



Santa Cruz County Latino Affairs Commission

701 Ocean Street, Room 510, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

P: (831) 454-2772 F: (831) 454-2411 TTY/TDD 711

commissions@santacruzcountyca.gov

www.scclatinoaffairs.org

Notice of Public Meeting and Agenda

DATE: Wednesday, October 14, 2026
TIME: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
LOCATION: United Way of Santa Cruz County
4450 Capitola Road, Ste 106, Capitola, CA 95010

****As a courtesy to those who are affected, kindly attend the meeting *scent-free* and *smoke-free*.****

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review
2. Approve *August 5, 2026 Meeting Minutes*
3. Public Comment
Any person may address the Commission for a period not to exceed three minutes on an issue within the jurisdiction of the Commission.
4. New Business/Continuing Business/Action Items:
 - 4.1. Consider Latino Representation in the Sheriff's Office Advocacy Letter
 - 4.2. Hispanic Heritage Month Exhibit Debrief
5. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Reports
 - 5.1. Immigration Advocacy Ad Hoc Subcommittee Update (*Nevarez, Lopez, Longoria, Flores*)
6. Commissioner District/City Reports
 - 6.1. District 1 (*Flores-Martinez*)
 - 6.2. District 2 (*Sanchez*)
 - 6.3. District 3 (*Flores*)
 - 6.4. District 4 (*De Santos*)
 - 6.5. District 5 (*Longoria*)
 - 6.6. Santa Cruz City (*Nevarez, Contreras*)
 - 6.7. Watsonville City (*Lopez, Rocha*)
7. Staff Report
8. Adjournment

Next Meeting Scheduled for 6:00 PM on Wednesday, December 2, 2026

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs or activities. If you require assistance to participate in the meeting, please contact (831) 454-2772 or TTY/TDD: 711 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to make arrangements.



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Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday, August 5, 2026

TIME: 6:00 PM

LOCATION: United Way of Santa Cruz County, 4450 Capitola Road, Ste 106, Capitola, CA 95010

PRESENT: Yadira Flores-Martinez (*1st District*), Oscar Sanchez (*1st District*), Kassandra Flores (*3rd District*), Cesar De Santos (*4th District*), Jaime Longoria (*5th District*), Emmanuel Nevarez (*City of Santa Cruz*), Aracely Contreras (*City of Santa Cruz*),

EXCUSED: Bibianna Rocha (*City of Watsonville*), Micaela Lopez (*City of Watsonville*)

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Kaite McGrew (*Commissions Manager*)

GUESTS: Rae Spencer-Hill (*District 2 County Supervisor's Analyst*), and 1 member of the public were present.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review

Meeting convened at 6:00 PM.

2. Approve April 1, 2026 Minutes

Motion to approve minutes as written.

Motion/Second: De Santos/Contreras

Ayes: Flores-Martinez, Flores, De Santos, Longoria, Nevarez, Contreras

Abstain: Sanchez

Motion passed.

3. Public Comment: None

4. New Business/Continuing Business/Action Items

4.1. S.H.I.E.L.D. Efforts Update

Spencer-Hill provided an update on the Board of Supervisors S.H.I.E.L.D. ad hoc subcommittee's activities, including implementation of the staging-area ordinance, the Inspector General's audit of the Sheriff's Office use of statewide law enforcement data, and the County's new federal immigration agency engagement policy. While the Sheriff's Office does not use FLOCK cameras in the unincorporated County, they do access data from other jurisdictions for serious criminal investigations. They adopted a written policy and increased documentation requirements to address procedural gaps identified in the audit. The County's immigration engagement policy was approved, with standardized staff training and departmental liaisons under development. Spencer-Hill also reported on efforts concerning law enforcement use of face masks, opposition to the proposed Gilroy ICE detention facility, and regional contingency planning for potential mass immigration enforcement, including family separation, child safety, and housing stability.

Commissioners expressed concerns regarding the potential impacts of federal immigration enforcement on community members, including the use of masks and plain clothes by federal agents, Sheriff's Office responses to potentially unlawful activity, and protections for children and families. Staff noted that the Commission's recent advocacy letter will be forwarded to the S.H.I.E.L.D. subcommittee which will dissolve at the end of Supervisor Hernandez's term.

4.2. Consider Hispanic Heritage Month Exhibit

Commission considered the ad hoc subcommittee's proposed exhibit.

Motion authorizing the subcommittee to implement the proposed exhibit

Motion/Second: Sanchez/Flores-Martinez

Motion passed unanimously.

4.3. Subcommittee Member Engagement Strategies

Staff summarized ad hoc subcommittee procedures. Commission discussed ways to stimulate member engagement.

5. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Report

5.1. Sheriff's Office Representation Ad Hoc Subcommittee:

De Santos provided additional context regarding the draft letter and summarized next steps.

5.2. Immigration Advocacy Ad Hoc Subcommittee:

The subcommittee will schedule a meeting, and staff will forward related correspondence.

5.3. Hispanic Heritage Month Ad Hoc Subcommittee:

Flores encouraged Commissioners to submit bios and photos promptly and to share contact information any known local Latinx artists with the subcommittee members.

6. Commissioner Reports:

6.1. District 1 (*Flores-Martinez*)

Flores-Martinez announced a September 12 community input workshop regarding amenities for the new *Valle de Pajaro* park. She noted concerns that some requests from more affluent community members may not reflect the broader needs of the Watsonville community encouraged Commissioners to share information with their communities to help ensure diverse participation.

