



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wednesday, January 18, 2023, 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/613973795>, Meeting ID: 613 973 795

REGULAR SESSION DRAFT AGENDA

5:00 1. CLOSED SESSION

6:00 2. Adjourn Closed Session

6:00 3. Call to Order/Establish Quorum

6:00 4. Agenda Review (5 min)

6:05 5. Announcements/Program Updates (10 min)

6:15 6. *CONSENT AGENDA – Action Items (5 min)

**In approving the consent agenda, the Board is approving recommendations within each committee's minutes listed below.*

6.1 Draft Minutes of the November 9, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting

6.2 Draft Minutes of the December 14, 2022 Governance Committee Meeting

6.3 Draft Minutes of the January 11, 2023 Governance Committee Meeting

6.4 Draft Minutes of the December 14, 2022 Finance/Audit Committee Meeting

6.4a MOTION to approve the Audit. Motion moved by Silvia/Sara. MSP.

6.5 Draft Minutes of the January 11, 2023 Finance Committee Meeting

6.5a Motion: Approve staff recommendation to add a second \$200k payment to pay off the Owner Carry Note and purchase a truck (approx. 75k) for LL Maintenance. Motion moved by Jack/Mary, MSP.

6.5b Motion to Recommend: We recommend that the staff recommend a policy change to be considered at the next board meeting that would allow CEO to do appropriate purchasing in order to spend down contracts where funds are at risk. Motion moved by Mary/Jack, MSP.

6.5c Motion to roll expiring 375K 3-month t-bill to 12 month t-bill. Motion Moved by Jack/Mary, MSP.

6.6 Action Item: Approve appointing site supervisors as facility designees

6.7 Action Item: Designate the Site Supervisors/Program Managers as agency representatives with Community Care Licensing

6:20 7. Receive comments from members of the public on “Items not on the Agenda” (5 min)

6:25 8. BOD Chair Report – Jack Jacobson (5 min)

6:30 9. CEO Report – Ray Cancino (15 min)

9.1 EED – Lisa Hindman Holbert

9.2 LL – Jesus Bojorquez

9.3 CACFP – Erika Rodriguez

6:45 10. Winter Storm Recovery Update (10 min)

6:55 10. Board/Staff Retreat (5 min)

7:00 11. Development Report-Tony Nunez/ Anna Vaage (10 min)

11.1 Donation Progress Report - Anna

11.2 Upcoming Events (Food from the Heart)

7:10 12. Finance Committee Update – Doug Underhill (15 min)

7:25 13. Newspaper Articles

7:25 14. Items for Next Agenda (5 min)

7:30 15. Adjourn Regular Meeting

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 5 pm - 7:30 pm, Meeting Location TBD – Zoom will be offered.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wednesday, November 9, 2022, 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/613973795>, Meeting ID: 613 973 795

Present: Ray Cancino, Seth McGibben, Jack Jacobson, Tyler Smith, Mary McMillan, Ryan Friedrich, Steph Ruhl, Sara Siegel, Michael Babich, Nick Calubaquib (5:27pm), Anna Vaage, Dana Wagner, Lisa Berkowitz, Lisa Hindman Holbert, Mayra Melendrez, Lois Sones, Brenda Griffin (6:15pm)

Minutes: Mary Mackenzie

REGULAR SESSION DRAFT MINUTES

5:00 1. CLOSED SESSION

5:55 2. Adjourn Closed Session

5:58 3. Call to Order/Establish Quorum

5:58 4. Agenda Review

6:08 5. Announcements/Program Updates

None

6:08 6. *CONSENT AGENDA – Action Items

**In approving the consent agenda, the Board is approving recommendations within each committee's minutes listed below.*

6.1 Draft Minutes of the September 21, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting

6.2 Draft Minutes of the October 13, 2022 Governance Committee Meeting

6.2a Motion to have FC at 2nd Wednesday at 5pm and GC at 6pm. Motion moved by Steph/Silvia, MSP.

6.3 Draft Minutes of the November 2, 2022 Governance Committee Meeting

6.4 Draft Minutes of the October 13, 2022 Finance Committee Meeting

6.5 Draft Minutes of the November 2, 2022 Finance Committee Meeting

Motion to move the consent agenda. Mary/Steph, MSP.

6:08 7. Receive comments from members of the public on “Items not on the Agenda”

6:08 8. BOD Chair Report – Jack Jacobson

None

6:09 9. CEO Report – Ray Cancino

Apologize for the closed session running long for the last meeting.

9.1 WIC – Dana Wagner

See program presentation. Mary will send out link. A personal story was shared about WIC from a board member.

9.2 *Elderday – Lois Sones*

See program presentation. PD has never heard one person say when I get old, I want to live in a nursing home. Elderday allows the client the dignity to live at home and still get the care they need. PD extended an open invitation to come visit Elderday, if you haven't already. With the pandemic, there has been a lot of talk about how lonely the seniors are, and that's not good for their health, Elderday allows people to congregate. For people with private long term care insurance, does the insurance pay for Elderday? Most insurance does pay. Are we in jeopardy of losing medical license if we don't have a medical director? Elderday is working with the licensing agency and providers. It's not an isolated issue, it's a systemic issue. Elderday has doubled stipend amount. Doing all we can to make it long term sustainable. What is the referral stream for Elderday? We send out letters to all local mediCAL providers, APS, LL, MOW, etc.

9.3 *FRC – Mayra Melendrez*

See program presentation.

6:31 10. Development Report- TBA/ Anna Vaage

CB is in the thick of end of year giving. [The Board] may have received the CB 2022 annual report which is also donor appeal. There is lots of outreach to connect with shoppers. A new marketing person started last week.

Mountain Affair had 95 guests and lots of great auction items. Attendance was down from about 110 the previous year. Revenue was down 20% from last year. Industry wide donations are down 15-20% from last year. As things are reopening, donations are down. Since inflation and gas prices have hit high levels, we've lost some of the monthly donors. 8 out of 48 monthly donors lost. Expecting very festive end of year donations.

MOW annual luncheon will be held at Chaminade on 3/17/23, week of champions is the week after.

6:39 11. Finance Committee Update – Doug Underhill

WIC spent out their budget, will switch over to the new federal fiscal year next month.

EED quarterly report: In the first quarter EED spent \$415k which is 21% of their contract.

There is a need for Intentional spending, a lot of the extra funds is created by staff vacancies. HP needs to increase the enrollment. Two GA positions open and vacant, fiscal has brought one person on board, he will be overseeing the EED program.

Elderday ADA is down in Sept/Oct, just around 60 for the year, fiscal built the budget at 65 ADA for the year, which would mean a 70 ADA by the end of the fiscal year, so now we're thinking 65 ADA at end of fiscal year. Budget is \$240k down the year, but the Kaiser grant was approved and is \$150k. That's going to lower the number to -\$91k, half of what approved prior year funds.

MOW, CBDG awarded \$66k per year, over 3 years. On top of that provided \$75k of CBDG leftover Covid funding.

LL Monterey Peninsula contract has been confirmed. The gain showing is due to staff vacancies. LL just hired a new driver trainer.

FRCs as a whole have been managed so they are slightly in the positive, CB trying to stockpile as much as possible into next year's budget. With both the 1440 and Packard grants, CB can move them to next year, which means that \$350k of funding can be deferred to next year's budget. California ERAP has made a final extension through December, \$50k is staying in house for staffing.

CACFP ended the federal fiscal year, they are major audit program this year.

Admin saw a slight decrease in expenses due to vacancies.

Development donations \$44k in general donations. Downwardly revised donations for the end of the year.

LOCC and Endowments have been under pressure. We did invest in T-bills and was put into motion.

Started with \$500k with prior year funds, programs are combined +\$45k. Overall decent start to the year.

