



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, August 11th, 2025
5:00pm – 7:00pm
Regular Meeting

Simpkins Family Swim Center
Community Rooms
979 17th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Introductory Items

1. **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL** Meeting called to order by Chair Konevich at 5:05PM.

Present: Alexis Konevich (District 1), Nick de Sieyes (District 2), Jeremy Sanford (District 3), Elizabeth Hernandez (District 4)

Vacant: District 5

Staff: Jeff Gaffney, Rebecca Hurley, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha

2. **AGENDA MODIFICATIONS** No modifications.
3. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** 5 members of the public.

Lynn Dunn: Expressed concerns regarding ADA compliance at the Live Oak Library Annex and provided an update on related discussions with County staff.

Carolyn Nelson: Shared concerns about the condition of hiking trails at Anna Jean Cummings Park.

Jean Brocklebank: Thanked County staff for their work on the meeting minutes. Requested the return of trash bins near the porta potty at Corcoran Lagoon that were previously located there. Suggested that the Commission ask the Board of Supervisors for assistance in enforcing off-leash dog regulations at Corcoran Lagoon Beach. Noted that the Friends of Corcoran Lagoon Beach are willing to help fund new signage in the area.

Michael Lewis: Thanked staff for refurbishing the volleyball court at José Avenue Park and encouraged increased community outreach to promote its use.

Vivian Fenner-Evans: Thanked staff for promptly addressing a safety concern at Anna Jean Cummings Park near the top of the slide. Requested Parks staff support in reopening a trail at Anna Jean Cummings Park that has been closed due to overgrown invasive species.

4. **ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA** (items 9-10)

Motion to approve: Sanford/2nd: Hernandez/**All in favor.**

Regular Agenda

5. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

District 1: Welcomed attendees from District 1. Expressed concern regarding the bridge at Farm Park and hopes for a resolution soon. Noted several upcoming volunteer opportunities in the district and looks forward to participating alongside community members.

District 2: Reported on a recent tour with Supervisor De Serpa and Parks staff, which provided a valuable opportunity to become more familiar with local parks.

District 3: Commended progress on the North Coast, noting it addresses one of the primary concerns raised by residents. Thanked Parks staff for their maintenance work at Anna Jean Cummings Park.

District 4: Highlighted the ribbon-cutting event at Valle del Pajaro County Park, noting it was a great opportunity to learn about the area's history and engage with local residents.

District 5: Vacant.

6. PARKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Jeff Gaffney thanked members of the public for their feedback and updates on park issues. He reported that the Natural Resource Management Plan, developed in partnership with the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, is underway, and decisions at Anna Jean Cummings Park will be guided by this plan. Invasive species removal may take additional time due to staff turnover and the absence of an AmeriCorps team this year.

He also shared that County Parks has resumed operations at Greyhound Rock and is working with the Sheriff's Office on a lease agreement in Davenport to establish a North County service center. Efforts are ongoing to improve water quality at Pinto Lake, enhance access to the Miller Property, and continue progress on the Pace Trail with volunteer support. Work also continues at Moran Lake County Park. Valle del Pajaro County Park is now open, and its master planning process will begin later this year, expected to take 18 months to two years. He also highlighted numerous community events happening throughout the County.

7. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Partnership Wins in Action – County Park Friends.

Mariah Roberts, Executive Director, shared that the success of their nonprofit is integrated with the success of the County Parks Department. In developing their own strategic plan, they began with County Park's Strategic Plan. She presented on the four pillars of their strategic plan, the work their organization does and how the partnership with County Parks leads to success within both organizations and more opportunities for members of the community.

Commissioner Comments

Vice-Chair Sanford and **Chair Konevich** *congratulated Mariah on the success of County Park Friends and thanked her for the presentation and information on how the commission can support their organization.*

Public Comments

Can CPF or maintenance support with repairs of the playground equipment at Leo's Haven? Mariah addressed that she cannot speak on behalf of County Parks, but this issue raises the importance of having financial support beyond the capital campaigns to maintain the parks. This is an issue that County Parks Friends is actively working through.

