



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD/TTY: call 711

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 12th, 2026
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 Vice-Chair Sanford at 5:10 PM.
Present: Nick de Sienes (District 2), Jeremy Sanford (District 3), Elizabeth Hernandez (District 4)
Absent/Excused: Alexis Konevich (District 1) & Anne Less (District 5)
Staff: Jeff Gaffney, Juan Perez Alvarez, Alexis Rodriguez-Rocha
- 2. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS** – No modifications.
- 3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** – 2 members of the public.
- 4. ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA** (item 8)
Approved consent agenda – Motion/Second: de Sienes/Hernandez
AYES: 3
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
ABSENT: 2

Regular Agenda

5. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

District 1: Absent.

District 2: Commissioner de Sienes reported that he has been identifying new ways to measure the value County Parks provide by looking at the impact of nonprofits that use park facilities. Using Aptos Soccer Club as an example, he shared that the club's 10-week fall season serves approximately 425 youth and generates about 9,000 child activity hours on County fields. He noted that collecting similar data from other groups could help demonstrate the community's return on investment and reinforce the importance of maintaining park facilities.

District 3: While not a County Parks matter, Vice-Chair Sanford reported on an issue that falls within District 3 and asked for County Parks support in addressing the issue. Over the holiday break, a shooting occurred at Cotoni Coast Dairies in which no one was injured, though a bullet reportedly passed near a jogger's head, causing significant public concern. It was noted that there may be confusion about the land's designation and permitted uses (National Monument vs. BLM land), including among local agencies. The incident sparked conversation regarding the need for clearer communication and improved signage, as none is currently in place.

District 4: Commissioner Hernandez reported spending time at Valle Del Pajaro County Park and noted that access remains challenging due to flooding and deteriorating road conditions. The road is often closed, limiting access for neighbors and requiring detours to an alternate entrance. She also observed that some visitors stop to use the restrooms but do not otherwise utilize the park's amenities. She is working to raise awareness of the park and build connections and partnerships to encourage greater community use of the facilities.

District 5: Absent.

6. PARKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Gaffney reported that recent storms caused only minor impacts, with a few downed trees that were promptly cleared and no property damage. Parks facilities remained busy with strong participation in events and activities. Most staff have returned from holiday leave, though some response delays may continue. The Governor's January 10 budget proposal was better than expected; while Health and Human Services may see the greatest impacts, the overall outlook is more positive for the upcoming fiscal year.

7. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Approved Parks & Recreation Commission 2024-25 Biennial Report with the addition of the four goals and subgoals proposed by the subcommittee – Motion/Second: Hernandez/de Sieyes
AYES: 3
NOES: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
ABSENT: 2

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.

- 8. Approve minutes from December 8th, 2025..... page 6.**

Written Correspondence Listing

- I. [Email from Amber Jones – Follow Up for the Half Basketball Court at Floral Park.](#)
- II. [Email from Jean Jani – December 8th meeting/discussion for proposed 38th Avenue park design.](#)
- III. [Email from Derek Draper – Next Phase for Floral Park.](#)
- IV. [Email from Jeremy Silveira – Santa Cruz County Outdoor Hockey Rink – Funding & Feasibility Inquiry.](#)

Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 5:51 PM.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

5:00 PM Monday, February 9th, 2026

Simpkins Family Swim Center Community Rooms