

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

**February 18, 2026
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. Vice Chair Newman was present via videoconference.

Vice Chair Newman attended the meeting remotely pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(c) as a reasonable accommodation; he stated that there were no individuals over the age of 18 present at his remote location.

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

3. PRESENTATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

COSCA Administrator Stark introduced Assistant City Attorney Rosemary Koo who will be supporting COSCA as the agency's attorney.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR:

A. Approval of Minutes of December 10, 2025 Meeting

Motion by Director Nickles to approve the Minutes of the December 10, 2025 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. Annual Board Organization

- i. Find that this action is not a project as defined under the California Environmental Quality Act.
- ii. Discussion and election of Board Chair.
- iii. Discussion and election of Vice Chair.
- iv. Discussion and appointment of Board Secretary.

COSCA Administrator Stark discussed the annual Board organization procedure.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Chair Huffer opened nominations for Chair of COSCA. Director Nickles nominated Vice Chair Newman as Chair. Hearing no further nominations, nominations were closed.

Motion by Director Nickles to nominate Vice Chair Newman as Chair of the COSCA Board of Directors for 2026; carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Newman, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Huffer; Noes – None; Absent – None.

Commissioner Huffer opened nominations for Vice Chair of COSCA. Chair Newman nominated Director Sullivan as Vice Chair; hearing no further nominations, nominations were closed.

Motion by Chair Newman to nominate Director Sullivan as Vice Chair of the COSCA Board of Directors for 2026; carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Huffer, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Newman; Noes – None; Absent – None.

Director Huffer opened nominations for Secretary of COSCA. Vice Chair Sullivan nominated COSCA Administrator/Secretary Stark as Secretary; hearing no further nominations, nominations were closed.

Motion by Vice Chair Sullivan to nominate Brian Stark as Secretary of the COSCA Board of Directors for 2026; carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Huffer, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Newman; Noes – None; Absent – None.

Motion by Director Engler to find that this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Huffer, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Newman; Noes – None; Absent – None.

- B. Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2024-2025
- i. Find that this action is not a project as defined under the California Environmental Quality Act.
 - ii. Receive and file COSCA's Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

City Accounting Manager Quezada provided a summary of the report. COSCA's net position increased \$1.2 million over last fiscal year reaching \$120.6 million at fiscal year-end. Program revenues decreased \$20.4 million from the prior fiscal year due to one-time capital grants and land contributions that were recorded in the previous fiscal year that were approved in 2008, 2010, and 2022. Program expenses increased \$0.2 million primarily due to overall increases in open space maintenance and restoration. At the end of fiscal year 2024-25, COSCA reported a fund balance of \$10.5 million, held for future open space acquisition and maintenance, comparable to prior fiscal year's balance of \$10.4 million. Capital assets increased \$1.1 million for an ending balance of \$110.2 million primarily due to land additions related to developer and City dedications, with some small purchases this year.

COSCA Administrator Stark stated the budget came in as expected considering the numerous land transfers being reconciled.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Motion by Director Engler to approve staff recommendation (to find that this action is not a project as defined under the California Environmental Quality Act; and receive and file COSCA's Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2024-2025); carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Huffer, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Newman; Noes – None; Absent – None.

Former Chair (now Director) Huffer then handed the meeting over to new Chair Newman as a result of Item 6A. Chair Newman stated that as he is participating remotely, he will pass the meeting over to Vice Chair Sullivan. He added his thanks to staff and his colleagues for facilitating his ability to participate remotely. Vice Chair Sullivan officiated the meeting from this point forward.

- C. Purchase and Sale Agreement with Escrow Instructions for Assessor Parcel 673-0-280-130 Between Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency and Drew Klein
- i. Find that the following actions are exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR sections 15061, 15313, 15317, and 15325.