- b. Countywide Trails Update & Plan – Rob Tidmore, Parks Principle Planner.

Robert Tidmore, Parks Principal Planner, presented the results of the *State of the Trails Report*. The report examined the existing trail network in Santa Cruz County, the western portion of San Mateo County, and part of Santa Clara County. It was developed through a collaborative effort among the Santa Cruz Mountain Stewardship Network (SCMSN), California State Parks, Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen), and County Parks departments from Santa Cruz, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties.

Commissioner Comments

- **Vice-Chair Sanford:** Asked if there are trails that can be identified as having connections to local Indigenous tribes and whether there are opportunities to highlight that history. Staff responded that the Amah Mutsun Land Trust is part of the SCMSN and has participated in many meetings. Although they were not heavily involved in this specific study, there is an opportunity to collaborate with them in the future.
- **Commissioner de Sieyes:** Asked who decided to weigh the four factors equally in the report. Staff explained that this decision was made by the Technical Advisory Group.

Public Comment

- A question was raised about whether the report is available online. Staff explained it is not publicly available due to confidential information contained within the report.
- One member of the public suggested establishing priorities for different properties based on their level of use.
- Another member of the public asked whether the report considered trail difficulty in terms of equity in usage. Staff responded that while data availability varies among counties, trail user feedback indicated a strong interest in identifying trail difficulty levels.
- Mariah Roberts noted that identifying trail difficulties could support programs such as *ParksRX*. Commissioner de Sieyes added that the *AllTrails* platform is another valuable resource for accessing trail information, including difficulty levels and other data.

c. Update on Moran Tree Work.

Rob Tidmore, Parks Principal Planner, and Rebecca Hurley, Deputy Director, provided an update on ongoing tree work at Moran Lake County Park. Due to the presence of nesting birds, work began at the 40 Moran Way parcel, where all trees have been removed. County Parks is developing a restoration plan for the site. Tree work along the trail will include pruning to reduce the risk of tree failure. All work is being conducted in consultation with the County's consulting arborist.

Public Comment

- Questions were raised about maintenance of the newly planted trees to ensure their survival. Staff noted that the trees are being watered and monitored. The species were selected based on recommendations from a biologist and arborist; however, some species have not thrived under current conditions, and alternative species may be considered for future plantings.
- A member of the public asked whether there is enough time before butterfly season to complete additional trimming. Staff confirmed that there is. A question was also raised about updates to the Placer Street plan—staff reported there is no new information at this time and that work will proceed when funding becomes available.
- Several members of the public expressed concern regarding the planned regrading of the 40 Moran Way parcel and the tree trimming that occurred along the trail.

8. SUBCOMMITTEE ORAL REPORTS

a. Parks and Recreation Commission 2024-25 Work Plan.

Updates noted on page 5 of the meeting minutes.

Consent Agenda

Consent items include routine business that does not call for discussion. One roll call vote is taken for all items. Only a Commissioner may pull items from Consent to Regular Agenda. Members of the public must request that a Commissioner pull an item from the Consent Agenda prior to the start of the meeting.

9. **Approve minutes from May 12th, 2025.**..... page 3.
10. **Consider Reports:**
- a. Aquatics Section Report..... page 7.
 - b. Arts and Cultural Services Report..... page 9.
 - c. Maintenance Section Report..... page 11.
 - d. Planning Section Report..... page 13.
 - e. Recreation Section Report..... page 17.
 - f. Reservations Section Report..... page 19.
 - g. Volunteer Section Report..... page 20.

Written Correspondence Listing

- I. None.

