

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

**December 10, 2025  
Civic Arts Plaza Board Room  
2100 East Thousand Oaks Boulevard**

**SUMMARY MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE:**

Chair Huffer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Flag Salute.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Director Engler, Director Nickles, Director Sullivan, Vice Chair Newman, and Chair Huffer were present.

Also present were: Assistant City Manager Alikhan, Assistant Attorney Brick, Assistant Attorney Koo, CRPD Park Superintendent Belavic, COSCA Administrator Stark, COSCA Analyst Huber, Senior Recording Secretary Goor, and via Zoom was Records Management Specialist Cyr.

**3. PRESENTATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**5. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

A. Approval of Minutes of September 17, 2025 Meeting

B. Approval of Minutes of October 29, 2025 Special Meeting

Motion by Director Newman to approve the Minutes of the September 17, 2025 meeting, and the October 29, 2025 Special Meeting, carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Newman, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Huffer; Noes – None; Abstain – None; Absent – None.

**6. ACTION ITEMS:**

A. Approval of Funding Appropriation for Palm Tree Removal in a Defensible Space Zone

- i. Find that this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under California Code of Regulations title 14, sections 15304(i) [Minor Alterations to Land - fuel management activities within 100 feet of a structure] and 15061(b)(3) [common sense], and under Public Resource Code section 21080.49(c) [wildfire risk reduction projects].

- ii. Approve an appropriation of \$22,750 from the Woolsey Fire Recovery Fund allocation for the Vegetation Fuel Management Reserve for the removal of 23 Mexican Fan Palms from an existing COSCA weed abatement zone.
- iii. Authorize COSCA's Co-Chief Administrative Officers or their designee to utilize the appropriation for the removal of the Mexican Fan Palms by either directly entering into a service agreement in a form approved by the COSCA attorney or by reimbursing a Partner Agency for including the removal of the Palms from the COSCA weed abatement zone in the scope of work under the Partner Agency's weed abatement contract.

COSCA Administrator Stark reported there are 23 Mexican Fan Palms on COSCA property between Avenida de los Arboles and Avenida de las Flores that are situated within the 100-foot defensible space zone for a group of homes on the south side of Avenida de los Arboles. As COSCA's long-term goal is to remove, rather than maintain, that type of tree, the proposal is to allocate Woolsey Fire Recovery Funds for Vegetation Fuel Management Reserve for their removal.

COSCA Administrator Stark responded to Director questions regarding debris haul-away, that the work will be done outside of nesting season, and applications for federal funds to cover the cost of palm removals.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Motion by Director Engler to approve staff recommendation (to find that this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under California Code of Regulations title 14, sections 15304(i) [Minor Alterations to Land - fuel management activities within 100 feet of a structure] and 15061(b)(3) [common sense], and under Public Resource Code section 21080.49(c) [wildfire risk reduction projects]; approve an appropriation of \$22,750 from the Woolsey Fire Recovery Fund allocation for the Vegetation Fuel Management Reserve for the removal of 23 Mexican Fan Palms from an existing COSCA weed abatement zone; and authorize COSCA's Co-Chief Administrative Officers or their designee to utilize the appropriation for the removal of the Mexican Fan Palms by either directly entering into a service agreement in a form approved by the COSCA attorney or by reimbursing a Partner Agency for including the removal of the Palms from the COSCA weed abatement zone in the scope of work under the Partner Agency's weed abatement contract); carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Newman, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Huffer; Noes – None; Absent – None.

- B. Approval of Parking Agreement with Ventura County Parks Department at Santa Rosa Valley Park / Hill Canyon Trailhead
- i. Find that this item is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act.
  - ii. Authorize COSCA's Co-Chief Administrative Officers or their designee to execute a 5-year agreement between COSCA and the Ventura County Parks Department to extend free parking at Santa Rosa Valley Park to support access to the Hill Canyon Trailhead, in a form approved by the COSCA attorney.

COSCA Administrator Stark presented the report noting in response to parking capacity issues at the Avenida de los Arboles entrance to Wildwood, COSCA has promoted parking at the Hill Canyon Trailhead. The 5-year agreement would extend free parking at Santa Rosa Valley Park to support access to the Hill Canyon Trailhead via a new agreement with a continuation of the fee schedule established in the original agreement.

COSCA Administrator Stark responded to Director questions about directing park users to the parking lot at Hill Canyon via the Wildwood Park address, with the acknowledgement we can't control Google's mapping system. He also responded as to whether funds from voluntary donation boxes or QR codes at parking areas would outweigh the cost of installing donation boxes and collecting donations. COSCA Analyst Huber added that COSF has expressed interest in utilizing QR codes for donations at trailheads.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Motion by Director Newman to approve staff recommendation (to find that this item is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act; and authorize COSCA's Co-Chief Administrative Officers or their designee to execute a 5-year agreement between COSCA and the Ventura County Parks Department to extend free parking at Santa Rosa Valley Park to support access to the Hill Canyon Trailhead, in a form approved by the COSCA attorney); carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Newman, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Huffer; Noes – None; Absent – None.

