



# Santa Cruz County Latino Affairs Commission

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## Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday, April 6, 2022

TIME: 6:00 PM

LOCATION: Meeting held remotely

PRESENT: Yadira Flores-Martinez (1<sup>st</sup> District), Fe Silva-Robles (3<sup>rd</sup> District), Leo Gomez (5<sup>th</sup> District),  
Rebecca Hernandez (City of Santa Cruz), Rebecca Garcia (City of Watsonville), Sylvia Mendez  
(City of Watsonville)

EXCUSED: None

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Kaite McGrew (Commissions Manager), Jenny Van Natta (Spanish Language Interpreter)

GUESTS: Heather Rogers (County Public Defender), Mandy Tovar (Training Equity & Development  
Director) and 2 members of the public were present

### 1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review

Meeting convened at 6:04 PM.

### 2. Approve February 2, 2022 Minutes

**Motion to approve minutes**

Motion/Second: Garcia/Mendez

**Motion passed unanimously.**

### 3. Public Comment

### 4. New Business/Action Items

#### 4.1. County Public Defenders Agency Overview

Rogers and Tovar gave an overview of the changes being implemented by the Public Defenders Agency as they transition into a County department. Commission is invited to collaborate with the department in their efforts to increase inclusivity with additional language resources and feedback on community outreach events. New developments include wrap-around support and services, additional resources, systems retooled for greater efficiency (e.g., courtroom defense teams, consultation with potential clients before their first court appearance) among others. Increased provision of resources and improved efficiency will result in better representation and a lowered caseload for staff attorneys.

#### 4.2. Election of Officers

**Motion to elect Gomez as Chair and Mendez as Vice Chair**

Motion/Second: Garcia/Flores-Martinez

**Motion passed unanimously.**

#### 4.3. Consider Adopting the AB-361 Statement of Findings Allowing Remote Meetings

**Motion to approve statement of findings authorizing the Commission to hold their next meeting remotely under the provisions of Assembly Bill 361**

Motion/Second: Garcia/Mendez

**Motion passed unanimously.**

## 5. Commissioner Reports

### 5.1. District 1 Report (Flores-Martinez):

Flores-Martinez reported on the walking for wellness project several Saturdays in April to establish safe pedestrian routes in Live Oak and the Pure Water Soquel project which will recycle water to replenish the in Live Oak groundwater base with purified water.

### 5.2. District 2 Report (Seat Vacant): No Report

### 5.3. District 3 Report (Silva-Robles):

Silva-Robles reported that though community activities continue to normalize, the need for support is still great including a need for financial, mental health and food insecurity support. Mental health support for children is still greatly needed.

### 5.4. District 4 Report (Seat Vacant): No Report

### 5.5. District 5 Report (Gomez):

Gomez encouraged Commissioners to visit the Loch Lomond reservoir which is open to the public for very low entry fees. This beautiful park was untouched by the recent wildfires and hosts many activities including boat rentals, fishing, picnic tables, and free pontoon boat tours of the lake during the second weekend of every month.

### 5.6. Santa Cruz City Report (Hernandez):

Hernandez reported that the Museum of Art and History (MAH) will celebrate the “Watsonville is in the Heart Project” on Saturday, April 9th. The project includes a digital archive of images and artifacts honoring the many contributions of the Filipino community to Watsonville’s history and success.

### 5.7. Watsonville City Report (Mendez):

Mendez reported that the Watsonville Hospital was sold and is now a District Hospital. The Board of Supervisors has selected five highly qualified hospital board members to navigate the transition. Garcia reported that the board seats will be elected positions with two board members coming up for election in November. Community members are encouraged to run for election.

### 5.8. Watsonville City Report (Garcia):

Garcia serves on both the Santa Cruz County Housing Authority and the Watsonville City Council. As the agencies have been determined “incompatible” Garcia will resign her seat on the Santa Cruz board unless the governing legislation is amended. If amended, she can continue for the remainder of her term. She hopes that her seat will be filled by a representative from the Latino community to better serve those receiving Housing Authority services.

## 6. Staff Report:

Staff reported that the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey has been completed and data is being analyzed. The EEO/CC Plan data continues to be updated. Formally setting aside funds to support Commission activities is not something Personnel is in a position to consider at this time. Personnel will continue to support these activities informally, budget permitting, on a case-by-case basis as they have done in the past. Commissions provided for under the County Code do not have supporting budgets as they are advisory bodies. Fundraising and grant mechanisms have been the historical process for meeting fiscal needs. County Counsel has indicated that Commission bylaws can be updated to allow fundraising and grant-related activities. The Commission’s Welcome Packet is being translated and will be available in both Spanish and English going forward.

## 7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 PM.

Submitted by: Kaite McGrew, *Commissions Manager*