6.2. District 2 (*Sanchez*) – No Report

6.3. District 3 (*Flores*) – No Report

6.4. District 4 (*De Santos*) – No Report

6.5. District 5 (*Longoria*) – No Report

6.6. Santa Cruz City (*Nevarez, Contreras*)

Nevarez reported on a planned kick-off event on the County Steps as part of a week of action opposing license plate readers, coinciding with FLOCK investor week, although the County does not have FLOCK cameras. Contreras reported on a recent Día del Mar event hosted by the City of Santa Cruz in collaboration with Community Bridges. The event provided families with an opportunity to experience the beach, learn about ocean safety, and build a sense of belonging. Contreras highlighted the value of connecting people from different backgrounds and expressed support for more culturally focused Latinx events in the City of Santa Cruz.

6.7. Watsonville City (*Lopez, Rocha*) – No Report

7. Staff Report:

Spencer-Hill announced a State of the County meeting on September 29th in Santa Cruz.

8. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Submitted by: Kaite McGrew, *Commissions Manager*



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October 14, 2026

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
Attn: Chair Martinez
701 Ocean Avenue, St. 500
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Recommendations Regarding Promotional Equity and Latino/a Representation within the Sheriff's Office

Dear Chair Martinez and Members of the Board,

The Latino Affairs Commission respectfully submits the following recommendations regarding promotional equity and the continued under-utilization of Latino/a employees in Sergeant positions within the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office Operations Bureau.

Over the past several years, the Commission has engaged in ongoing dialogue with Sheriff's Office leadership regarding diversity, advancement opportunities, and barriers to promotion. While the Commission appreciates the Sheriff's Office's many significant efforts to improve mentorship and professional development opportunities, concerns remain regarding the ongoing disparity between the percentage of Latino/a sworn personnel within the department and the percentage serving in the Operations Bureau supervisory roles.

According to data presented to the Commission, Latino/a employees comprise approximately 38% of sworn Sheriff's Office personnel, while only 8.3% of Operations Bureau Sergeants are Latino/a as compared to the CBSA available workforce (41%). The Commission acknowledges the value of the 30% Latino representation in Special Teams, (a necessary precursor to promotion to Sergeant), but believes the ongoing disparity between Deputy representation and Sergeant representation warrants additional review to better understand whether structural or procedural barriers may exist within the promotional process that have not yet been addressed by Sheriff Clark's continuing efforts.

In the interest of promoting transparency, fairness, accountability, and public confidence, the Latino Affairs Commission respectfully recommends that the Board of Supervisors consider taking the following actions:

- Direct the Sheriff's Office, in consultation with the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer, to conduct a comprehensive, data-driven review of its professional development and promotional pipeline for Deputies, including advanced-responsibility assignments, special teams, detective assignments, and the mentorship program. The EEO Officer may be consulted regarding the data

and methodology and may provide relevant observations concerning equal employment opportunity and access to career advancement.

- The review should compare the demographic composition and outcomes of these programs before and after implementation of the current process and track participants through the full career-development pipeline—from access to developmental opportunities, to increased responsibilities and promotional eligibility, to actual promotion to Sergeant and other leadership positions.
- Direct the Sheriff's Office to report its findings to the Board annually (with a copy to the Latino Affairs Commission), including baseline and current data sufficient to evaluate whether the current process has significantly increased participation and advancement opportunities for Latino Deputies, including
 - the number and demographic composition of participants at each stage,
 - the length of time participants remain in developmental assignments before promotion, and
 - the number and demographic composition of participants who ultimately receive promotions.
- The report should provide measurable outcomes and identify any disparities in participation, progression, or promotion, rather than relying solely on the implementation of the new process or the expectation that results will occur over time.
- Direct the Sheriff's Office to conduct an anonymous employee survey to gather candid feedback regarding employee experiences with career advancement and promotional processes within the department.

The Commission believes that implementation of these recommendations would be consistent with sound public sector human resources practices and support the County's stated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accountability. Ensuring that promotional systems are transparent, equitable, and merit-based benefits not only employees, but also strengthens public trust in County institutions and their ability to reflect and serve the community fairly. Fostering that trust with the Latino community in particular is of utmost importance in the current political climate.

Thank you for considering the abovementioned recommendations and for all you do to advance the interests and safety of the Latino community in Santa Cruz County.

Respectfully,

Kassandra Flores
Commission Chair
Santa Cruz County Latino Affairs Commission



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Scheduled Meetings

Unless otherwise specified, regularly scheduled Latino Affairs Commission meetings are generally held as follows:

DAY: First (1st) Wednesday
MONTH: Every other month (February, April, June, August, October and December)
TIME: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
LOCATION: **United Way of Santa Cruz County****
4450 Capitola Road, Ste 106, Capitola, CA 95010

****Changes to the schedule**, including special meetings, changes of location, or meeting cancellations, will be listed on the website at www.scclatinoaffairs.org as soon as information becomes available.

2026 Meeting Dates		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
February 4, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	United Way
April 1, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	United Way
June 3, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	United Way
August 5, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	United Way
October 14 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	United Way
December 2, 2026	6:00 – 7:30 PM	United Way

Public Participation

- Please check the meeting agenda to learn details about how to participate in the commission meeting.
- If you need special accommodations, please call 454-2935 or TDD: 711 (California Relay Service) at least 48 hours before the meeting.