- ii. Approve a Purchase and Sale Agreement with Escrow Instructions (Agreement) for Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 673-0-280-130 between COSCA and Drew Klein (“Seller”), and authorize Co-Administrative Officer, or designee, to execute the Agreement and all other documents necessary to effectuate the purchase including the authority to accept the deed, subject to resolution of any liens and encumbrances affecting said parcel.
- iii. Approve a budget appropriation and expenditure in an amount not to exceed \$42,000 (\$38,000 purchase price, plus closing costs not to exceed \$4,000) from A/C #889-0000-238-99.00 (COSCA Trust Fund – Fund Balance) to A/C #512-4410-679-8100 (CI 1227, Capital – Land).

COSCA Administrator Stark presented the report noting the property lies within the Southern Ridge open space area adjacent to property owned by COSCA. It consists of six underlying lots totaling 0.46 acres that are part of an antiquated subdivision known as the Ventu Park Extension #4 tract with frontage on South Ventu Park Road. The property is steeply sloped with mature native chaparral vegetation. The purchase price of \$38,000 is based on a contemporary narrative appraisal. It is south of the City of Thousand Oaks and outside the City limits but within COSCA’s jurisdiction. He discussed the benefits of the purchase, the reasons for using COSCA Trust Fund, and the CEQA exemption sections. He responded to questions regarding the number of underlying lots within the one tax parcel and that the property has a fairly steep slope, is in a scenic protection area, has no utilities, does not have a trail, and the chaparral has conservation value. COSCA Administrator Stark also responded to comments about the extent of COSCA’s jurisdiction.

Director Nickles noted that there was a typographical error in the Agreement; COSCA Administrator Stark will correct the error.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Motion by Director Huffer to approve staff recommendation to find that the following actions are exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR sections 15061,15313, 15317, and 15325); approve a Purchase and Sale Agreement with Escrow Instructions (Agreement) (for Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 673-0-280-130 between COSCA and Drew Klein (“Seller”), and authorize Co-Administrative Officer, or designee, to execute the Agreement and all other documents necessary to effectuate the purchase including the authority to accept the deed, subject to resolution of any liens and encumbrances affecting said parcel); and approve a budget appropriation and expenditure

in an amount not to exceed \$42,000 ((\$38,000 purchase price, plus closing costs not to exceed \$4,000) from A/C #889-0000-238-99.00 (COSCA Trust Fund – Fund Balance) to A/C #512-4410-679-8100 (CI 1227, Capital – Land)); carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Huffer, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Newman; Noes – None; Absent – None.

- D. Appropriation of Funds for Roadway Repairs and Drainage Management the Autumn Ridge Road in Lang Ranch Open Space
- i. Find that this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR sections 15304 and 15301.
 - ii. Approve an appropriation of \$32,500 from the Woolsey Fire Recovery Fund (Land Management) for design and construction services to repair damage to an existing storm drainage structure on Autumn Ridge Road in the Lang Ranch open space area.

COSCA Administrator Stark reported that COSCA contracted with J&H Engineering, Inc. in May 2024 to implement drainage improvements on Autumn Ridge Road in the Lang Ranch Open Space to address a long-term drainage issue and road damage at this location. In November 2025, six days of heavy rains resulted in a small sinkhole at the repair site. Storm run-off flowed into the sinkhole, down the repaired area, and caused significant erosion. In-house attempts to repair the sinkhole have been unsuccessful and a more permanent solution is needed. J&H is being retained due to their existing familiarity with the site and installation of the previous project. Concrete and soil will be mixed to create a hard pan across the road. Its shape will direct run-off into the existing drain. Administrator Stark responded to Director inquiries noting the gopher holes caused some of the issue in the area, and added there was no history of sinkholes in that area. Staff has not inspected the site since the recent heavy rains, but repair costs are not anticipated to change if some additional work is needed.

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 (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR sections 15304 and 15301; and approve an appropriation of \$32,500 from the Woolsey Fire Recovery Fund (Land Management) for design and construction services to repair damage to an existing storm drainage structure on Autumn Ridge Road in the Lang Ranch open space area); carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Huffer, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Newman; Noes – None; Absent – None.

