



Santa Cruz County Commission on Disabilities

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Meeting Minutes

DATE: Thursday, October 09, 2025
TIME: 12:30 PM to 2:00 PM
LOCATION: Santa Cruz County Building, Fifth Floor – Coastlines Conference Room
701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
PRESENT: John Daugherty (*1st District*), Becky Taylor (*3rd District*), Brenda Gutierrez Baeza (*4th District Co-Chair*), Jessica Liddy Hayford (*4th District*), David Molina (*5th District Co-Chair*), Mitali Weiglein (*5th District*)
EXCUSED: Tymothie Hale (*2nd District*)
ABSENT: Jonathan Zinnanti (*2nd District*), Richard Gubash (*3rd District*)
STAFF: Kaite McGrew (*Commissions Manager*)
GUESTS: Sven Stafford (*CEO Principal Administrative Analyst*) and no members of the public were present.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
Meeting convened at 12:43 PM.
2. Agenda Review
3. Approve October 9, 2025 Minutes
Motion to approve minutes as written
Motion/Second: Taylor/ Gutierrez Baeza
Motion passed unanimously.
4. Public Comment: None
5. New/Continuing Business/Action Items:

5.1. County Strategic Plan Presentation

Stafford provided an overview of the County's strategic planning outreach efforts and invited the Commission to offer feedback on priorities for the disabilities community. The Commission identified health and access to healthcare, housing, and economic justice as key priorities and discussed existing infrastructure that either supports or hinders access to programs and services in these areas. Highlights included the need for expanded mental health care and services addressing isolation, enhanced care management, issues related to immigration enforcement, the scarcity of healthcare providers—particularly in South County—and recent challenges with federal food service funding (e.g., SNAP). The Commission requested that staff return in January to continue brainstorming strategies to address these priorities.

5.2. Santa Cruz County Employment Services Awards Report

Liddy Hayford and Molina Then shared information about the 18th annual *Santa Cruz County Employment Services Awards* ceremony multi-agency event held at the Aloha Grill, hosted by several community partners, including Community Life, Santa Cruz City Schools, Pajaro Valley Unified Transitions Program, Hope Services, the Department of Rehab, and San Andreas Regional Center (SARC), to name a few. Eleven employers were recognized for their efforts to employ people with disabilities, including New Leaf Market, CVS, SLV Unified School District, and Freedom Elementary School among others. The event was reportedly well attended, and the ceremony is expected to air on public television eventually.

6. Commission Priority Reports:

6.1. Accessibility Awareness Priority Report: No Report

6.2. Accessible Recreation Priority Report

The Treasure Cove accessible playground at Jade Street Park held its groundbreaking ceremony, marking the official start of construction on the project.

6.3. Affordable Accessible Housing Report: No Report

6.4. Affordable Accessible Transportation Report: No Report

7. Correspondence: None

8. Staff Report: None

9. Announcements/Emerging Matters:

Weiglein serves on the Community Advisory Council for Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). They are interested in learning more about the Commission and collaborating on public-focused (versus school-related) events. They host an accessible Easter Egg Hunt for children in disabilities, which might be a good opportunity. Molina suggested inviting representatives to attend a Commission meeting to share more about their efforts.

Gutierrez Baeza shared that County Park Friends has not been funded in a while and County Parks has told them not to fundraise on their own or to host events outside of County Parks' programs. At the same time, Parks has not been able to host any events or programs for lack of funding. Wheelchair basketball had to be canceled because Parks could not fund it and County Park Friends were not allowed to seek private funding for the event.

Staff reported a County Government hiring freeze and emphasized the recent funding cuts to safety net programs that address essential community needs, such as food insecurity. Commission was encouraged to consider aligning their priorities to match the current fiscal climate in an effort to maintain their relevance with the Board of Supervisors.

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kaite McGrew, *Commissions Manager*