in the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Rosa Rangel, Vice-Chairperson Diane Wells,
Commissioners Richard Escalante, Hector Martinez,
Laurie Milhiser, Arturo Padilla, and City Council Liaison Bill Ruh and
Corysa Martinez

Excused: Commissioner Darlene Ferraro

Also Present: Assistant City Manager/Director of Human Services Marcia Richter
Assistant Director of Human Services & Grants Manager Alyssa Colunga
Community Services Supervisor Jordi Ubaldo
Recreation Coordinator, Community Angela Franco
Administrative Specialist Abigail Perales

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Padilla made the motion to approve the minutes from the Community Activities Commission special meeting on December 8, 2025. Vice-Chairperson Wells seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Richter distributed the Anthesis 2024 Annual Report which gives an overview of the year's accomplishments along with a thank you card, expressing appreciation for the CAC Committee's long-term partnership and support.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Military Banner Program

Chairperson Rangel led a discussion on the Military Banner Program. Ms. Franco provided an update on the Military Banner Program, sharing this year there are five new active Military Banners. The current Military Banner program consists of a total of 40 Military Banners, 33 are active military banners, along with five Veteran Banners and two all-Veterans Banners.

Chairperson Rangel informed the Commissioners that the Military Banner Presentation will take place at the City Council meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Franco informed the Commission that two banner participants have been honorably discharged from the military and their banners will be removed. One of the veterans will not be able to attend the presentation but their family is planning to attend, and one participant is still pending. All Commissioners are encouraged to attend. Commissioner Milhiser informed the Commission that she will not be attending the Military Banner Presentation due to prior commitments.

Commissioner Escalante volunteered to read the script for the PowerPoint presentation.

B. Holly Jolly Holiday - Recap

Holly Jolly Holiday took place on Thursday, December 4, 2025 from 3:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Montclair Youth Center and Alma Hofman Park.

Chairperson Rangel congratulated the staff and thanked them for their hard work. She also added that the event continues to grow and improve each year and appreciates staff's efforts for coordinating a memorable event for the community.

Ms. Richter shared that over 2,000 guests were in attendance this year compared to approximately 1,000 last year. The event was spread across the Youth Center, Benito Street in front of City Hall, and the Alma Hofman parking lot for the snow area. The event also started earlier than in previous years. This year, a total of 632 guests entered the "Photo with Santa" station, 341 photos were taken with Santa, 102 letters were written to Santa, and 343 waivers were completed to participate in the snow activities. Nearly 50 volunteers assisted with the event, not including CAC members. Volunteers included students from Montclair High School's Key Club, JROTC program, Water Polo Team, and National Honor Society, as well as Montclair to College students completing community service hours. Additionally, six participants from the 2025 Montclair Youth Talent Show performed Christmas songs for the guests waiting in line for the Photo with Santa.

Commissioner Milhiser asked if there were any complaints regarding the Letters to Santa age restriction. Chairperson Rangel informed the Commission that a parent whose child was over the age limit of ten years old was disappointed and she redirected them to other activities, such as the scavenger hunt. Overall, limiting participation to children age ten and under was considered a good decision and helped keep the Letters to Santa manageable for staff.

Commissioner Escalante shared at a City Council meeting, the Council expressed their thanks to the staff and the CAC for the excellent work on the event.

C. *Holiday Home Decoration Contest - Recap*

Sixteen entries were judged for the 2025 Holiday Home Decoration Contest which included two nominations from the public and an additional home included along the judging route. The three winning families attended the December 15, 2025 City Council meeting. Commissioner Rangel read the script while a PowerPoint presentation showed photos of each decorated home. Each family received a framed certificate and a \$100 gift card of a Montclair business of their choice. The winners chose gift cards to Main Event, Olive Garden, and Lazy Dog. The winners included:

All About Christmas
4910 Howard Street

Light Up the Holiday's
9917 Pradera Avenue

Disney Holiday Cheer
9932 Geneva Avenue

Commissioner Milhiser commented this was the best year yet for the Holiday Home Decoration Contest because there were more decorated homes throughout the city.

Commissioner Martinez suggested extending the contest entry deadline by an additional week in hope that more homes will participate. Ms. Richter informed the Commission that extending the deadline would make preparing the awards and presentation challenging. Commissioner Milhiser added we publicize the winners before Christmas so the public has time to view the awarded homes. Ms. Richter also mentioned awarding the prizes after Christmas would not be as exciting. Ms. Richter informed the Commissioners that the Human Services activities brochures with information on the Holiday Home Decoration Contest were distributed in September, giving participants plenty of time to prepare for the contest and its deadlines. Tentative dates for 2026 have been proposed: applications due December 4, judging on December 7, and the Council meeting on December 21. Dates for the 2026-2027 meetings, judgments, and presentations will be finalized and added to the calendar in September 2026.

