



# Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission

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## Meeting Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 2026

TIME: 12:30 PM

LOCATION: United Way, 4450 Capitola Road, Ste 106, Capitola CA 95010

PRESENT: Suzanne Doty (*Chair - 1<sup>st</sup> District*), Antonio Rivas (*2<sup>nd</sup> District*), Mark Johannessen (*2<sup>nd</sup> District*), Lois Sones (*3<sup>rd</sup> District*), Katie Limas (*Vice Chair - 4<sup>th</sup> District*), Carol Childers (*5<sup>th</sup> District*), Roger Wapner (*5<sup>th</sup> District*)

EXCUSED: Dena Taylor (*1<sup>st</sup> District*)

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Kaite McGrew (*Commissions Manager*)

GUESTS: Clay Kempf (*AAA/Seniors Council Executive Director*), Alicia Morales (*HSD Social Services Director*), Sven Stafford (*CEO Principal Administrative Analyst*) and two members of the public were present.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review

Meeting convened at 12:30 PM. Agenda reordered to accommodate presenter arrivals.

2. Motion to Approve October 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes

**Motion to approve minutes as written.**

Motion/Second: Wapner/Childers

Ayes: Doty, Rivas, Sones, Limas, Childers, Wapner

Abstain: Johannessen

**Motion passed.**

3. Public Comment: None

4. New Business/Action Items:

4.1. Senior Surveys Follow-up Report

Morales summarized the Master Plan for Aging *Age Well Santa Cruz County Needs Assessment Survey* results. The assessment highlights several concerns affecting residents as they age. Affordability is a major issue—especially for younger residents, those with lower incomes, and people with disabilities—despite a strong desire to remain in the county. Many report unmet needs for household help and technological support, particularly those living alone. Access to health care, including Medicare providers, specialists, and mental health services, is limited, with many seniors forced to seek care outside the county. Younger residents and caregivers report high levels of anxiety, depression, and stress, while caregivers struggle to find affordable respite support. Additional concerns include low disaster preparedness, social isolation and loneliness, and vulnerability to financial scams, abuse, and neglect. Overarching policy recommendations include: applying an aging and disability lens to all County services, infrastructure, and policies; and exploring alternative funding sources (e.g., Assisted Living Waivers, Enhanced Care Management, and PACE programs) after recent State and Federal budget cuts. Commission will consider advocacy opportunities for local Assisted Living Waiver and PACE programs at future meetings.

Sones arrived at 12:38.

#### 4.2. Master Plan for Aging Update Presentation

Kempf reported on the County's development of a comprehensive, dynamic local Master Plan for Aging playbook tailored to local needs, service gaps, projects, resources and champions. Local priorities include aging at home, expanding the senior shared housing program, embedding access to transportation in community plans, restoring funding to key programs, and expanding existing community networks. Success will be monitored via AARP livability indexes, community investments, the presence of Senior-focused programs, MPA Workgroup Committee meetings, and AAA Advisory Council meetings. Stakeholder collaboration will be key to success.

#### 4.3. County Strategic Planning Presentation

Stafford summarized the County's 2032 Strategic Plan Focus Areas, (housing and infrastructure, Community Care and Resilience, health, wellbeing & connection, Safety & Justice, Environment, climate & sustainability and economy & job growth, and outreach efforts. Fall survey results are available online. Commission feedback was primarily in the following areas: ensuring that an age equity lens is applied in all six areas, not just the "health in all policies" lens; access to affordable transportation; crimes against seniors especially elder abuse by caregivers, family members, and in facilities; and defunding of the local ombudsman program.

#### 4.4. Consider Seniors Commission 2024-2025 Biennial Report

Commission reviewed the 2024-2025 Biennial Report and amended it to clarify some of the goals and add several affiliations.

**Motion to approve the *Seniors Commission 2024-2025 Biennial Report* as amended**

Motion/Second: Childers/Johannessen

**Motion passed unanimously.**

#### 4.5. Consider Amended 2026 Meeting Schedule

Commission considered revising their June meeting date to accommodate venue scheduling.

**Motion to approve the amended meeting schedule**

Motion/Second: Wapner/Sones

**Motion passed unanimously.**

#### 5. District Reports

5.1. District 1: No Report

5.2. District 2: No Report

5.3. District 3: No Report

5.4. District 4: No Report

5.5. District 5: No Report

6. Senior Legislature Report: No Report

7. Staff Report: No Report

8. Correspondence: None

9. Emerging Matters and Commissioner Announcements: None

10. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 2:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kaite McGrew, *Commissions Manager*