



Semiquincentennial



Middletown/Portland America 250 Committee
Thursday, February 5, 2026 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Present:

Mayor Gene P. Nocera
First Selectman Michael Pelton
Councilmember Jeanette Blackwell
Sandra Russo Driska

Ken McClellan
Deborah Shapiro, Vice Chair
Robert Santangelo
Kisha M. Michael, Chair

Also present:

Sam Gold, Susie Beckman, RiverCOG

Public:

Haley Stafford, Middlesex county
Chamber of Commerce

Absent:

Councilmember Linda Salafia
Johanna Bond
Christine Marques
Dominick DeMartino
Robyn Anderson Turner

1) Call to Order

K. Michael, Chair called the special meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

2) Public Comment

Haley Stafford on behalf of Chamber of Commerce collaboration.

3) Accept/Amend the Agenda

A motion to accept or amend the agenda was made by D. Shapiro and seconded by Mayor Nocera; matter passes unanimously with no comments, abstentions or objections.

4) Remarks from the Chair

K. Michael, Chair delivered brief remarks on housekeeping topics for the New Year a briefing on items/topics that need attention. Briefing ensued on details of new business.

5) New Business

a) 2026 Committee Meeting Schedule

- Mayor Nocera made a motion to accept the draft calendar attached to the agenda; M. Pelton, First Selectman seconded. Discussion ensued to clarify which option is best for all members' calendars. Mayor Nocera made a second motion to accept option



One, the second Monday of each month; seconded by K. McClellan; matter passes unanimously with no abstentions or objections.

- Mayor Nocera made a motion to accept the timeframe from 4-5 p.m.; seconded by D. Shapiro, Vice Chair. Discussion ensued over a considerable time and chose 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.; matter passes unanimously with no abstentions or objections.

Calendar Year 2026

| Month | Day | Time | Meeting Platform |
|--------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| March | 16 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |
| April | 13 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |
| May | 11 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |
| June | 8 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |
| July | 13 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |
| August | 10 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |
| September | 14 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |
| October | 12 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |
| November | 9 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |
| December | 8 | 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. | WebEx |

b) Mayor’s Appointments

K. Michael, welcomed new member Gary Wallace; also added for the record are the stats of the committee: 16 members, 9 is quorum, 1 new member and 2 vacancies. K. Michael would like to fill these seats as soon as possible as there are public requests for participation. K. Michael requested that the unattended seat from Portland send in a letter of resignation.

c) America’s 250th Master Plan

K. Michael, gives a briefing and positive defense for the master and marketing plan, as provided by the Chamber of Commerce; to be used as a roadmap for this project. Additionally the information from Middletown’s 350th was discovered and will also be used as a guiding aid. K. Michael encourages everyone to read through the plan; thanks is given to the Chamber for providing their support.

- Mayor Nocera made a motion to accept the master plan as presented; motion was seconded by B. Santangelo. A question was raised by Councilmember Blackwell of the documents development. K. Michael stated it was received prior to the January 12th meeting to review, and a briefing was given on it at the January 12th meeting. D. Shapiro added support for using the plan. Matter passes unanimously with no abstentions or objections.



d) Anchor Events

K. Michael, Chair introduced discussion to clarify and confirm three upcoming Anchor Events as listed in items i. – iii.

- Mayor Nocera made a motion to accept the dates as listed for declaring the city's Anchor Events; seconded by M. Pelton, First Selectman. No further discussion, matter passes unanimously with no abstentions.

- (i) 3-27-26 Kick Off -Flag Raising

- (ii) 6-27-2026 Fireworks

- (iii) 7-4-2026 250th All county Parade

ii. Other

D. Shapiro noted for the record Discovering Amistad has settled on the first week of October for arrival. Additionally, the Historical Society is considering hosting a small scale Middle Passage Ceremony.

6) Adjournment

K. Michael entertained a motion to adjourn brought to the floor by Mayor Nocera, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell, matter passes unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kisha McWilliams Michael, Chair
Arts & Culture Coordinator

Attachments:

- [draft Committee meeting schedule](#)
- [Mayor's Appointments 03-Feb-26](#)
- [America 250 Master Plan for the City of Middletown](#)