



Santa Cruz County Measure Q Citizens Oversight Advisory Board



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MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 30th, 2025
5:30pm – 7:30pm
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 at 5:31PM.

Present: Julieann “Julie” Howard (District 1), Dennis Webb (District 2), Sandy Brown (District 3), Julissa Espindola (District 4), Mark Correia (District 5), Scott Harway (City of Capitola), Rachel Dann (City of Santa Cruz), David Sanguinetti (City of Scotts Valley), Celeste DeWald (City of Watsonville)

Staff: Elissa Benson (ACEO), Jeff Gaffney (Director – Parks), Rebecca Hurley (Deputy Director – Parks), Dave Reid (Director – OR3), Juan Perez Alvarez (ASM – Parks), Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha (Admin Aide/COAB Liaison – Parks)

2. **AGENDA MODIFICATIONS** No modifications.
3. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** No oral communications.
4. **ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA** (item 9)

Motion to approve the consent agenda: Brown/**2nd**: Howard/All in favor.

Regular Agenda

Information Items

5. **Presentation by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County**..... page 3.

Sarah Newkirk, Executive Director, and Eric Lombardo, External Affairs Director, of the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County presented information on their organization. They spoke about the pillars, goals, and some projects that the organization is currently working on. As well as how Measure Q funds through the Land Stewardship Implementation Partnership could benefit projects that directly impact and connect the public to open land.

- *Commissioner Brown thanked the Land Trust for the presentation and looks forward to continued work and partnership with the organization.*
- *Vice-Chair Espindola asked for clarification on which trails dogs were allowed on. Byrne-Milliron Forest, Glenwood and some of San Vicente Redwoods.*

6. **Introduction of the Measure Q Literature Review Synthesis**..... page 4-23.

Director Reid introduced the item and led discussion. The intent of the item was to bring attention to foundational elements and processes in creating the vision plan with the consultant. Highlighted Section 4.65.060 of Santa Cruz County Code. In collaboration with the consultant, synthesized 19 different County, State and local plans using AI technology to digest and identify thematic areas across the plans. The synthesis will be used to guide the development of the Vision Plan.

- *Chair Dann commented on the use of AI and its success in creating the synthesis. She also expressed support in continuing to use the technology to support the Act language of using existing plans to guide the development of the Vision Plan.*
- Commissioner Howard: *Do you envision the Vision Plan having a priority project list?* At this point, Staff would like to keep the Vision Plan at a high enough level that talks broadly about thematic areas of focus, geographies of focus, and project types, rather than specific projects. Since it is a 5-year plan, the plan should have latitude to work on projects as they come up.
- Commissioner Correia: *Does the library section of the Measure Q website have all the plan documents?* At this point, some, but not all are linked on the website. Staff can work on getting as many as possible added to the website. Currently, you can find the Crosstab Synthesis and Crosstab Summary in the library section. *As documents are revised, how does that play into the Vision Plan once it is adopted?* We will try to integrate, but for the first five-years, the Vision Plan should be broad enough and cover the thematic areas.

Action Items

7. Accept the Vision Plan adoption timeline and approve potential additional COAB meeting date of June 18, 2025..... pages 24-27.

Director Reid reviewed the Vision Plan adoption timeline and discussed some of the deadlines (drafts, stakeholder meetings, etc.). The stakeholder meetings will be kicked off next week on May 9th. County Staff is working with Placeworks to move as quickly as possible while creating trust with the public through engagement in the development of the plan. The purpose of the additional June 18th meeting would be to review the Vision Plan Annotated Outline.

Rob Tidmore, Parks Principal Planner, addressed that there were discussions internally about pushing the July 1st deadline. After considering the public's feelings on past Measures, it was deemed necessary to take the extra time to properly engage the public and stakeholders in the development of the Vision Plan.

Several commissioners asked questions:

- *When the act is not requiring public meetings – and the plans being used to help develop have already gone through a lengthy development process with public feedback and the COAB has meetings open to the public – can we shorten the timeline?*
- *If the timeline was to be condensed, how successful do you think the Vision Plan would be?* County staff and Placeworks are trying to run as many things concurrently as possible, to be mindful of timing. Stakeholder groups are critical pieces to get perspectives of the identified thematic areas, from groups that were originally not included in plan developments. Conversations were had about how many stakeholder meetings to hold, and the amount was decided with the intent to include North, Mid and South Santa Cruz County feedback.

- *When will Measure Q funds become available? Can agencies begin planning without the Vision Plan?* Measure Q property tax will appear in December 2025; funds won't be available to grants immediately but will go to funded entities. Spending is encouraged to align with the Vision Plan, although not mandated by Measure Q.
- *Do you have confidence Placeworks will get this done by October?* Yes, there are 3 project managers to keep the project on time. County staff got them onboard with the most aggressive timeline they can accomplish.
- *What is the difference between a Preliminary Vision Plan Outline and a Vision Plan Annotated Outline?* Try to synthesize the feedback from the stakeholders and will likely circulate a draft for feedback, but most of the work/revisions will be County staff and COAB.
- *Were there conversations with the people that will be implementing the money about the extended timeline? Can they begin planning without having the Vision Plan?* From the County's perspective, the money should not be spent without the Vision Plan. Encourage the entities to spend in accordance with the Vision Plan, although this is not required from the Measure Q language.
- *Where can the stakeholder survey link be found? Can the stakeholder list be reviewed for additions?* The stakeholder survey was recently sent out and can be shared with commissioners for review, along with the stakeholder list. The community survey is not yet available.

Commissioner **concerns** about extended timeline/support for **shorter** timeline:

- Build trust through action, not just engagement.
- Avoid the risk of a “domino effect” where other milestones are also pushed back.
- Could create public perception of inefficiency.
- Timeline already feels long—consider condensing meetings instead.

Commissioner support for the **extended** timeline:

- Allows for deeper, more inclusive stakeholder engagement.
- Helps avoid the risk of rushing and excluding key communities (e.g., South County).
- Builds stronger public trust through transparency and inclusion.
- Enables thorough and meaningful public feedback integration.
- Provides time to differentiate and focus both on broad outreach and targeted input.
- Shortening and then missing a new deadline would be worse.

Motion to accept Vision Plan adoption timeline and additional meeting date: Correira/**2nd**: Espindola/All in favor

- 8. Approve the amended Measure Q Citizens Oversight Advisory Board (COAB) Bylaws for submission and final approval by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors.....** pages 28-43.

Director Gaffney briefly reviewed the changes made to the bylaws.

Motion to approve the COAB Bylaws for submission to the Board of Supervisors: Brown/**2nd**: Sanguinetti/All in favor.

Consent Agenda

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

9. **Approve minutes from April 16th, 2025**..... pages 44-49.

Written Correspondence Listing

- I. None

Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 6:47PM.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

5:30 PM Wednesday, May 21st, 2025

*Live Oak Library Annex – **Active Learning Room***

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