Doug will be reaching out in about 3 weeks to scramble to put together the audit committee, only 1 member of FC can be on it. There may be an email vote allowing CB to send audit to CDE.

6:50 12. Newspaper Articles

6:50 13. Items for Next Agenda

6:50 14. Adjourn Regular Meeting

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 18, 2022, 5 pm - 7:30 pm, Meeting Location TBD – Zoom will be offered.



Governance Committee Meeting

Wednesday, December 14, 2022, 6-7 pm

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/326410777>

Meeting ID: 326 410 777

Present: Jack Jacobson, Michael Babich, Sara Siegel, Ryan Friedrich, Silvia Morales, Ray Cancino, Doug Underhill, Seth McGibben

Minutes: Mary Mackenzie

REGULAR SESSION DRAFT MINUTES

6:00 1. Meeting to order/Establish Quorum

6:00 2. Closed Session

6:28 3. Consent Agenda

a) *11/2/22 Regular Session Draft Minutes*

Motion to move the minutes as written. Motion moved by Ryan/Michael, MSP.

6:43 4. Agenda Review

6:31 5. ACTION ITEM: CDE Funding Resolution FY 23/24

Change Ray's name to without "d". Motion to accept the CDE Funding Resolution for FY23/24 with correction. Motion moved by Michael/Sara, MSP.

6:32 6. Items for next GC Agenda/BOD Agenda

6:32 8. Adjourn

Next Meeting: December 14, 2022, 6-7 pm

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/326410777>,

or call +1 669 900 6833

Meeting ID: 326 410 777



Governance Committee Meeting
Wednesday, January 11, 2023, 6-7 pm
Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/326410777>
Meeting ID: 326 410 777

Present: jack, steph, ray, sara, doug

Minutes: Mary Mackenzie

**REGULAR SESSION
DRAFT MINUTES**

- 6:00 1. Meeting to order/Establish Quorum**
- 6:00 2. Closed Session**
- 6:41 3. Consent Agenda**
 - a) 12/14/22 Regular Session Draft Minutes
 - Motion to approve 12/14/22 Regular Session Draft Minutes as written.**
 - Motion moved by Steph/Sara, MSP.**
- 6:41 4. Agenda Review**
- 6:41 5. Winter Storm Emergency Response**

Donations from Community Foundation in the form of \$30k grant, which will cover CB's expenses. CB has been activated for the last 10 days. LL team has been a major part of the activation doing evacuation notifications and evacuation support. LL has provided over 70 rides, and has had vehicles break as result of evacuations, and were on the front line for evacuations for people with special needs. 3 exempt staff that weren't getting paid more showed up on New Year's Day to help canvass neighborhoods. The agency is working to support Pajaro Community. CB has received feedback from board members that they wanted opportunities to participate, and is working to create those opportunities.
- 6:45 6. Items for next GC Agenda/BOD Agenda**
- 6:45 8. Adjourn**

Next Meeting: February 8, 2023, 6-7 pm
Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/326410777>,
or call +1 669 900 6833
Meeting ID: 326 410 777



5PM December 14th 2022

Present: Jack Jacobson, Ray Cancino, Michael Babich, Doug Underhill, Sara Siegel, Ryan Friedrich, Silvia Morales

Minutes: Mary Mackenzie

Guest: Peter Mercerno

Finance Committee Minutes

There are pros and cons about co-mingling EED private and public pay sites. Is it just more work, or is there really a financial reason not to co-mingle the sites? There are a couple of questions to be answered. If the private pay site isn't making a profit, should we be subsidizing it or converting the site into a CSPP subsidized care site? If CB wants to pursue converting into CSPP site, the agency will have to go through licensing. If we do co-mingle, what's the advantage to doing so? With the co-mingle it sounds great in theory, however, according to the auditor, it has a built in loss. If you don't get enough funds on the private pay exceeding the reimbursement rate of subsidized care you will be always operating at a loss. The idea of the HP was to have a sliding scale based on incomes. The CEO has given directives to increase enrollment to PD and to change the hiring plan. These directives have received resistance. CEO has directed PD to have the RM families pay what they could at HP and it would be sliding scale, and CEO states PD is resistant to that. The first conversation that needs to happen is whether or not the agency is beyond its core competency in trying to operate a private pay site. Another conversation is to whether CB should switch to a CSPP site. Keeping it separate does allow us to subsidize it in a different way. CB can't subsidize it by CSPP. Co-mingled sites are either breaking even or always being run at a loss and consequently having to subsidize it.

Audit Committee Minutes

There was \$603k in realized revenue in FY 20/21 for use in 21/22. There are \$356k in realized revenue in FY 21/22 for use in FY 22/23, so there was \$247k in expenses in FY 21/22 without revenue to match. This generated a starting point of showing a negative \$247K.

Peter Mersino performed the Federally required single source agency audit, the outcomes and process are outlined in an independent audit report. It is a clean report, there are no

findings. The information is fairly stated in all material respects. The report is by government practices.

Went over the Assets, Property and Equipment at purchase costs, not fair market value, \$18.858M. Went over Liabilities in the report. Notes payable include a new loan for Elderday, and a refinance for the Main Street property.

Statement of Activities: Revenue vs expenses loss of \$224k. Net increase of net assets of \$722k.

Statement of Functional Expenses: Main expenses of salary and benefits 53% of total expenses. Pass through food payments accounted for 18%.

Notes of the financial statements which allows the reader to be more informed about them. Went over the notes, 4, 5, 6 and 10. End of Note 10: Schedule of future minimum payments for each succeeding years ending June 30. Note 11: Liquidity and Availability of financial assets for the next year.

Report on Government Auditing Standards – no instances, so clean report.

Compliance Audits for Major Programs: CACFP and ERAP – clean report. Total Fed. Funds: \$7.5 M, Last year was close to \$8M. State \$3.5 M this year, last year \$3.3 M

Summary of Audit Results: CB is a low risk auditee, no findings in last two years, and the audits have been timely filed.

Measure D funding schedule – report reserve fund, revenue and expenses.

There was a conversation about whether to pay down a significant portion of the Lift Line owner-carry loan with reserve funds. This would result in additional use of resources, to limit liability. A drawback is that there would be less cash on hand

What are we doing for Measure D reserve funds, this will be discussed at the next Finance Committee meeting.

Want to thank staff for being professional and for maintaining clean books. Special thank you to CFO.

Audit Committee: Ryan, Silvia, Sara

MOTION to approve the Audit. Motion moved by Silvia/Sara. MSP.



Finance Committee

Wednesday, January 11, 2023, 5:00-6:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/326410777>

Zoom Meeting ID: 326-410-777

Santa Cruz County, CA

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Mary McMillan, Michael Babich, Ryan Friedrich, Doug Underhill, Ray Cancino, Jack Jacobson

Minutes: Mary Mackenzie

AGENDA

5:05 Agenda Review

5:05 CFO Report – Doug Underhill

a) Department updates

We still need to hire a fourth Grants Analyst. Two candidates are in the pipeline for interviews. CACFP State audit entrance meeting is scheduled this month.

b) Nov 30th 2022 Statement of Activities and Financial Position

Changes from audit is \$3.3M in cash and cash in advance. \$2.25M is CCAH funds.

c) Investments and Funds – Dec 31, 2022

Investment accounts have gone up a bit from lows. Burroughs didn't produce December balance sheet, so this is a 2-month change.

5:25 Elderday 501 Main and Elderday ADA

There was a 12-month \$588K renovation component to the loan that expired in November, however due to delays in the permitting process, Elderday is just getting ready to do construction now. Santa Cruz County Bank is in the process of extending it 12 months. The most recent Swenson contracting bid has increased by \$590K including contingency. Total bid has increased by 17%. These are unbudgeted expenditures. Increases of inflation impacting raw materials 17-35%. Goal is to be under the \$3M. CB is pushing Swenson to try to get construction prices down. When we accepted the parameters of the construction plan how did they add 500k? It's part of the development of the kitchen? Some of the exhaust systems and other kitchen expenses were not included in initial bid. The city also wants CB to redo sidewalk for them. The

only way to bargain prices down is to go to each subcontractor, CB has switched some of the subcontractors.

