

**INDEPENDENCE DAY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**
Thursday, September 18, 2025 – 7:00 PM
College Room - Alexander Hughes Community Center

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Carson Elhai called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT KRISTA CARSON ELHAI, CHARLIE GALE, CHRISTINE MOORE,
JULIANNE SALTZER

ABSENT STACEY CAPONIGRO

ALSO PRESENT

Nancy Brower, Community and Human Services Commission Liaison
Melissa Vollaro, Recreation and Human Services Director
Kelly Love, Recreation and Human Services Coordinator
Amber Tudor, Program Coordinator

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CEREMONIAL MATTERS, PRESENTATIONS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice Chair Carson Elhai invited public comment.

There were no requests to speak.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Vice Chair Carson Elhai invited public comment on the Consent Calendar.

There were no requests to speak.

1. Independence Day Committee Special Meeting Minutes of July 10, 2025
Approved and filed the Independence Day Committee special meeting minutes of July 10, 2025.

Committee Member Gale moved to approve the Consent Calendar, seconded by Committee Member Moore, and carried on the following vote:

AYES: Committee Member – Carson Elhai, Gale, Moore, Saltzer
NOES: Committee Member – None
ABSTENTION: Committee Member – Caponigro

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

2. **SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

Vice Chair Carson Elhai opened the floor for nominations for the office of Chair for the 2025-26 term.

Committee Member Moore nominated Stacey Caponigro for the office of Chair.

Nominations were closed and Vice Chair Carson Elhai invited public comment.

There were no requests to speak.

Committee Member Moore moved to nominate Stacey Caponigro for the position of Chair for the 2025-26 term, seconded by Committee Member Gale, and carried on the following vote:

AYES: ***Committee Member –Carson Elhai, Gale, Moore, Saltzer***
NOES: ***Committee Member – None***
ABSTENTION: ***Committee Member – Caponigro***

Vice Chair Carson Elhai opened the floor for nominations for the office of Vice Chair for the 2025-26 term.

Committee Member Saltzer nominated Krista Carson Elhai for the office of Vice Chair.

Nominations were closed and Vice Chair Carson Elhai invited public comment.

There were no requests to speak.

Committee Member Saltzer moved to nominate Vice Chair Carson Elhai for the position of Vice Chair for the 2025-26 term, seconded by Committee Member Gale, and carried on the following vote:

AYES: ***Committee Member –Carson Elhai, Gale, Moore, Saltzer***
NOES: ***Committee Member – None***
ABSTENTION: ***Committee Member – Caponigro***

3. **2026 4th of July Evening Program**

Amber Tudor, Program Coordinator, reported that the two options for the 2026 evening program are to host a fireworks show at Pomona College, once vendors and permissions are granted, or to host no evening program and utilize budget to enhance the Festival. She explained that the two options were based on the Committee's past practice.

The Committee discussed the lack of feasibility of a drone show based on Claremont's budget as well as the fact that 2026 is the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the community will expect fireworks.

Vice Chair Carson Elhai invited public comment.

There were no requests to speak.

Committee Member Gale moved to recommend a Fireworks Show at Pomona College as the 2026 4th of July evening program, seconded by Vice Chair Carson Elhai, and carried on the following vote:

AYES: ***Committee Member –Carson Elhai, Gale, Moore, Saltzer***

NOES: ***Committee Member – None***

ABSTENTION: ***Committee Member – Caponigro***

4. 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2026

Amber Tudor, Program Coordinator, reported that staff have considered some ways to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence including a tree planting in Memorial Park, and asked the Committee for suggestions for the 2026 event.

The Committee suggested utilizing Claremont Heritage for some 4th of July history, a bench at the park, having the community send in photos, or having speakers from each decade discussing 4th of July through the decades.

Vice Chair Elhai invited public comment.

There were no requests to speak.

The Committee received and filed the report.

5. 4th of July Festival

Amber Tudor, Program Coordinator, reported on the traditional festival programming and asked the Committee for suggestions for the 2026 Festival.

Suggestions included a Ben Franklin impersonator and an American history trivia contest.

Vice Chair Carson Elhai invited public comment.

There were no requests to speak.

The Committee received and filed the report.

REPORTS

Staff

Melissa Vollaro, Recreation and Human Services Director, reported that staff will be working on request for proposals for fireworks, checking in with Pomona College about hosting, working on sponsorship, Kiwanis agreement, and the 2026 event budget. Additionally, the City's two-year budget process will begin in the new year and staff are busy with fall events.

Committee

Committee Member Gale reported that he received an email from Russ Binder about getting more floats in the parade.

Liaison

Commissioner Brower reported that the Community and Human Services Commission received the Friends of the Claremont Hills Wilderness Park annual report and will be reviewing 31 Community Based Organization funding applications. She also reported that the Tree Committee heard about tree removals from Edison on Forbes Avenue.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Carson Elhai adjourned the meeting at 8:02 PM. The next regular meeting of the Independence Day Committee will be held on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 7:00 PM in the Alexander Hughes Community Center, 1700 Danbury Rd, Claremont.

ATTEST:



Krista Carson Elhai
Vice Chair



Amber Tudor
Recording Secretary