CONEJO OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

May 20, 2026
Civic Arts Plaza Board Room
2100 East Thousand Oaks Boulevard

SUMMARY MINUTES

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

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

2. **ROLL CALL:**

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

Also present were: Assistant City Manager Alikhan, CRPD Park General Manager Friedl, Assistant Attorney Brick, 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 April 8, 2026 Meeting

Motion by Director Engler to approve the Minutes of the April 8, 2026 meeting, carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Huffer, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Newman; Noes – None; Abstain – None; Absent – None.

6. **ACTION ITEMS:**

A. 2026 Conejo Open Space Trails Action Committee (COSTAC) Appointments.

i. Find that this action is not a project as defined under the California Environmental Quality Act.

ii. Approve the Nomination Subcommittee's recommendations for COSTAC members and alternates.

COSCA Analyst Huber discussed the recruitment process for four scheduled COSTAC vacancies including the City Clerk posting, press release, posting on City and COSCA social media and the COSCA website, published in the City Scene Newsletter, and other outreach efforts. She reported 12 applications were received, two withdrew, 10 were interviewed, and one more withdrew. The Interview Committee forwarded its recommendations based on the pool of nine applicants to the Nominations Subcommittee for consideration. She reviewed the nominees' qualifications and responded to Directors' questions regarding the low number of applications from the equestrian community. She noted that that nominee Sara Jones is an equestrian.

Speaker/Written Statement Cards: None.

Motion by Director Sullivan to approve staff recommendations (to find that this action is not a project as defined under the California Environmental Quality Act; and approve the Nomination Subcommittee's recommendations for COSTAC members and alternates [Members Term 2026-2029 - Steve Bacharach, Sara Jones, Kathryn Mason, and John Noble; Alternates with Term 2026-2027 – Drucilla Khansari, Bobby Langin, Chris Layton, and Jessica Minucci]); carried 5 – 0 by the following vote: Ayes – Directors Engler, Huffer, Nickles, Sullivan, and Chair Newman; Noes – None; Absent – None.

B. Authorize Acceptance of 245 Acres of Open Space from the Southern California Association of Seventh-Day Adventists (SDA) – Conejo Canyons Open Space.

i. Find that the following actions are exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR sections 15061,15313, and 15325.

ii. Approve Resolution 2026-03, acceptance of a grant deed for 245 acres of open space in the Conejo Canyons Open Space from the Southern California Association of Seventh-Day Adventists (SDA) and authorize the COSCA Co-Administrative Officer to execute the Certificate of Acceptance, in a form approved by the COSCA attorney.

COSCA Administrator Stark stated the resolution would authorize COSCA to accept open space property from the SDA. The parcel is located northwest of the terminus of Academy Drive, identified as Lot 15 of Tract 4927-03, APN 667-0-051-565. It is adjacent to existing COSCA open space, south of the Conejo Canyons Open Space, and creates further connections with Arroyo Conejo, and Wildwood Open Space Areas. At 245 acres, it is already zoned Open Space and contains healthy intact high conservation value chaparral habitats. The property dedication is tied to

prior land use approvals associated with Academy Business Park Specific Plan (SP) 13. The SP was originally approved in 1995, and in 2011 the City Council approved Amendment No. 2. Under Condition 86, Planning Unit M-2 is required to be dedicated for permanent open space protection and transferred either to the City or to COSCA. Acceptance was delayed until the 5-year restoration and monitoring period ended. COSCA staff have determined that the desired goals were achieved. Immediate concerns are managing illegal access by motorcycles. To date, the City has already installed some boulders to prevent illegal access and implemented parking restrictions to address loitering, litter, and other nighttime activities. Long term plans include trail development. He also noted an acreage correction as outlined in the motion below.

Speaker Card: Velino Salazar, Glendale, Immediate Past President of SDA, spoke in favor but that they are requesting a continuance as they want to include land use discussion on a separate 70-acre parcel toward the center of the subject property.