Elderday has had to close due to a Covid outbreak for 10 days, and has had to close because there were evacuation warnings at the Elderday site. This is causing serious financial hardship. Current Gain/Loss is projected at a \$350k loss, with the amount of reserves required for the renovation project going from \$275 to \$775k.

Are there any grants that could help us? Looking at disaster coverage through our insurance. We do have an income replacement clause, the question however is whether this is a disaster or not. CB is hoping that since this is happening across the state, we can lobby in the legislative session for adult day health services. This however, may be a long shot since the state is projected to be in a large deficit this year. Extended Case Management (ECM) may be a way to help get some funding back, there is a lot of funding through the state. It keeps people out of the hospitals, so it keeps MediCAL costs down. The revenues from ECM services will start to come in this fiscal year, but next fiscal year, it will be providing \$500 per case per month. The agency would be paid to do the outreach for referrals. We have a bit of a pipeline issues, we've lost two social workers, so ability to do intake is greatly reduced. We did confirm that Kaiser Grant \$150k for this year, and 100k for the following year. We have some revenue potentially coming in as well.

5:35 Lift Line Measure D potential payoff of Owner Carry Note *Action Item

Major funding increases in all the major grants. Trying to bring in drivers as quickly as we can. The funding allowed us to operate after hour evacuations for the last 4-5 days. TDA is giving us another \$93,211 payment this FY. The board directed CB last time to look at options including but not limited to paying down the debt and ongoing liability as a way to spend out some of the funding LL has received. CB was able to connect with PD and he is in support of spending down liability in property. The other thing he would like to do is to buy a 4x4 truck for maintenance and emergency operations (approximately \$75k) and think about if we want to try to do a (TNC) on demand transportation service for our community. Metro and CB have been discussing cooperation on providing on-demand services. We would have to substantially subsidize the program. CEO is always open to unique ideas like that. There is a staff recommendation to use Measure D reserves to pay off the owner carry note at 545 Ohlone. The current Measure D surplus is \$690k, if we were to pay off the owner carry not now, we'd be saving \$18k in interest. We also have a big paving project that could be \$350k. If MOW is going to buy a property, then CB need a strong balance sheet, so the \$400k would be helpful to pay down the owner carry note.

Motion: Approve staff recommendation to add a second \$200k payment to pay off the Owner Carry Note and purchase a truck (approx. 75k) for LL Maintenance.

Motion moved by Jack/Mary, MSP.

5:45 Early Education Division Surplus and Enrollment

We're raising the magnifying glass on the program. A lot staffing hasn't been hired yet. The reality is we're going to have a lot to spend out again this year. There might be

some fixed assets (vehicles at each site for fieldtrips), retention bonuses, raise teacher rates that are sustainable. The agency would like to incentivize spending on the needs of the facilities/resources to keep upgrading. It makes sense that PD doesn't yet have a plan to spend out the \$429k in the recently increased CSPP contract, but still need to figure out how to spend it. Also, there is still \$200k in the budget for new hire personnel, but if these hire do not materialize, then will need to spend that out as well. The PD has to authorize purchases. If you authorize CEO to spend out contract, then he has no problem spending them out. Fiscal has done analysis for EED, including building the budget for 23/24 in a fully staffed scenario. It was suggested that the goals should be a well paid staff, changes in licenses, and great training/buildings, and to get the word about EED. With universal TK every year that program will get more people enrolled.

Request was made to put EED discussion (Closed Session) for Board Meeting

Motion to Recommend: We recommend that the staff recommend a policy change to be considered at the next board meeting that would allow CEO to do appropriate purchasing in order to spend down contracts where funds are at risk.

Motion moved by Mary/Jack, MSP.

5:50 Roll-over of expiring 3-month T-Bill to 12 Month *Action Item

Motion to roll expiring 375K 3-month t-bill to 12 month t-bill. Motion Moved by Jack/Mary, MSP.

5:55 Questions and Items for next Agenda

6:00 Adjourn

Next Meeting February 8th, 2023

AGENCY BOARD RESOLUTION
RESOLUTION # 2023-01-18-HP

Duly noticed regular meeting of the Community Bridges Board of Directors held on January 18, 2023 the following resolution was made.

Whereas, the Board discussed the **Highlands Park Early Education Center**.

Whereas, the Board hereby authorized **Community Bridges to operate the Highlands Park Early Education Center with Jamie Delaney as the person in charge of the facility, and Raymon Cancino or Lisa Hindman Holbert as the agency (Community Bridges) Representatives**.

Whereas, on behalf of the Community Bridges Board of Directors, **Raymon Cancino and Lisa Hindman Holbert are to apply and submit and receive all document pertaining to the**

**Highlands Park Early Education Center
8500 Highway 9
Ben Lomond, CA 95005**

Whereas, in **the event of Raymon Cancino's absence, Seth McGibben and Lisa Hindman Holbert are authorized to receive any documents including reports of inspections and consultation, accusations and civil and administrative processes on Raymon Cancino's behalf at the above named facility.**

It is further resolved that the Board Officers, Chief Executive Officer, are authorized to sign any documents and take any steps necessary to fulfill the intent of resolution.

Jack Jacobson, Board President

Sara Siegel, Board Secretary

AGENCY BOARD RESOLUTION
RESOLUTION # 2023-01-18-FG

Duly noticed regular meeting of the Community Bridges Board of Directors held on January 18, 2023 the following resolution was made.

Whereas, the Board discussed the **Fairgrounds Early Education Center**.

Whereas, the Board hereby authorized **Community Bridges to operate the Fairgrounds Early Education Center with Rosalba (Rossy) Torres as the person in charge of the facility, and Raymon Cancino or Lisa Hindman Holbert as the agency (Community Bridges) Representatives.**

Whereas, on behalf of the Community Bridges Board of Directors, **Raymon Cancino and Lisa Hindman Holbert are to apply and submit and receive all document pertaining to the**

**Fairgrounds Early Education Center
2667 East Lake Avenue
Watsonville, CA 95076**

Whereas, in **the event of Raymon Cancino's absence, Seth McGibben and Lisa Hindman Holbert are authorized to receive any documents including reports of inspections and consultation, accusations and civil and administrative processes on Raymon Cancino's behalf at the above named facility.**

It is further resolved that the Board Officers, Chief Executive Officer, are authorized to sign any documents and take any steps necessary to fulfill the intent of resolution.

Jack Jacobson, Board President

Sara Siegel, Board Secretary

AGENCY BOARD RESOLUTION
RESOLUTION # 2023-01-18-ND

Duly noticed regular meeting of the Community Bridges Board of Directors held on January 18, 2023 the following resolution was made.

Whereas, the Board discussed the **Nuevo Dia Early Education Center**.

Whereas, the Board hereby authorized **Community Bridges to operate the Nuevo Dia Early Education Center with Erica Castillo as the person in charge of the facility, and Raymon Cancino or Lisa Hindman Holbert as the agency (Community Bridges) Representatives**.

Whereas, on behalf of the Community Bridges Board of Directors, **Raymon Cancino and Lisa Hindman Holbert are to apply and submit and receive all document pertaining to the**

**Nuevo Dia Education Center
135 Leibrandt Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060**

Whereas, in **the event of Raymon Cancino's absence, Seth McGibben and Lisa Hindman Holbert are authorized to receive any documents including reports of inspections and consultation, accusations and civil and administrative processes on Raymon Cancino's behalf at the above named facility.**

It is further resolved that the Board Officers, Chief Executive Officer, are authorized to sign any documents and take any steps necessary to fulfill the intent of resolution.