7. **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

A. 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 for December 2025, Trail Watch had 19 reports and 29 hours donated for a year-end total of 243 reports and 356 hours donated. Adopt-A-Trail had 32 reports and 81 hours donated, for a year-end total of 526 reports and 901 hours donated. For January 2026, Trail Watch had 27 reports and 43 hours donated; Adopt-A-Trail had 51 reports and 115 hours donated. November and December Trail work program events were canceled due to rain and muddy conditions. In January, improvements were made to Park View Trail. Spring Trail Work Day will be March 21st.

Director Sullivan noted 1,257 hours were donated to open space between the two programs in 2025.

B. 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 it was a very wet winter with Rangers figuring out how to address storm damage, saturation, downed trees, and ruts. He added that COSCA staff participated in the Bike Rodeo and e-Bike Safety Event, Wheels on the Bus Program, and the Monthly Volunteer Work Day at the Park View Trail. On February 24th, Cal Fire will inspect possible Gold Spotted Oak Borer (GSOB) activity.

COSCA Analyst Huber stated GSOB, native to Northern Mexico/ Southeast Arizona, was limited by the Sonoran Desert, but has spread via infested firewood. It was detected in San Diego County in 2008. There is an active infestation in Northeast Simi Valley, originating from Santa Clarita. Following recent training, a Ranger noticed D-shaped exit holes from the trunk of a recently downed tree. A Cal Fire Forestry Pathologist will inspect that tree along with some others in the area. City staff have already removed four trees of concern. COSCA, CRPD, and City staff are working to document the extent, monitor, and determine treatment protocols which may include full tree removal or insecticide application. In response to

questions, she explained GSOB primarily affects Coast Live Oaks in our area, cutting tree circulation within three to five years. Confirmation is needed from Cal Fire before making any announcements. Ventura County released social media posts about GSOB, which the City has shared. Coordination between the City, CRPD, and COSCA will occur to develop the most effective outreach strategy.

COSCA Analyst Huber also responded to Director questions regarding whether trail erosion/flooding comes from poor drainage design, a trail being built in or crossing a stream, or if trail use or abuse creates these situations. She commented that one of the photos in the PowerPoint relates to an ephemeral stream in Rancho Potrero. Initial work to allow run-off to flow beneath the trail, now needs modification due to the abundance of precipitation this season. When rains are expected, COSCA posts on social media and the website that trails are closed.

COSCA Administrator Stark commented on climate predictions that indicate our area may receive more rain over time with storms being stronger. COSCA's. As such, COSCA's Supervising Ranger is identifying larger issue areas that may require further engineering.

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

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

CRPD General Manager Friedl thanked the Thousand Oaks Police Department (TOPD) for enforcement activity related to e-motorcycles. Hopefully this support will help address safety concerns associated with these vehicles, as well as alleviate damage that many parks have sustained from e-motorcycles; impounding and fines are beginning to occur.

COSCA Administrator Stark added that TOPD has done a great deal of education. Their education and warning period is over, and impounding is taking place now.

Director Sullivan commented on education efforts that have taken place with regard to e-bikes.

Director Engler noted a lot of State-level discussions are happening on the subject of e-bikes as well, and new legislation regarding e-bikes/ motorcycles may be forthcoming.

9. **BOARDMEMBER COMMENTS:**


Chair Newman thanked the COSCA Board for their confidence in electing him as Chair. He added that he has been in discussions at the State level to have a uniform approach, which may be better than an agency-by-agency approach, to e-motorcycles and out-of-class e-bikes which are not legal. There is a proposed bill for DMV registration for Class 2 and 3 e-bikes; however, that may not solve the safety issues and property destruction that are happening, which is more of an e-motorcycle issue.

Director Sullivan stated the Conejo Open Space Challenge, showcasing ten trails, will go live March 1st, which will more information can be found at www.cosf.org. From April 20th – 23rd is the annual Trails Education Days; volunteer opportunities are still available.

Director Nickles reminded citizens about the trails at Tarantula Hill and the soccer fields; both are paved and good alternatives when trails in open space are muddy.

10. **CLOSED SESSION:** None.

11. **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m. to the Special Meeting of April 8, 2026.



David Newman, Chairperson

Minutes Approved: April 8, 2026

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