Written Statement Cards: None.

COSCA Analyst Huber responded to questions about history and timing of restoration. COSCA Administrator Stark responded to questions about the dedication and future grant deed transfer and next steps, maintenance, trail connections, open space zoning of this parcel.

Motion by Director Nickles to approve staff recommendation, with the correction of the acreage in Resolution Section 3 from 7.14 acres to 245 acres, to find that the following actions are exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, 14 CCR sections 15061,15313, and 15325; and approve Resolution 2026-03, (acceptance of a grant deed for 245 acres of open space in the Conejo Canyons Open Space from the Southern California Association of Seventh-Day Adventists (SDA) and authorize the COSCA Co-Administrative Officer to execute the Certificate of Acceptance, in a form approved by the COSCA attorney); 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 February through April, 2026, Trail Watch had 107 reports and 106 hours donated. Adopt-A-Trail had 117 reports and 211 hours donated. The February Monthly Trail Work event was canceled due to rain. In April, 12 participants made improvements to Park View Trail, and the May event will be at Eagle Point Trail. Spring Trail Work Day was March 21st at the Whole Access Trail and Los Robles Trail with Rangers and 56 participants.

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 COSCA Analyst Huber presenting a PowerPoint on behalf of the Rangers that highlighted rattlesnake relocation activity, trail clearing, Trails Education Day, Trail Work Days, the Earth Month event, interpretation talks at groups and schools, and Scout projects including fence repainting and signage. Natural Resource Interpretation Training, Canine Medical Training, and Basic Trail Building was completed by several staff members. Other trail work was highlighted as well.

COSCA Administrator Stark responded to questions regarding the proximity of the fire in Simi Valley that did not reach COSCA property, noting and Lang Ranch open space was closed for emergency vehicle access. Chair Newman noted a mandatory evacuation in the Chesbro area.

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

A. Follow-up items, announcements, and upcoming issues: None.

9. **BOARDMEMBER COMMENTS:**

Director Engler commented on Fire Department fuel reduction and experiments in Mountains Recreation and Conservation Agency (MRCA) property in the Rimrock area, similar to what is being done in the Dos Vientos area. COSCA Administrator Stark stated it is a learning opportunity that they are following.

Director Nickles mentioned that he spoke to several equestrians who are not using trails due to fear of e- bikes. He requested staff return with further information on how to address the e-bike situation.

Assistant City Attorney Brick responded that determining whether an e-bike is motorized depends on its class. He cautioned that the issue is not on the Agenda, but staff can take the referral and agendize it for a future meeting.

Director Sullivan stated Trails Education Day Annual Writing Contest winners were announced at last night's City Council Meeting and will be again at tomorrow evening's CRPD meeting. She added that there were 1,000 fourth graders and 65 volunteers at Trails Education Day.

Chair Newman stated other agencies are dealing with the e-bike issue, notably the unlicensed motorcycle aspect – not the Class 1, 2 or 3 e-bikes. He added that there are two bills pending that propose licensing and/or insurance requirements.

Director Huffer requested further discussion of e-bikes on trails be agendized. He commented on differentiation between classes of e-bikes, and added that there are some who would not be on the trails without some assistance. Director Newman clarified that the National Park Service okays Class 1 e-bikes, while the City of Westlake Village has banned all e-bikes.

Assistant City Attorney Brick again cautioned that the e-bike issue is not on the Agenda, but could be agendized for a future meeting to include information addressed by Director Huffer. Director Sullivan requested that it include a presentation from the Sheriff's Department delineating e-bike categories.

Director Nickles commended COSCA and Planning Department staff for their work on the property dedication item heard this evening, noting that he worked on the issue decades ago when he was a staff member.

10. **CLOSED SESSION:** None.

11. **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m. to the Regular Meeting of September 16, 2026.

David Newman, Chairperson

Minutes Approved: September 16, 2026

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