Jack Jacobson, Board President

Sara Siegel, Board Secretary

AGENCY BOARD RESOLUTION
RESOLUTION # 2023-01-18-RM

Duly noticed regular meeting of the Community Bridges Board of Directors held on January 18, 2023 the following resolution was made.

Whereas, the Board discussed the **Redwood Mountain Early Education Center**.

Whereas, the Board hereby authorized **Community Bridges to operate the Redwood Mountain Early Education Center with Lisa Hindman Holbert, as the person in charge of the facility, and Raymon Cancino or Lisa Hindman Holbert as the agency (Community Bridges) Representatives.**

Whereas, on behalf of the Community Bridges Board of Directors, **Raymon Cancino and Lisa Hindman Holbert are to apply and submit and receive all document pertaining to the**

**Redwood Mountain Early Education Center
7103 Highway 9
Felton, CA 95018**

Whereas, in **the event of Raymon Cancino's absence, Seth McGibben and Lisa Hindman Holbert are authorized to receive any documents including reports of inspections and consultation, accusations and civil and administrative processes on Raymon Cancino's behalf at the above named facility.**

It is further resolved that the Board Officers, Chief Executive Officer, are authorized to sign any documents and take any steps necessary to fulfill the intent of resolution.

Jack Jacobson, Board President

Sara Siegel, Board Secretary

AGENCY BOARD RESOLUTION
RESOLUTION # 2023-01-18-SYC

Duly noticed regular meeting of the Community Bridges Board of Directors held on January 18, 2023 the following resolution was made.

Whereas, the Board discussed the **Sycamore Street Early Education Center**.

Whereas, the Board hereby authorized **Community Bridges to operate the Sycamore Street Early Education Center with Arasele Rocha as the person in charge of the facility, and Raymon Cancino or Lisa Hindman Holbert as the agency (Community Bridges) Representatives.**

Whereas, on behalf of the Community Bridges Board of Directors, **Raymon Cancino and Lisa Hindman Holbert are to apply and submit and receive all document pertaining to the**

**Sycamore Street Education Center
121 Sycamore Street, Suite 100
Santa Cruz, CA 95060**

Whereas, in **the event of Raymon Cancino's absence, Seth McGibben and Lisa Hindman Holbert are authorized to receive any documents including reports of inspections and consultation, accusations and civil and administrative processes on Raymon Cancino's behalf at the above named facility.**

It is further resolved that the Board Officers, Chief Executive Officer, are authorized to sign any documents and take any steps necessary to fulfill the intent of resolution.

Jack Jacobson, Board President

Sara Siegel, Board Secretary

AGENCY BOARD RESOLUTION
RESOLUTION # 2023-01-18-VV

Duly noticed regular meeting of the Community Bridges Board of Directors held on January 18, 2023 the following resolution was made.

Whereas, the Board discussed the **Vista Verde Early Education Center**.

Whereas, the Board hereby authorized **Community Bridges to operate the Vista Verde Early Education Center with Maria Hurtado as the person in charge of the facility, and Raymon Cancino or Lisa Hindman Holbert as the agency (Community Bridges) Representatives.**

Whereas, on behalf of the Community Bridges Board of Directors, **Raymon Cancino and Lisa Hindman Holbert are to apply and submit and receive all document pertaining to the**

**Vista Verde Early Education Center
1936 Freedom Boulevard
Freedom, CA 95019**

Whereas, in **the event of Raymon Cancino's absence, Seth McGibben and Lisa Hindman Holbert are authorized to receive any documents including reports of inspections and consultation, accusations and civil and administrative processes on Raymon Cancino's behalf at the above named facility.**

It is further resolved that the Board Officers, Chief Executive Officer, are authorized to sign any documents and take any steps necessary to fulfill the intent of resolution.

Jack Jacobson, Board President

Sara Siegel, Board Secretary

Community Bridges
Agency-Wide Revenue and Expenses
November 30, 2022

DESCRIPTION	RECEIVED YTD 11/30/22	EARNED YTD 11/30/22	% OF TOTAL	A/R YTD 11/30/22	UNEARNED YTD 11/30/22	DESCRIPTION	ACTUAL YTD 11/30/22	% OF TOTAL
REVENUE						EXPENSE		
County of Santa Cruz	364,960	433,297	6.1%	68,337		Salaries & Wages	3,186,896	45.2%
City of Santa Cruz	26,172	52,083	0.7%	25,911		Payroll Taxes	330,730	4.7%
City of Capitola	0	22,000	0.3%	22,000		Health Insurance/Retirement	410,207	5.8%
City of Scotts Valley		0	0.0%	-		Contracted Services	524,749	7.4%
City of Watsonville	2,500	2,083	0.0%	417		Transportation Services	89,867	1.3%
AAA-Title IIIB/C	310,552	385,456	5.4%	74,904		Staff Travel	6,140	0.1%
USDA-AAA / CAFB / SL	101,893	122,893	1.7%	21,000		Occupancy Expense	574,512	8.1%
Dept of Health Svcs-WIC / Snap Ed	390,714	1,063,975	15.0%	673,261		Office/Program Expense	114,214	1.6%
Dept of Educ-CACFP Admin	75,487	166,829	2.3%	91,342		Staff Training	9,019	0.1%
Dept of Educ-CACFP Homes Passthru	537,273	539,973	7.6%	2,701		Insurance	22,880	0.3%
Dept of Educ-CACFP Ctrs CCC / CBAS	95,872	95,872	1.3%	-		Taxes, Licenses, Interest & Fees	141,742	2.0%
Dept of Education-CDD/CDSS	903,189	660,417	9.3%	242,772		Equipment Expense	26,916	0.4%
Transportation Development Act	501,116	377,347	5.3%	123,769		Raw Food and Related	369,775	5.2%
EFSP (FEMA)	0	5,000	0.1%	5,000		Vehicle Operations/Maintenance	59,680	0.8%
Covered CA / HRSA	54,626	73,121	1.0%	18,495		Payments to CACFP Homes/Ctrs	635,846	9.0%
LCTOP	0	0	0.0%	-		Payments to Other Agencies	161,754	2.3%
FTA Section 5310 - Cal Trans Ops	0	78,333	1.1%	78,333		Fixed Asset Purchases	-	0.0%
First Five	62,754	112,554	1.6%	49,800		Vehicle Related Purchases	-	0.0%
STA - Measure D	202,173	547,500	7.7%	345,327		Real Property Purchases / LHI	41,659	0.6%
CA ERR	95,872	162,072	2.3%	66,200		Depreciation/Amortization	204,167	2.9%
Foundations & Other Grants	3,100,195	828,000	11.6%	2,272,195		Measure D Facility Reserve		
Donations/Fundraising	533,248	533,248	7.5%	-		Non Cash Incentives	143,006	2.0%
Participant Contributions	38,154	38,154	0.5%	-				
Client Fees	95,841	95,841	1.3%	-				
Medi-Cal Fees	340,063	550,000	7.7%	209,937				
Program Income-Other	22,682	22,682	0.3%	-				
Transportation Fees/Scrip	3,765	3,765	0.1%	-				
Outside Contracts	43,578	43,578	0.6%	-				
Uncollectible Revenue		0	0.0%	-				
Interprogram Revenue	94,014	94,014	1.3%	-				
				-				
TOTAL REVENUE	7,996,692	7,110,088	100.0%	1,752,548	2,639,153	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	7,053,757	100.0%
				1,213,347	508,858	Operational Gain (Loss) **	56,331	
						Grant Funded Asset Gain	41,659	
						Prior Yr Net Assets	9,595,415	
						Net Assets:	9,693,404	

