



Township of Montclair 205 Claremont Avenue Montclair, NJ



Civil Rights Commission
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MINUTES OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
7/17/2025

ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 1902 by Madeline Gale. Ravi Srinivasan, Chair, had arranged with Matthew Amaral, Township Communications Director, to have posted on the Township website.

Roll Call:

Commissioners-Attended :	Commissioners- Not in Attendance	<i>Other Parties in Attendance:</i>
Gale, Madeline	Jennifer Otero (resigned from CRC (Civil Rights Commission) Aug 24 2025)	
Spence, Reubena	Ravi Srinivasan	
Campbell, Nelson (called in).	Kevin Pierre	
Leonore Dickerson (called in)	Kevin Allen	
Leslie Brown, Treasurer	Matilda Carvajal	
Bouknight, Yvonne (Ed Designee)	Matthew Frankel	
Mayor Renee Baskerville (Township Council Liaison)	Sol Demefack (HS Liaison)	
Joni Cohen		

Per Township website: There are 3 generic open vacancies / appointments for the CRC, now increasing to 4 with Jennifer Otero's resignation. The MSU appointee position is also open, and the high school representative needs to be renewed as of Jun 2025.



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Meeting notice was provided on [Meeting Dates Township of Montclair, NJ \(montclairnjusa.org\)](https://montclairnjusa.org) as well as filed with the Township Clerk. Civil Rights Commission activities also listed in Montclair Local (Internet only news site) with link to Township site for meeting dates: [Montclair Civil Rights Commission: Come Be Part of Change - Montclair Local](#).

- 1) Leslie reported on Mr. Harris's questions regarding affirmative action:
 - A) The report was read on race, gender and titles of all employees from July 1, 2025.
 - B) Leslie will invite Ms. Dawkins to present a formal presentation at our September CRC meeting.
 - C) The last report was the EEOC from 2023.
 - D) We will discuss more regarding Mr. Harris' questions at our next CRC meeting. We will write to Mr. Harris to inform him of the necessary status of his inquiry. It was noted that Ms. Dawkins did not have a background in Affirmative Action.
- 2) Mayor Baskerville will be meeting with Ruth Turner, the new Superintendent of Montclair schools. We will be requesting Ms. Turner to attend a future CRC meeting.
- 3) Marcia Almeida, the Chair of the Montclair Department of Recreation and Cultural Affairs Advisory Board, was our special guest at the July CRC meeting tonight.
 - A) The Mayor announced that under Councilperson Toler, a separate committee will meet on July 22 called the Cultural Arts Committee. Jeremy P, Greg P, and others are planning to be on it. Previously there was an Arts Advisory Board that was abolished.
- 4) Reubena is waiting to hear back from Matt Amaral to receive a clearer logo for the CRC business cards.
- 5) Mayor Baskerville met with Lani and Josh from the MJCRC. They recommended training on anti semitism. Please check the name of said training. Regarding Anti-Bias trainings for the Board of Education, Title 6 indicates that such trainings are required. Eileen Gilbert will meet with the mayor to discuss these trainings further.
- 6) Marcia Almeida continued to discuss her Advisory board and answered questions from the CRC.

A-Leslie Brown asked if federal cuts have impacted the programs. State and local taxpayer dollars have paid for local programming, so these trainings should not be affected.



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B-Marcia mentioned that the Montclair Recreation Website that Montclair residents can access pools and swim for free as exercise supports public health.

C-Summer camp is available for families who are low income and no family has ever been denied due to a lack of funds.

D-Languages currently being spoken in Montclair include French, Portuguese, Turkish, Spanish and Creole. There are also 4 Spanish speaking employees in district. Google translate is being used to help communicate with Spanish speaking families. The school system translates documents into all 5 languages. Parks and Recreation translates Spanish at this time. The CRC has asked about data for how many students speak other languages, and what the state requirements surrounding translation are.

E-Online applications are user friendly for undocumented residents.

F-Count for the unhoused population in Montclair is approximately 20 but rising.

G-Marcia reported that 2 parks do not have bathrooms due to safety concerns.

H-Disparities between Upper Montclair and South end discussed.

7) The 30 year program to assist with substance abuse issues that was originally managed by the Montclair Intervention Alliance has been cancelled as it cost \$100,000-funds which had previously been provided by the state (from fines drug dealers paid). Project graduation also began with the Montclair Intervention Alliance, to give students a positive way to celebrate and avoid the use of drugs and alcohol. First Night was created for a similar purpose for New Year's Eve.

8) Discussion regarding using AI to record CRC meetings/take minutes.

9) Discussion regarding Montclair Communication Commission and CRC.

Currently Rahum Williams, Eric D'Amato, Mayor Renee Baskerville, and Matthew Frankel have worked on this.

10) MS. Bouknight explained the investigative process of HIB (Harrassment, Intimidation, and Bullying). Details pertaining to protocols for parents, teachers, students and HIB specialists were discussed.