D. Community Benefits Program

Ms. Richter stated that the Community Benefits Program invitation packets were mailed on December 17, 2025 to thirteen agencies invited by the Commission and listed below.

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| 1. AgingNext | 8. Love for Humanity |
| 2. Anthesis | 9. Montclair Meal on Wheels |
| 3. Assistance League of the Foothill Communities | 10. OMSD Health and Wellness Services |
| 4. Care & Company | 11. OPARC |
| 5. Christian Development Center | 12. Project Sister Family Services |
| 6. Foothill Family Shelter | 13. VNA Care |
| 7. Hope Through Housing Foundation | |

To be considered for funding, the agency information, budget, and funding requests are due by Thursday, January 22, 2026. A funding amount of \$45,000 is available to be distributed to agencies this year.

Ms. Richter informed the Commission, to date, one packet was received from VNA Care. She also added Anthesis has decided to withdraw from the program, citing sufficient funding from other sources. Anthesis expressed the desire for their funding to be allocated to other agencies. Anthesis typically proposes special projects for funding and provides a thorough post-award report with photos.

Ms. Richter heard from Assistance League of Foothill Communities and they will be working on the packet. Karolyn Bragg, Grants Committee member from Assistance League of the Foothill Communities, will be coordinating the project this year. Ms. Richter requested that Ms. Perales follow-up with Ms. Bragg to assist with any clarifications. Commissioner Milhiser offered to reach out as well.

Ms. Richter explained that the Commission will receive the agency packets for review before the hearing scheduled on March 4, 2026.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Volunteer Recognition Program

The Volunteer Recognition Program is scheduled to be held on Monday, April 20, 2026 during the City Council Meeting which will begin at 7:00 p.m. followed by the reception in the Senior Center.

Discussion among the Commission included the following:

- Theme of this year's event was decided to be "Volunteers Rock Montclair." Rock painting was suggested as a possible activity to include at the reception.
- Mr. Ubaldo explained invitations are sent to different Montclair organizations that help support our community through volunteers and distributed a list of possible agencies. The list is comprised of fifty-nine organizations including community benefits agencies, schools, service clubs, churches, and local non-profits.
- Nomination application packets will be mailed at the end of January or early February to allow agencies time to submit nominations by March.
- Committee members will finalize the theme and discuss decorations and other event details at the February meeting.

B. Memorial Day Program

The Memorial Day Program is scheduled to be held on Monday, May 25, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the Memorial Garden adjacent to City Hall. The Commission is asked to arrive by 4:00 p.m.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Ms. Richter stated the Veterans Memorial Wall Plaque Application is available through the Winter/Spring Human Services Brochure that was mailed to all Montclair residents and applications are due by February 20, 2026.
- The Commission discussed repeating last year's performance by the 300th Army Band. Staff may explore other options if desired.
- The Montclair High School JROTC will not be available for this year's Memorial Day Program due to closing the program at the end of the school year. Other options include the Police Honor Guard, other veterans, active-duty Montclair residents, and the 300th Army Band. Ms. Franco will assist in looking for participants.
- Commissioner Padilla will speak to the Veterans attending the Military Banner Presentation to see if they can participate and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Ms. Richter confirmed the refreshments will remain the same as previous years including BBQ hot dogs, chips, cake, cookies, lemonade and water.
- Ms. Richter mentioned staff will send save-the-date emails to dignitaries soon, and a formal invitation will be sent as the event draws near.
- Ms. Richter asked the Commission members to submit any new poems they may have in case a poem is incorporated into the program this year. Commissioner Milhiser suggested if he have enough plaques there is no need to read a poem.

ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Ms. Richter introduced Alyssa Colunga as the new attendee who will begin participating in the CAC meetings beginning in February. Ms. Richter informed the Commission that she is retiring after 40 years of service to the City of Montclair. She expressed appreciation for the CAC's support and added she will remain involved as a retired annuitant, pending City Council approval. The

Commission congratulated Ms. Richter on her retirement and thanked her for her leadership to the CAC and community.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Rangel adjourned the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Abigail Perales
Administrative Specialist