

**CONEJO OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**September 9, 2020
Via Videoconference/Teleconference**

SUMMARY MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE:

Chair Skei called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Flag Salute in the Board Room, 2100 Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Thousand Oaks, California.

2. ROLL CALL:

Director Nickles and Chair Skei present. Vice Chair Director Bill-de la Peña and Directors Huffer and Jones were present via videoconference.

Also present were: Assistant City Attorney Liberman, COSCA Administrator Stark, IT Supervisor Beltchev, Office Supervisor McMurtry, and Recording Secretary Goor; with the following present via videoconference: CRPD General Manager Friedl, Deputy City Manager Rogers, CRPD Park Superintendent Kouba, and COSCA Analyst Huber.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Speakers/Written Statements: None.

4. PRESENTATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A. None

5. CONSENT CALENDAR:

A. Approval of Minutes of June 24, 2020 Meeting

Director Nickles suggested adding 'County' to the last sentence for Item 6A (page 2) so that it would read, 'Ventura County Wildfire Protection Plan'.

Motion by Director Nickles to approve the Consent Calendar item as follows: Minutes of the June 24, 2020 Meeting with the correction, carried 5-0 by the following vote: Ayes – Bill-de la Peña, Huffer, Jones, Nickles, and Skei; Noes – None; Absent – None.

6. **ACTION ITEMS:**

- A. COSCA Administrator Stark presented a report on Authorization to Accept 83 Open Space Parcels (92.04 acres) from the City of Thousand Oaks. He reviewed the background of such acquisitions and provided additional information on these properties in the Skyline and South Ranch areas. Mr. Stark clarified that the top (north) section of the Vallecito parcel was left off the staff report exhibit but was included in the staff report table and the final acreage tally. He responded to Directors' questions noting COSCA has already been managing these areas as open space, and questions regarding future lot mergers/consolidation projects.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Motion by Director Jones to accept the parcels (to authorize the Board Secretary to accept the transfer of 83 open space parcels totaling 92.04 acres as described in Table 1 of the staff report from the City of Thousand Oaks to COSCA for management as open space, and authorize staff to record the transfer deeds). carried 5-0 by the following vote: Ayes – Bill de la Peña, Huffer, Jones, Nickles, and Skei; Noes – None; Absent – None.

- B. COSCA Analyst Huber presented a report on Authorization to Accept 10' Wide Multi-Purpose Trail Easement to Provide Access into the Glider Hill Open Space Area. Ms. Huber noted the easement is at 612 Lone Oak Drive. Two of five easements necessary to complete the trail have already been granted. She responded to Directors' questions regarding access from Erbes Road, other easements in the works, conditions on the project, and the placement of the home on the lot.

Vice Chair Bill-de la Peña left the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Motion by Director Huffer to approve staff recommendation (to authorize Board Secretary to accept multi-purpose trail easement at 612 Lone Oak Drive (APN 671-0-300-010), from the Jonathan and Sonja Friedman Trust). carried 4-0 by the following vote: Ayes – Huffer, Jones, Nickles, and Skei; Noes – None; Absent – Bill-de la Peña.

- C. COSCA Administrator Stark presented a report on Approval of Appropriation of SCE Funds for Community Outreach Improvements. He discussed updates to the COSCA website, brochures, fire safety outreach, and the possibility of a multi-agency and regionally-branded smart phone app and responded to Directors' questions. Chair Skei suggested the app include information on trail parameters such as ease of use and which trails are open.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Vice Chair Bill-de la Peña rejoined the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Motion by Director Nickles to approve staff recommendation to authorize staff to expend up to \$30,000 of funds from the Woolsey Fire Settlement to improve COSCA's community outreach programs (and infrastructure including updates and improvements to COSCA's website, organizational brochures, and signage in priority areas), carried 5-0 the following vote: Ayes – Bill-de la Peña, Huffer, Jones, Nickles, and Skei; Noes – None; Absent – None.

7. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- A. COSCA Administrator Stark provided an update on COVID-19 including trail re-openings, safety protocols, reduced field staff availability, and cancellation of large organized group activities. Mr. Stark noted an increase in trash and rescues, and less consideration for neighbors has occurred with the increase in inexperienced visitors.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Verbal Report provided.

- B. COSCA Administrator Stark provided a COSCA Fire Safety Program Update. Mr. Stark reviewed efforts to reduce fire risk and what neighbors can do to protect their homes in the defensible space buffer. He noted COSCA partners with other agencies for fuel modification on public lands and commented on wind transmission of embers, and brush clearance and the frequent colonization of those areas by more flammable non-native vegetation that can occur when native vegetation is removed. In response to Directors' questions, he stated he could provide a map of where fuel modification is performed on open space. Chair Skei added information will be available on sustainable defensible landscaping on www.defensiblespace.org from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and other agencies.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Verbal Report provided.

- C. COSCA Analyst Huber provided an update on COSCA Volunteer Corps Activity including Trail Watch with 166 reports and 292 volunteer hours, and Adopt-A-Trail with 78 reports and 185 volunteer hours donated.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Verbal Report provided.

- D. CRPD Park Superintendent Kouba provided an update on Ranger Operations and Maintenance Activities including rescues this past week and trail closures due to draw-down of emergency resources through Sunday. Other issues included further tree loss in the Los Robles open space area with only a few oak trees left along the Whole Access Trail, the rangers' removal of graffiti with earth-toned paint, and COVID-19 response which has stretched staff very thin with over 600 full time equivalent ranger hours spent. Mr. Kouba responded to Directors' questions regarding what events would require closing of open space.

Deputy City Manager Rogers commended the efforts of the Rangers, CRPD, Mr. Kouba, Mr. Friedl, Mr. Stark, Ms. Huber, and City Communications Manager South for their dedication and work in relation to advocating for open space during these challenging times.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Verbal Report provided.

8. **COSCA UPDATES** (CRPD General Manager and/or City Manager):

- A. Follow-up items, announcements, and upcoming issues

CRPD General Manager Friedl stated despite COVID-19 challenges, parks remain open; community centers are closed to drop-in use but remain open to assist schools as support centers for children within COVID-19 protocols. CRPD has also partnered with the Chamber of Commerce for Dinner In The Park which can be taken home or eaten in the park with information on the Chamber's website.

9. **BOARDMEMBER COMMENTS:**

Director Huffer presented a photo of sunrise over Santa Rosa Trail.

10. **ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m. to Regular Meeting on Wednesday, November 18, 2020.



Rorie Skei, Chairperson