Adjournment Motion to adjourn at 6:56 PM: Sanford/**2nd**: de Sieyes/**All in favor**.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

5:00 PM *Tuesday*, October 14th, 2025

Simpkins Family Swim Center Community Rooms.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION WORK PLAN 2024/25						
#	Stated Goal	Members Involved	Timeline	Fiscal Impact*	Projected Outcomes	Update #7 08.11.2025
COMMUNITY OUTREACH						
1	Attend County sponsored events, serving as County ambassadors by welcoming, meeting and greeting the public, and serving in a volunteer capacity conducting various event duties as needed.	All	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Commissioners engage and interact with citizens while remaining aware of current trends in the public use of parks, beaches, trails, recreation programming, and special events. Create outreach to the public, educating them on what the Parks & Recreation Commission does, how to engage with the Commission and local government, programs the County offers, and spaces & places to recreate. Each Commissioner participates in a minimum 2 events.	de Sieyes - Went out to the location in Aptos village, where members of the community are discussing the potential of a parcel being donated to County Parks. Beginning conversation. Hernandez - Attended the Valle del Pajaro County Park grand opening. Spoke to neighbors, heard their concerns and connected them with resources that could address the concerns. Konevich - Plans to attend some volunteer events in the fall.
2	Connect with local City and County Commissions to better understand collaboration opportunities.	All	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Attend meetings of area commissions, create connection with members. Better understand efforts of area commissions generating ideas for future Santa Cruz County Parks & Recreation goals and determining opportunities for collaboration where synergy exists.	No update provided.
3	Identify and schedule guest speakers for Parks & Recreation Commission meetings, as appropriate.	All	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Commissioners gain awareness and understanding of topics relevant to goals outlined in this Commission Work Plan and other topics of interest.	Konevich - Reached out to Mariah Roberts to have County Park Friends regularly attend meetings and provide commission with updates on their activities/programs.
GREAT FACILITIES						
4	Research community needs related to facility use, development, and programming.	de Sieyes, Sanford	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Generate a better understanding of community interests and needs related to facilities and programming. Identify related core and stretch objectives. Provide findings to Parks & Recreation department for consideration and planning.	Sanford - Heard from some constituents that limited field usage in the winter creates an impedement in growing their sports programs. de Sieyes - Has heard some excitement from constituents on the modification to the County's reservation systems. There is a hope that other organizations will follow in suit and modernize their systems.
EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP						
5	Examine climate resiliency efforts and advise Park & Recreation department of best practices.	Hernandez	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Gain awareness and understanding of topics relevant to climate resiliency through research and connection with local organizations. Identify gaps in climate resiliency efforts/education and advice Parks & Recreation department of best practices.	No update provided.
6	Identify best practices for sustainability and advise Park & Recreation department of findings.	Konevich, de Sieyes	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Commissioners examine current sustainability efforts within the County and explore additional best practices in all areas of sustainability. Areas of exploration could include, but are not limited to those outlined in the Strategic Plan 5-year Update such as balancing recreation and conservation, restoration or enhancement, water conservation, nature programming, interpretive signage, community partnerships, etc. Provide recommendations on best practices, potential partnerships, and community outreach opportunities to Parks & Recreation department.	No update provided.
SPECIAL PROJECT(S)						
7	Explore Best Practices for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) related to Parks & Recreation	Konevich, Hernandez	April 2024 - December 2025	No Impact	Explore DEI best practices and make recommendations for greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in all areas of parks & recreation including, but not limited to, those outlined in the Strategic Plan 5-year Update such as signage, health and well-being, park accessibility, recreation programming, and collaboration with non-profit groups.	Hernandez - While networking with CPFand Young Outdoor Leaders at the ribbon cutting, some of the group expressed wanting to create a plaque that discusses the history of the land.
ADVISE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS -- NOTE:						
	2024/25 Parks and Recreation Commission Work Plan Outcomes to be submitted in the Biennial Report	Chair	On or before January 31, 2025		Board of Supervisors is advised of past year work plan outcomes in Biennial Report.	
	2025/26 Parks and Recreation Commission Proposed Work Plan/Goals to be submitted in the Biennial Report	Chair	On or before January 31, 2025		Board of Supervisors reviews proposed work plan goals and intended outcomes in Biennial Report.	