7. **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

- A. Establish the 2026 Meeting Dates for Regular Meetings of the COSCA Board of Directors
- i. Find that this action is not a project as defined under the California Environmental Quality Act.
  - ii. Establish the 2026 meeting dates for regular meetings of the COSCA Board of Directors pursuant to Resolution 2023-02.

The written report was received and filed. For the record, 2026 meetings shall be February 18<sup>th</sup>, May 20<sup>th</sup>, September 16<sup>th</sup>, and November 18<sup>th</sup>.

**B. COSCA Volunteer Corps Activity**

- i. Find that this action is not a project as defined under the California Environmental Quality Act.
- ii. Receive and file COSCA Volunteer Corps Activity report.

The written report was received and filed and indicates that from September through November, Trail Watch had 60 reports and 84.5 hours donated; Adopt-A-Trail had 119 reports and 218.5 hours donated. The Trail Work Program helped Rangers with trail maintenance on Los Robles West trail, drainage maintenance and improvements on the Oakbrook Vista trail, and trail and drainage improvements on sanctioned trails and native species planting adjacent to Dos Vientos Community Park.

**C. Ranger Operations and Maintenance Activities (verbal report)**

- i. Find that this action is not a project as defined under the California Environmental Quality Act.
- ii. Receive verbal report.

The verbal report was received with CRPD Park Superintendent Belavic presenting a PowerPoint. He noted that the Ranger Unit is fully staffed with the recent hiring of Brittany Schiefer. Other items he shared included: Ranger Keenan worked on Nature Center restroom repairs, and the Janss fire, a small two-acre vegetation fire in the Los Robles area with Rangers closing trails, leading fire investigators in, assisting in closing firelines and keeping non-native vegetation from establishing. In addition, there were 5” of rain in November and Rangers ensured erosion to trails was minimized by staying current with drainage ditch maintenance per the Drainage Action Management Program (DAMP). Rangers also spent time on public interpretive programs, trail work, creekside trash cleanup, post-rain work, and abandoned vehicles cleanup. Two Eagle Scout projects took place – one at the Los Robles Trailhead removing a kiosk, building a retaining wall, and painting; and one at Parkview Trail with a trail and bridge rebuild, and ditch cleaning.

COSCA Administrator Stark responded to Assistant City Manager Alikhan regarding v-ditch cleanup homeowner responsibility, and the assistance and education that was provided.

The Rangers were thanked for their work on Parkview trail and eliminating illegal trails. It was also noted there was no major damage during recent rains, and CRPD Park Superintendent Belavic noted clearing drainage, and sandbag and wattle set-up were effective preventative measures.

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

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

CRPD General Manager Friedl stated that the Conejo Open Space Foundation (COSF) holiday party was a success noting it was nice to see a very full room of open space lovers. He noted the State of the City event took place the day prior to the current Board meeting and congratulated the Mayor on a great year.

9. **BOARDMEMBER COMMENTS:**

Director Newman noted there is the possibility of a Ventura County Planning Commission Hearing on or near February 12<sup>th</sup> regarding the potential expansion of the Pacific Rock Quarry Expansion on the west side of Conejo Mountain bordering MCRA/ COSCA land near homes in Dos Vientos.


Director Sullivan stated the County Supervisor's Office will host a Bike Safety Day at Redwood Middle School January 24<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. with Ventura County Sheriff's Department/Thousand Oaks Police Department. The focus will be on e-bike safety and COSCA is invited to have a booth.

Director Nickles stated he was currently a member of the Ventura County Parks Advisory Committee, appointed by Supervisor Gorell. He learned that the Parks Department only receives \$300,000 from the County's General Fund. The County apparently does not have the revenue to support many of the existing park facilities, so the Parks Department has been focusing its efforts on facilities and parks that are revenue driven, notably those with camping facilities. He acknowledged the fee COSCA will be paying to the Parks Department for the parking agreement, and believes it would be great to continue to find ways to partner with them. He also acknowledged CRPD General Manager Friedl's inaugural Lorax award, which was given to COSCA Administrator Stark at COSF's holiday event on December 5. In addition to the gift book (a copy of *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss) Administrator Stark received, he offered to loan him a variety of additional books as did Director Engler.

Chair Huffer thanked COSF for the very well-attended holiday party.

10. **CLOSED SESSION:** None.

11. **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m. to the next Regular Meeting on February 18, 2026.

  
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Chuck Huffer, Chairperson

Minutes Approved: February 18, 2026