Community Bridges
Statement of Financial Position
November 30, 2022

ASSETS	Unrestricted	Restricted	Nov 30 2022 Total	
			Net Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	7,353,697	-	-	7,353,697
Cash reserved for LOFRC Facility Maint	-	-	442,615	442,615
Accounts/Grants receivable	2,009,372	-	-	2,009,372
Prepaid expenses	283,549	-	-	283,549
Inventory - Raw Food & Supplies	25,000	-	-	25,000
Refundable Deposits	126,421	-	-	126,421
Property and equipment	8,597,577	-	-	8,597,577
Leasehold improvements	1,321,006	-	-	1,321,006
TOTAL ASSETS	19,716,623	-	442,615	20,159,238
LIABILITIES				
Accounts payable	365,499	-	-	365,499
Salaries and wages payable	278,409	-	-	278,409
Payroll taxes payable	205,466	-	-	205,466
Retirement (401k) benefits payable	27,771	-	-	27,771
Accrued vacation salaries and wages	494,291	-	-	494,291
Health insurance payable/withheld	21,430	-	-	21,430
Short term debt (includes LOC)	106	-	-	106
Long term debt	5,356,556	-	-	5,356,556
Volunteer Center liability	3,152	-	-	3,152
Capitalized leases payable	-	-	-	-
Due to fixed asset fund (Measure D/TDA)	793,330	-	-	793,330
Unearned revenue/advances	2,748,406	-	-	2,748,406
PPP loan/refundable advance	-	-	-	-
Other liabilities	171,417	-	-	171,417
TOTAL LIABILITIES	10,465,834	-	-	10,465,834
Fund Balance June 30, 2021	9,149,698	-	445,747	9,595,445
Current Year Income (Loss)	101,091	-	(3,132)	97,959
TOTAL NET ASSETS	9,250,789	-	442,615	9,693,404

COMMUNITY BRIDGES Program Budget Summary October 31, 2022											
Projections for Year Ending 6-30-2023											
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	J	K
PROGRAM NAME:	6/30/22 Unaudited Balance	Annual 22/23 Approved Budget	Current Projected Expenses	Current Projected Revenues	As Yet Unsecured Revenues	(E-D) Net 2022-2023 Gain/Loss	(B+G) Cumulative Gain/Loss	Goal 25% Reserve %	Change from Prior Mo	% Change	14.53% Gen'l & Adm Exp
WIC (CB FY)	206,645	2,620,475	2,690,907	2,689,600	0	(1,307)	205,338	7.7%	(1,307)	0.0%	394,516
Early Education Division	500,512	2,344,980	2,812,502	2,780,804	300,000	(31,698)	468,814	16.7%	(11,183)	-0.4%	369,592
Elderday	325,606	2,043,432	2,106,960	1,941,171	485,293	(165,789)	159,817	7.6%	75,389	3.6%	302,801
Meals on Wheels	1,449,078	2,856,854	2,459,261	2,614,069	618,921	154,808	1,603,886	68.0%	18,906	0.8%	346,530
Lift Line	(131,752)	2,807,659	2,893,036	2,915,234	220,000	22,198	(109,554)	-4.3%	(20,000)	-0.7%	285,609
La Manzana Commty Res	328,607	1,135,721	1,557,333	1,542,143	150,000	(15,190)	313,417	20.3%	(32,498)	-2.1%	216,972
Mountain Commty Res	377,584	674,721	992,367	990,435	75,800	(1,932)	375,652	38.3%	(11,862)	-1.2%	83,387
Nueva Vista Commty Res	337,237	354,910	439,804	466,402	65,000	26,598	363,835	83.5%	11,723	2.7%	63,910
Live Oak Commty Res	194,821	308,834	410,980	421,825	98,000	10,845	205,666	50.0%	(15,753)	-3.8%	59,721
CACFP (CB FY)	21,067	4,233,196	4,151,372	4,198,628	40,000	47,256	68,323	6.4%	-	0.0%	67,619
Administration	105,521	2,283,002	2,307,454	2,382,658	234,450	75,204	180,725	7.8%	38,495	1.7%	16,064
Philanthropy	310,992	338,535	352,328	309,380	229,059	(42,948)	268,044	76.1%	(18,225)	-5.2%	51,198
TOTAL PROG OPERATIONS:	4,213,302	22,002,319	23,174,304	23,252,349	2,516,523	78,045	4,103,963	21.89%	33,685	0.1%	2,257,919
LOCR-Capital Campaign	445,746		25,000	(1,153)	0	(26,153)	419,593	NA	19,560		0
CBHQ FY 20/21 Activity		-	103,700	100,920	0	(2,781)	(2,781)	NA	1,749		0
501 Main Street	269,206		3,326,365	3,088,000	0	(238,365)	30,841	NA	(4,642)		14,184
Fixed Assets & Gen'l Agy	4,605,620	-	1,780	(19,969)	0	(21,749)	4,583,871	NA	15,429		0
TOTAL AGENCY	9,533,874	22,002,319	26,631,149	26,420,147	2,516,523	(211,003)	9,135,487	21.89%	65,781	0.2%	2,272,103

Fixed Asset purchases and Pass-Thru expenses exempt from Indirect; Revenues and Expenses include all pass-through

Program Budget Summary
October 31, 2022

PROGRAM NAME:

WIC	First month of new FFY. All re-class costs built in for all programs
Early Education Division	CSPP Contract Increased 423K, projected underspent by 600K+, assuming 400K non G.A. expenses
Elderday	YTD ADA 58.5, revised Jan-Jun 2023 to 63 from 65. +150 Kaiser grant, + personnel from re-class
Meals on Wheels	minor decrease food costs, personnel (vacancy)
Lift Line	Increased personnel, still have drivers to hire, Measure D coming in strong
La Manzana CR	+4K personnel, +3.5K Contracted, +5K prog supplies, +7K phone, +38K incentives, +25K CF rev, +7.5K Kaiser rev
MCR	-33K personnel, +3.5K prof services, +2K event, +8K utility, +25K incentives, +25K CF rev, -18K outside contracts (vaccine)
Nueva Vista CR	-4K personnel, +3.5K contracted, +25K incentives, +25K CF rev, -12.5K Kaiser
Live Oak CR	+2.5K personnel, +3.5K contracted +25K incentives, +25K CF rev, -2.5K Kaiser
CACFP	End of FFY - will retain State earnings and Have Federal Carry over of 39K, DCH Count 388
Administration	-personnel cost (vacancies) offsetting re-class costs, +Indirecct from programs- high level of uncertainty
Philanthropy	Development donations 44K Q1, downward projection of 170K for remaining 3.
LOCR-Cap Campaign	Actual YTD less proj FY 22/23 expenses, 10/31/2022 \$444,593
La Manzana Property	Actual Revenue/Expense through 10/31/2022
501 Main Street	Actual Expenses as they occur, CCAH grant not yet realized revenue, No change from last month
FAs & Agy Unrestr.	Actual YTD less projected FY 22/23 expenses, Endowment Balance 10/31/2022 \$675,892
Total Agency	Total Programs +78K, Total Agency -211K, BOD aproved budget -582K

Community Bridges

In Santa Cruz County, 56% of residents age 5 and older do not speak English very well or at all, according to the Census Bureau. Community Bridges' project for this year's Santa Cruz Gives, called "Let's Learn English Together!," seeks to address this.

This initiative will teach non-English speaking parents during the day to speak English, and help pay for childcare for young children while their older children are in school. This will allow them to guide their children with schoolwork.

In Santa Cruz County, the poverty rate among those who worked full-time for the past 12 months was 3%. Among those working part-time, it was 16% and for those who did not work, it was 19%.



Seniors enjoy a Meals on Wheels lunch at the Watsonville Senior Center in May. —photo by Tarmo Hannula/The Pajaronian

[Featured](#) [News](#) [Local News](#)

City to form Senior Action Committee

By: **JOHANNA MILLER** December 8, 2022

0 157

WATSONVILLE—The City of Watsonville is searching for residents 50 years of age or older to serve on its new Senior Action Committee (SAC).

