



CITY CELEBRATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES FROM February 23, 2026
Huntington Beach City Hall

Call to Order at 5:30 PM

Roll Call

- Committee Members: *(Present) Ellen Kuhnert, Patricia Pappas, Yolanda Campos, Julian Douglas, Valentina Bankhead, Michael Latham, Delaine Bailey*
 - Council: *Butch Twining, Mayor Pro Tem*
 - Staff Liaison: *Julie Toledo*
 - Other Staff: *None*
 - Public: *Amory Hanson*
 - Public Comments (3 minutes per speaker) *None*
- Approve minutes from January 26, 2025 meeting (*Julian Douglas, 2nd by Ellen Kuhnert*)

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. 2026 Celebration Calendar Themes

- a. January – “Foundations of Freedom – Early HB Foundations”
- b. February – “From the Sands of Iwo Jima to Sands of HB – The Legacy of Sacrifice & Service”
- c. March – “Valor & Sacrifice – Celebrating Our Sworn Personnel”
- d. April – “Patriotism & Remembrance”
- e. May – “Honoring Service, Building Community – Military Appreciation Month”
- f. June – “Countdown to America 250 – Honoring Our Symbols & Sacrifice”
- g. July – “Happy 250 America!”
- h. August – “Honor & Valor – Honoring the Purple Hearts & Coast Guard”
- i. September – “Echoes of Bravery – Civil War Valor & 9/11 Resolve”
- j. October – “Wings of Freedom”
- k. November – “Honoring the Brave – Saluting Our Veterans”
- l. December – “Season of Remembrance & Reflection”

2. Review Draft 2026 City Celebration Events/250 Semiquincentennial Calendar

- Patti discussed teaching the Constitution and Executive Branch for teachers to come in and teach.
- Mayor Pro Tem Twining brought up D-Day and the Coast Guard
- Julian brought up the question of what do we do after the 4th of July? Brought up possible photo contest showing best photos of Independence Day in HB.
- Patti said she was looking into the Freedom Truck coming to HB
- Patti looking into having a tree planting and a plaque
- American Story with Dr. Stefan Bean and Supervisor Nguyen looking at a June date
- It was discussed about having the committee in the Independence Day Parade. Julian and Michael were a yes.
- Lemonade stand was brought up a few times to serve lemonade at certain events – Memorial Day or Veterans Day
- Give away ribbons for bikes for the bike parade – patriotic themed.
- Ellen mentioned a 1965 Ford Truck with committee in the truck for the Independence Day parade. Michael and Julian to come up with ideas and bring back to group.



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- Michael suggested contacting HB Propane for a truck. Ellen suggested surf boards and/or bald eagles be decorated in the truck.
- a. **February – “From the Sands of Iwo Jima to Sands of HB – The Legacy of Sacrifice & Service”**
 - Julian Douglas to write stories on Joe Bush, Bruce Bender and William “Bill” White for social media.
 - Committee served cake for the City’s 117th Birthday and celebrate prior to City Council meeting on 2/17
- b. **March – “Valor & Sacrifice – Celebrating Our Sworn Personnel”**
 - Julie suggested attending the March 26 event at the Central Library with the Veterans Resource Center and American Legion Post 133
- c. **April – “Patriotism & Remembrance”**
 - Julie said City is doing event with County – Pet Expo on April 25 from 1pm to 4pm.
 - National Arbor Day is April 24 – Potential Tree Planting at City Hall
 - Kick off “What Does American Mean to Me” Contest – Display work in May/June – Michael said he could help with this effort.
- d. **May – “Honoring Service, Building Community – Military Appreciation Month”**
 - Julie said HB Symphony putting on Patriot Concert on Sunday, May 24 at 5:30pm at City Hall for Memorial Day
 - Julian Douglas suggested we should do something for National Police Week.
 - Patti Pappas suggested doing something with the three branches of government in May.
- e. **June – “Countdown to America 250 – Honoring Our Symbols & Sacrifice”**
 - Display art work at City Hall or other locations. Collect art work
 - Julian Douglas suggested demonstrations around town. Renewed relationship with City and Navy. Julian Douglas recommended doing a landing on the beach.
 - Dr. Stephen Bean and Supervisor Nguyen to speak at City Hall in Council Chambers.
- f. **July – “Happy 250 America”**
 - Valentina working on dance production and working with Independence Day reps.
 - Photo contest after July 4th – show us your best Independence Day photos. Categories for Parade, kids/family, fireworks, etc.
- g. **August – “Honor & Valor – Honoring the Purple Hearts & Coast Guard”**
 - Coast Guard – Julian brought up idea of doing something in August “Cocktails with Coasties.” Julian to follow up on this.
 - Julian suggested Purple Heart stories
 - Support National Night Out at City Hall



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- Patti suggested the group serve lemonade at the Car Show at Golden West College/American Legion Post 133
- h. **September -“Echoes of Bravery – Civil War Valor & 9/11 Resolve”**
- Julie said City is working with multiple cities in OC for the Guinness Book of World Records “Largest Potluck” at Mile Square Park set for Sunday, Sept. 27 from 3pm to 6pm
 - Julian brought up 9/11 at the 25th Anniversary of that tragic day.
 - National Constitution Day is Sept. 17 and it was brought up that there be readings at the Sept. 15 City Council meeting. Reading of the preamble. Michael said his son Greyson could read.
 - Julian brought up POW Day in Sept and writing a story about it.
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- i. **October -“Wings of Freedom”**
- Patti brought up having airplanes at library
 - Michael brought up a retired T-bird, F16
 - Patti was going to ask Kevin Elliott about a play area for kids
- j. **November -“Honoring the Brave – Saluting Our Veterans”**
- It was discussed having another lemonade stand for Veterans Day ceremony
 - Valentina brought up having crosses like they have at an event in Costa Mesa
- k. **December -“Seasons of Remembrance & Reflection”**
- Time Capsule
 - Wreaths Across America – Julian brought up and will bring to next month’s meeting to discuss.
 - Julian brought up Pearl Harbor
- 3. Review 250 HB Logo**
- Did not review logo as it is still in draft form.

Adjournment – 6:47 PM

The next scheduled meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2026 at 5:30 PM.