



The voice of our community

**Board Meeting
February 10, 2026 – 4:15 PM
MINUTES**

**In-Person at the Montecito Community Hall/Library
And Virtually Via Zoom**

I. Call to Order at 4:02 PM by Chair Macfadyen. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Present: Albertson, Bode, Bollay, Craigie, Denson, Duran, Gherson, Hedrick, Herting, Lundgren, Macfadyen, Pennino, Rockenbach, Serrani, White, Wittman

Absent: Prince

II. Approval of January 13, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes

Rockenbach/Duran Motion Approved

III. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda- Local students Jack Hyatt (DPHS) and Sebastian Fabio (SBHS), who are leading a seven-week campaign for Blood Cancer United, shared their goal of raising \$200,000 to fund blood cancer research. They noted that someone in the U.S. is diagnosed with a blood cancer every three minutes and spoke about their mentor's personal battle with the disease. Attendees were encouraged to support through donations, business sponsorships, or sharing their campaign.

IV. President's Report- Committees will now meet monthly and submit written reports to strengthen accountability. The Community Plan continues to guide MA priorities. The Association will participate in celebrations tied to the nation's 250th anniversary.

V. Executive Director Report- Houghton Hyatt-Reported that a successful board retreat was held with full attendance and priorities were set for 2026. Ongoing coordination with Hands Across Montecito (HAM) continues. HAM met with the CityNet team and reported that there is \$80k in the account for HAM. Board members will tour Lotusland in March. There were 125 membership renewals in January, including two new members. Board members are required to bring 4-5 new members each per year.

VI. Treasurer Report- We are waiting for the new lease details to approve the 2026 budget – should be able to approve in April's meeting.

IV. Community Reports

Superintendent Cold Spring School-Amy Alzina highlighted several successes at the campus, including the school's longstanding Valentine's Day breakfast tradition and strong demand for summer programming, with 17 classes filling within minutes of registration opening. She also announced an upcoming AI Summit, scheduled for July 7–9, that will bring together educators and community partners. Alzina currently chairs California's AI task force for TK–12 education and noted that the school's updated safety plan was recently approved, including improvements to its phone and communication systems.

Chief Neels-MFD-Chief Neels Shared that the chipping program is underway and 300 tons of vegetation have been taken away. They completed their annual plan, and it is on the website. They are recruiting for fire chief due to Chief Neels retiring in March.

Sheriff Dept.-Lt. Rich Brittingham- Update on recent events. reported incidents including theft from vehicles, trespassing, and vandalism. Residents were reminded to remain vigilant and report suspicious activity. The substation will be completed soon.

Montecito Sanitary District-John Weigold-Reported that they acquired a new vacuum truck, permitting improvements, and a commercial FOG (fats, oils, grease) program. Sewer rates are under review for the first time since 2016.

Aida Thau, Chief of Staff, Roy Lee, 1st District Supervisor-Shared updates on a proposed gas leaf blower ban, they are working with the other supervisors to get approval for just Montecito, and it will take about six months. They are working on a no camping on beach ordinance, and a forthcoming resolution honoring Chief Neels on March 3rd.

V. Agenda

Board Retreat Follow Up

Committee chairs were finalized for the year:

Land Use: Chris Albertson & Cliff Ghersen (Co-Chairs) Working on a survey for members on topics that matter to the community. Will look at updating the community plan.

Events: Mindy Denson (Chair) Meetings underway for spring programming and anniversary celebrations.

History: Leslie Lundgren (Chair) Continued archival work and community storytelling projects.

Outreach: Laura Bode (Chair) Ambitious membership growth plan, welcome boxes for new residents, business partnerships, and creative events.

Safety Response: Jacqueline Duran (Chair) Focus on license plate readers, fire defense projects, and crosswalk safety. Will meet the third Tuesday of every month.

Hands Across Montecito: Dorene White (Chair) Monthly outreach walks and coordination with service providers, CityNet & Earthcomb.

X. Old Business-None

XI. New Business- Motion to present a symbol of recognition to retiring Chief Neels. Bolly made a motion to honor Chief Neels at the next meeting with a plaque.” – Rockenbach second the motion – motion approved.

Adjourned 5:58 p.m.