Members of this volunteer committee will advise the city and other local jurisdictions by representing the perspectives, concerns and needs of Watsonville's older adults.

Katie Nuñez, Older Adult Services Supervisor for Parks & Community Services, said that creating SAC comes after the City was accepted into the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities in August. The initiative aims to help improve communities by adopting features such as safe, walkable streets; better housing and transportation options; access to key services; and social opportunities.

"In order to accomplish becoming [Age-Friendly], we needed to form a group of forward-thinking individuals who can evaluate and make recommendations for a better quality of life for our older adults," Nuñez said.

SAC members will meet monthly to discuss citywide issues, and will play a crucial role in supporting the five-year Age-Friendly initiative. They will also help the City promote its ongoing community survey, which it is working on with the County of Santa Cruz and other local jurisdictions.

Other commitments may include planning events and fundraising.

Nuñez emphasized how SAC will work on a much broader scale than just within the Watsonville Senior Center.

"I am hoping we find members of the community who want to make a difference for seniors now and even 10 to 20 years in the future," she said.

Watsonville Mayor Ari Parker said that organizing such a committee is a long time coming. Nuñez had originally been hired in 2020 to create a more robust network of programs for seniors, with their input. But things changed when the pandemic hit, Parker said.

"Katie's position changed dramatically in the past two years," she said. "She did a tremendous job in a very difficult time. But this, what we're starting now, was always the original vision—finding new ways to directly involve seniors in our community. I can't think of anyone better suited to do this than her."

Parker oversees Watsonville's District 7, which includes Watsonville's Senior Village. She said she suspects there will be a lot of interest in the new committee.

"We have more seniors than any other community in the tri-county area," she said. "I think this will be pretty competitive. Our seniors here are very active, and involved already. I'm very excited about how this committee could go."

The SAC application deadline is Jan. 13. Interested residents [can apply online](#) or obtain a physical application at the Watsonville Senior Center, 114 E. Fifth St.

*For information about SAC, contact Nuñez at **768.3277** or katie.nunez@cityofwatsonville.org.*

Community Music School Keeps Melodies Alive

Santa Cruz Gives' music-minded organizations seek funding so they can continue to bring sweet sounds to the community

<https://www.goodtimes.sc/community-music-school-keeps-music-thriving/>

By Johanna Miller

December 14, 2022



Community Music School is hoping to fund after-school music instruction for teens through its participation in Santa Cruz Gives. PHOTO: Courtesy Of Community Music School

For the past 30 years, Community Music School (CMS) has been providing music education and enrichment opportunities for artists across Santa Cruz County.

CMS was created by Shelley Phillips as a direct response to the defunding of public-school music programs that started in the 1990s. At first a two-week summer music camp for children, the organization has expanded over the years to also include programs for teenagers and adults. It now hosts an annual Harp Festival and offers resources to connect music students and teachers.

"A lot of students have to play by themselves," says Susan Willats, who has been at the helm of CMS for the past four years. "They practice at home by themselves, or with a teacher. Our niche is that they can come and play in groups, and get to understand how it is to play in an ensemble."

This year, CMS is joining a number of other local nonprofits for Santa Cruz Gives (SCG), GT's annual digital giving campaign. Each participating nonprofit is given a section of the SCG website where they explain what they do and the project they want to fund—their “Big Idea” for the future. People can donate directly from the website to the nonprofits of their choice.

“It’s our first year with Santa Cruz Gives,” Willats says. “We’re very excited. We are a very small nonprofit. It’s just me, 10 hours a week, and a Board. One of the benefits of being involved with this campaign is that a lot more people will learn about us and what we do.”

Willats calls the recent passing of California Proposition 28, which funds school-based arts and music education throughout the state, “a game-changer.” However, the funding still has a limit, she says, which is why organizations like CMS are eager to keep up and running.

“Right now, even if schools have music it’s usually only 45 minutes once a week,” she says. “That’s not enough to learn an instrument. We recognize that our programs are mainly for those who already know instruments. But there are a lot of kids who don’t have that. Our ‘Big Idea’ is to fund beginning music classes in underserved neighborhoods.”

CMS has already launched a pilot program in partnership with **Community Bridges**, which offers music instruction after school. They hope to expand the program in 2023. “It’s a small program, but with a deep impact,” she says. “With it, we are trying to help balance the distribution of music wealth and resources throughout the county.”

While it is CMS’s first year with SCG, another nonprofit has been part of the campaign since it launched in 2015: Senderos, an arts and culture group aiming to create successful pathways for the Latino community of Santa Cruz County.

At **Senderos**, Latino culture and history are taught and celebrated through dance and music classes, with public performances held throughout the year. The organization also offers tutoring, scholarships and more.

“We strongly believe in what we’re doing,” says Fe Silva-Robles, Senderos co-founder and program director. “This is important work, especially now after the pandemic. Our community was impacted by Covid in a serious way. So we are very happy now to come back, to once again be performing in our community.”

Silva-Robles says the organization’s “Big Idea” this year is to secure funding for its free dance, music and tutoring programs. The group is also preparing for 2023 events, including its annual Vive Oaxaca Guelaguetza, an authentic cultural festival with food, music, dance, music and crafts. The event is scheduled to return April 16 at San Lorenzo Park.

"We are grateful for *Good Times* to continue to give us the opportunity to raise money through Santa Cruz Gives," Silva-Robles says. "We're a small nonprofit, run by volunteers. It's really made an impact being part of this."

Meanwhile, **El Sistema** aims to foster positive child development and promote social change by expanding access to high-quality music instruction, free of charge, to students from historically excluded communities in Santa Cruz County. They hope to grow their Watsonville Youth Symphony, launched in March 2022. With students graduating from its pre-orchestra program with the skills and qualifications required to perform in an orchestra, El Sistema started a youth symphony that reflects the full diversity of the community.

Another music-oriented Gives project is from **Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos**, which is looking to increase funding for its Audio and Visual Engineering program. The group needs to upgrade its music studio, purchase updated computers, mixing boards and cameras. In the longer term, they would like to expand and offer this education to our local community.

To donate to these groups, or see a full list of participating nonprofits, visit santacruzgives.org.

Santa Cruz County senior center hopes to get lease extension on property; center a lifeline for thousands of senior citizens

The center is a lifeline for thousands of senior citizens



Updated: 8:45 PM PST Dec 14, 2022



Felix Cortez

<https://www.ksbw.com/article/santa-cruz-county-senior-center-hopes-to-get-lease-extension-on-property-center-a-lifeline-for-thousands-of-senior-citizens/42248734>

LIVE OAK, Calif. —

Time is running out for a Santa Cruz county senior center that serves thousands of seniors every month. The center, located in Live Oak, has been on notice to vacate its current property by the end of this month, but it's hoping to get a six-month extension.

“The interruption of services would be very difficult for our senior community across Santa Cruz County,” said Tony Nunez, spokesman for Community Bridges, which supports and helps fund the senior center.

That center is home to the county’s Meals on Wheels program and Senior Network Services. Together, they helped more than a quarter million seniors last year.

But the center is located on property owned by the Live Oak school district and they want to use the property to build workforce housing.

“We understand the situation that not only the Live Oaks School District is in but really other school districts across the county and across our region. But, you know, these are essential services as well that serve a really unrecognized population and senior citizens,” said Nunez.

On Wednesday night, the Live Oak school board approved a six-month lease extension for the senior center, but now the property needs major repairs and the district previously voted not to invest in any more improvements.

District superintendent Daisy Morales wasn't available for comment Wednesday but told action news this back in May.

“If we can’t do the venture together then they’re going to have to vacate and it’s not really us wanting to push them out or send them out, there is the idea that there are significant structural issues,” the superintendent said.

At the same board meeting, the district will consider creating a sub-committee to discuss the future development of the site for housing. Leaders at the senior center believe any development could be mixed-use and include their services.

