



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Date: May 14, 2026, 1:00–3:00 pm

Location: EOC, 5200 Soquel Ave., Santa Cruz

1. Call to Order / Instructions for Participation

- Patsy Gasca called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm; room introductions conducted.

2. Roll Call

- Emergency Management Council Appointed Members, Districts 1–5.

3. Changes to the Agenda

- No changes.

4. Public Comment

- **Nina Audino** – Population statistics of the proposed BESS site at Minto Rd. Watsonville: 35,558 people; 12 schools; 4,600 students; 47 in-home care recipients; several elder care facilities. Raised concern: what will evacuation look like on a two-way road? No guarantees – must prepare and think critically.

5. Approval of Minutes (Attachment A)

- **Motion:** Rob Oatey. **Second:** Tom Avila. **Abstention:** Nancy Yellin. Motion carried.

6. Old Business

- None.

7. New Business

- **Forest Revere** – PRFMA local hazard mitigation planning is underway; draft expected in July. Community meetings will be open to EMC participation.

8. Informational Reports

- **OR3** – Measure Q update; CIRP. update; Monterey/ Santa Cruz County Joint Functional Exercise.
 - **Clare Peabody** – Provided an overview of the Measure Q Revenue Measure and an update on the inaugural year of the grant program. Discussed MQ funding priorities and methodology for reviewing and scoring grant applications. Invited the EMC to attend a COAB meeting on 5/27 at 5:30 pm at Simkins Swim Center, where final grant award recommendations will be presented.
 - **Clare Peabody** – Provided an update on the Coastal Incident Response Plan (CIRP), newly underway in coordination with the City of Santa Cruz and the coastal coordination group. Last update was 2004.
 - **Clare Peabody** – Announced that the Hazard Mitigation Plan received final approval from CalOES and FEMA; all jurisdictional partners have adopted the plan. These steps



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY OFFICE OF RESPONSE, RECOVERY & RESILIENCE

ensure the county and partners remain eligible for BRIC and other large mitigation programs.

- **Dave Reid** – A multi-county functional exercise will take place next week, focused on how to coordinate during an incident along the county border.
- **City of Scotts Valley** – Meredith Roberts: No report.
- **City of Santa Cruz** – Robert Oatey / Meredith Albert: CIRP update. EOP going to Council next week. In-person DSW training coming up in July, with plans to make it a regular occurrence. Focus on seasonal risk mitigation via public messaging. Hiring 6 firefighters; promoting 2 battalion chiefs. Ribbon cutting for 6-Minute to Live “safe station” at Lighthouse, Monday at 1:00 pm. Upcoming beach safety day for 5th graders in partnership with COE. Race the Flame event: 10/17/2026.
- **City of Capitola** – Leo Moreno: No report.
- **City of Watsonville** – Tom Avila: New Battalion Chief starting this week. City appointed Danielle Green as new Public Works Director.
- **County Office of Education** – Rishi Lal: Absent.
- **Santa Cruz County Sheriff** – Dee Baldwin: Absent.
- **County Fire** – Sam Filson and Scott Weese: Presented Summer Wildland Fire Outlook Report (slides attached). Updates include peak staffing, fuels mitigation, and a control burn in the Sandhills area on Tuesday.
- **Central Fire** – Nigel Miller: Deputy Fire Marshal hired. Defensible space assignment completing. Working on infrastructure improvements.

8a. Non-Governmental Organizations

- **CERT Council** – Amanda Gullings: Absent.
- **CERT Auxiliary** – Liz Selling: Planning for AST in June. “Disaster in Paradise” CERT training at Cabrillo Campus Watsonville, August 16 (TBC) – internal skill refresher and preparedness testing.
- **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)** – Alexandria Vingino: Nancy serving as interim volunteer leader/officer of MRC.
- **Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)** – Dan Selling: Equine evacuation exercise with Santa Clara County to provide hands-on experience. Message passing exercise from EOC to HAMS, then CERTs to Firewise. Castle Rock search and rescue exercise.
- **American Red Cross** – Patsy Gasca: Deploying abroad to Typhoon response
- **Watsonville Emergency Airlift Command Team (WEACT)** – Tom Hail / Bob Weiser: 75 volunteer pilots signed up with planes. Major exercise 5/30, 10:00 am–2:00 pm, at Watsonville airport – flying supplies around to other regional airports. Will recertify with CALDART for membership.
- **UC Santa Cruz** – Stephan Edgar: Storm Ready recognition by NWS. Beta testing power forecasting from NWS. Continuity and animal care development underway. Golden Eagle exercise next week.
- **LTRG** – Recover California launches the 2023 program today; LTRG will assist. Co-hosting EM preparedness event at Aptos Grange, June 6, 1:00–5:00 pm.

9. OR3 Grant Updates

- **FY 2022 State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP)** – Closing 5/31/26
- **FY 2023 State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP)** – Closing 5/31/26



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY OFFICE OF RESPONSE, RECOVERY & RESILIENCE

- **FY 2024 State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP)** – In Progress
- **FY 2025 State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP)** – Submitted
- **FY 2026 State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP)** – Submitted
- **FY 2024 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)** – Closing 6/30/26
- **FY 2025 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)** – Submitted
- **California Fire Safe Council – County Coordinator Grant, Round 2** – Approved; leveraging as match for BRIC / HMGP
- **FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure & Community (BRIC) Grant** – Beginning scope development; environmental permit scope development underway
- **NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program** – In construction

10. Announcements

- None recorded.

11. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn at 1:57 pm. **Second:** Nancy Yellin. Motion carried.