“Something like that could be an incredible opportunity for our community. And so yeah, we have our hand up and it's raised and we'd like to have some say in the future of this site and we want to work together with the local school district,” said Nunez.

Meals on Wheels in Live Oak gets six-month lease extension



Meals on Wheels and Senior Network Services have been inhabiting the Live Oak Senior Center since 1977. In early May, they received an eviction notice and were given six months to vacate the building. The building is owned by the Live Oak School District. (Jessica A. York — Santa Cruz Sentinel).

By **PK HATTIS** | pkhattis@santacrus sentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel

PUBLISHED: December 15, 2022 at 5:55 p.m. | UPDATED: December 16, 2022 at 2:05 p.m.

SANTA CRUZ — Meals on Wheels has been given a little more roadway.

After receiving a six-month non-renewal notice in early May for the lease it has at the Live Oak Senior Center, Meals on Wheels for Santa Cruz County says it has been granted a six-month extension and its lease agreement is now set to expire June 30, 2023.

"It allows us more time to have an appropriate response in terms of being able to find a permanent location for Meals on Wheels," said Ray Cancino, CEO of Community Bridges, the organization providing administrative support and oversight for the meal service. "We obviously have contingency plans, but those plans are really hard on staff and how we would be delivering service."

The property at 1777 Capitola Road is owned by the Live Oak School District and, according to a Community Bridges release, its Board of Trustees recently approved the extension and established a subcommittee to facilitate discussion for future development of the property.

The Live Oak School District did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The district told Community Bridges in late 2018 that it was rethinking its use for the property and was exploring the possibility of remaking it into workforce housing, according to Community Bridges. But Cancino is hoping the two organizations can negotiate a mixed-use plan that both meets the dire housing need and maintains current services for the elderly.

Meals on Wheels has operated out of the Live Oak center since 1977 and for good reason. Cancino previously told the Sentinel the building has an ideal amount of space for its offices, a dining room, cooking area and storage facility. It would need to disperse some of these operations to other locations across the county should the Live Oak building become unavailable.

It distributed about 250,000 meals to seniors last year, many of whom are homebound and live below the poverty line.

Cancino says Community Bridges is also in early phases of exploring a new location in Santa Cruz. Still, a transition to the new location is not ideal, as it would require close to a \$2 million renovation investment and a two-year project timeline, according to the Community Bridges release.

“We’re never going to stop providing service,” Cancino said, adding that “it’s just going to be more difficult” if they have to transition to a new facility.

Name dropping | Tony Nunez joins Community Bridges

By **SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL** |

December 17, 2022 at 3:40 p.m.

Community Bridges on Tuesday announced Tony Nunez as its new marketing and communications manager.

Nunez comes to Community Bridges after spending the past 10 years serving as a regional news editor at the Watsonville Pajaronian, Santa Cruz Good Times and Scotts Valley Press Banner. He is also a member of the inaugural board of directors for the Pajaro Valley Health Care District, the public agency tasked with overseeing the operations of Watsonville Community Hospital.

“We are so lucky to have landed a local talent like Tony Nunez,” said Community Bridges CEO Raymon Cancino in a prepared release. “His expertise and experience with our local community and the knowledge of he has about our needs will be a huge asset to Community Bridges.”

Community Bridges delivers essential services, provides equitable access to resources, and advocates for health and dignity across every stage of life. For information, visit communitybridges.org.

Opinion: Is It Year in Review Time Already

Let us help you remember, even though you'd probably rather forget
<https://www.goodtimes.sc/opinion-is-it-year-in-review-time-already/>

December 21, 2022

GOOD WORK

NEWS NEWS

Last week, Community Bridges officially announced its hiring of Tony Nuñez, former Good Times News Editor, as their marketing and communications manager. We know he's going to do amazing work at the nonprofit, but we'll miss reading his unique and captivating reporting. We're also excited to announce that our own tireless and talented reporter Aiyana Moya will be taking over as *GT*'s News Editor, and we can't wait to see what she'll do!

Community Bridges pauses in-person Elderday services as COVID numbers rise

Temporary halt in services expected to last two to three weeks

By **PK HATTIS** | pkhattis@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel

December 21, 2022 at 3:04 p.m.

SANTA CRUZ – When COVID-19 numbers begin to surge, it posed a threat not only to the physical health of elderly and immunocompromised individuals, but also to the health care infrastructure and support systems surrounding them.

The latest example can be found in a recent announcement from Community Bridges that it has temporarily halted in-person services for its Elderday Adult Day Health Care program due to the recent spike in COVID-19 infections in Santa Cruz County.

Elderday provides care for about 150 elderly county residents every year who suffer from complex medical conditions, disabilities and dementia. However, because that population is also considered to be at high risk of a negative outcome following a COVID-19 infection, it has paused in-person services for two to three weeks and a minimum of 10 days beginning Dec. 15.

“The decision to pause services was necessary to put client health first and prevent further community spread amongst our vulnerable population,” said Community Bridges CEO Ray Cancino in a statement.

Elderday will continue with remote services so participants can continue to receive some of the medical support they have come to rely on.

Community Bridges says the decision also comes with a steep financial cost. It estimates the program will lose an estimated \$60,000 to \$80,000 in average daily attendance funding it gets from state and federal resources dedicated to Adult Day Health Care programs.

“This is a big hit,” said Community Bridges Marketing and Communications Manager Tony Nunez, “but we made the decision because it’s the right thing to do.”

Public health professionals across Santa Cruz County have been sounding the alarm for weeks about a surge of respiratory illness this winter and the wave has already made an impact.

Last week, Deputy Health Officer David Ghilarducci told the Sentinel that Dominican and Watsonville Community hospital bed capacity has reached 95% to 98% and the wave is not expected to peak until “probably a couple weeks into January.” Still, he said it was encouraging to see that the number of patients moved to the intensive care unit has remained stable.

The growing number of infections has been driven by a trifecta of respiratory viruses including respiratory syncytial virus or RSV, influenza and COVID-19.

Local wastewater data that detects the gene highly predictive of COVID-19 reflected a dramatic increase in virus spread shortly after the Thanksgiving holiday and Ghilarducci said a similar increase is expected following Christmas and New Year’s.

How can the community help bring in-person Elderday services back sooner? Community Bridges reiterated the advice consistently pushed forward by public health officials – staying up to date with COVID-19 boosters and the influenza vaccine and wearing a mask in public places when possible. Officials have also encouraged residents to stay home if they’re sick and test before indoor gatherings.



Seniors enjoy a Meals on Wheels lunch at the Watsonville Senior Center in May. —photo by Tarmo Hannula/The Pajaronian

Featured News Local News

Meals on Wheels given half-year eviction reprieve

By: TODD GUILD December 22, 2022

1 336

SANTA CRUZ—Meals on Wheels of Santa Cruz County (MOW) has received a temporary reprieve, seven months after receiving an eviction notice from Live Oak School District.

The organization has been operating out of the Live Oak Senior Center—which the school district owns—since 1977.

While the eviction notice came on May 4, the school district told Community Bridges in 2018 that it was looking to construct workforce housing on the property at 1777 Capitola Road. The organizations have been negotiating since then.

MOW, a program of Community Bridges, last year distributed roughly 250,000 meals to seniors, many of them homebound and living below the poverty line.

In addition, some 45 people per day are served by the onsite senior center, where the mid-county location draws people from throughout the county.

According to Community Bridges spokesman Tony Nuñez, the six-month extension gives both organizations breathing room to meet their goals.

But moving would be a costly endeavor for MOW, he said, and prove a logistical challenge.

The LOSD Board of Trustees made the decision at its Dec. 14 meeting, and also approved the creation of a sub-committee to discuss the future development of workforce housing at the site.

The District's plans potentially include a mixed-use housing project that could include permanent space for Meals on Wheels.

Community Bridges is in the "intermediate stages" of seeking out a location in Santa Cruz as a failsafe if the school district follows through on the eviction. Those discussions, Nuñez says, include local, county and state officials.

But making that move will require nearly \$2 million of renovations and repair and up to two years to complete the necessary improvements.

Seeking a new location would also require MOW to temporarily spread its operations across to facilities at Elderday in Santa Cruz and the City of Watsonville, requiring the organization to make renovations and capital improvements to address those impacts to the kitchens.

In addition, MOW would be required to spend thousands of dollars to rent freezer space for its Home Delivered Meal program.

"The question is that we don't have time," said Community Bridges CEO Raymon Cancino. "Construction and development is two years away, and we have a six-month extension. Those realities just don't meet our needs."

Cancino added that the organization does not want to spend its money on a temporary location.

"We want to make these one-time expenses worthwhile," he said.

Community Bridges Debunks Taxation Myths

The nonprofit provides the straight dope on the misconceptions regarding undocumented immigrants and taxes

goodtimes.sc/community-bridges-debunks-taxation-myths

By Aiyana Moya

December 27, 2022



Community Bridges has helped nearly 100 community members access almost half a million dollars in tax benefits over the past year.

There's a common misconception that undocumented immigrants don't pay taxes. Ray Cancino, CEO of Community Bridges, says that stereotype is simply false.

"They pay taxes every single day," says Cancino. "You can't negotiate down any grocery bill or any sales tax of a gas station. Millions of dollars are being taxed to the undocumented that are never returned in terms of public benefit."

For undocumented immigrants, Cancino says the fear of the government knowing their status is a significant enough deterrent to pursue any kind of tax reimbursement efforts. But the consequence of that fear means that there are billions of federal and state dollars left on the table, money that could fuel the local economy and make a big difference for those undocumented families, many of whom are living in poverty.

With the help of the Santa Cruz County ITIN and Child Tax Credit Project, Community Bridges is working to get money back into the hands of locals, by assisting eligible families and individuals in filing for their Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).

An ITIN allows undocumented immigrants to file for taxes, and makes them eligible for dozens of programs, like Child Tax Credit (CTC) and Earned Income Tax Credits (ETIC). Overall, Community Bridges has helped nearly 100 community members access almost half a million dollars in tax benefits over the past year: from tax reimbursements alone, filers have accessed approximately \$122,000 in IRS refunds, and saved a total of \$4,160 in document preparation fees.

In the current economic context, Cancino says this reimbursement money can mean the difference between buying essential goods, like diapers or groceries, or making hard decisions about what to sacrifice in order to pay rent. He points to some of Community Bridges services, like its food pantry and Family Resource Center, which have experienced a 135% increase in demand for services, as an indication of how much people need extra support in recent years.

The federal government reducing its Child Tax Credit program will be just another financial strain for low-income families, Cancino says. Throughout 2021, the program lifted 2.1 million children out of poverty, according to the Census Bureau. Now, the program will exclude some of the lowest earning families, which means that finding creative solutions to supplement income will be critical, he says.

“The reality is that money is an incredible way of stabilizing a family home from a lot of the negative impacts of our society that we see, from domestic violence to crime to substance use to homelessness,” says Cancino.



Tonje Switzer. (Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



BY CHRISTOPHER NEELY

Source: Lookout Santa Cruz



Bonny Doon resident Tonje Switzer has turned the experience of her home burning down in the CZU fire into a way to help others through post-fire recovery. "Her story," says one person who knows it, "is one of a clear-eyed motivation to succeed in values-driven work, leaving a trail of people better off, and community better built, in her wake."

DEC 27, 2022 | 5:31 AM

More than two years and four months have passed since the CZU Complex fire scorched large swaths of the Santa Cruz Mountains and swallowed nearly 1,000 homes in its path. Yet each weekday morning when Tonje Switzer leaves her Bonny Doon home to walk her dog, Astra, a tapestry of Tyvek tarps, wooden house frames and blackened redwood trunks set against a chorus of miter saws and hammers affirms the axiom she instills in her clients.

"Recovery is a marathon, not a sprint," Switzer says.

Switzer remembers sitting on her back patio on Aug. 16, 2020, as that fateful lightning storm swept in. After watching bolts strike the forest, she rushed to gather her husband, their daughter and dog into the car and evacuate the home they had moved into just a couple months earlier. The family returned two days later, their house still standing, to collect a few cherished items before a mandatory evacuation was issued later that afternoon.

Ultimately, Switzer's home would meet the same end as 910 others: reduced to a pile of ash and char. Yet before she knew her own family's fate, she sprang into action on behalf of others. Two days after the evacuation order, Switzer hiked the Pogonip, searching out those in the houseless community and providing them evacuation maps and updates on the fire's latest activity.

That show of dedication to the well-being of strangers in a moment of unparalleled personal tragedy is only the first snapshot in a still-growing mosaic of Switzer's commitment to her community in CZU's wake, as both a volunteer and in her job as a manager with Mountain Community Resources. She's done everything from laying down infrastructure to keep post-fire toxic contamination from Santa Cruz's watershed, to guiding desperate residents through the byzantine world of development permits and contractors.

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 PROMOTED CONTENT

"It's been life-changing," converted Victorian home provides respite for homeless after hospital stays

Learn how a \$250,000 Kaiser Permanente grant is helping Housing Matters transform a converted Victorian home on River Street into seven units of supportive housing.

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"She's a bright mind with a heartbeat tuned to the needs of this place we call home," says Kevin Heuer, a director with the Community Foundation Santa Cruz County. "Her story is one of a clear-eyed motivation to succeed in values-driven work, leaving a trail of people better off, and community better built, in her wake."

Switzer prefers to work in the background, which explains her slight uneasiness as we wind slowly on foot through her neighborhood, a photographer in tow, talking about the work that has earned her a designation as one of Santa Cruz's unsung heroes.

"This is weird, I am a behind-the-scenes person," Switzer admits. "But the first thing that comes to mind is that there are so many unsung heroes. When a disaster like this happens, community comes together, even those who have lost their homes and are still struggling."

Switzer's preferred title is activist. At least, that's the identity most responsible for putting her where she is today. She immigrated from Oslo, Norway, in the early 2000s after seeing a documentary about a group of antiwar protesters, many from the Bay Area, who created a human shield around U.S. bombing targets in Iraq.



(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

She initially landed in San Francisco but eventually found her way to Santa Cruz by volunteering for the local nonprofit Homeless Garden Project. Her volunteer work allowed her to stay in the U.S. for six months at a time before having to go back to Norway and renew her visa. She did this back-and-forth every six months for five years before deciding that her mission in life required additional schooling. In her mid-30s, Switzer enrolled as an undergrad at Cabrillo College and later transferred to UC Santa Cruz to complete a sociology degree.

"Sociology for me is condoned activism," Switzer says. "It's really about understanding the systems people live in — systems we create — and how we adhere or not to those systems. I've always been an activist, so for me, it was always about activism condoned through a very established structure."

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www.santacruztrails.org/newsletter

Faced with having to rebuild in the wake of the CZU fire, that expertise in human systems gave her an advantage in navigating the world of disaster insurance, rebuild permits and government approvals. Today, nearly 2½ years after the fire, only 24 homes have been completely rebuilt and passed final inspection. Switzer's was the ninth.

Switzer's work as operations manager with Mountain Community Resources, an arm of the countywide nonprofit Community Bridges, has put her in direct contact with victims of the fire, as both a disaster case manager helping people put one foot in front of the other, and part of the team deciding how to delegate a bank of donation funds to help people finance their recovery.

She was the only one of her coworkers whose home burned down in the fire. She isn't bragging about her early success, but rather leverages it to build trust with her clients at Mountain Community Resources and prove to them that she is a trusted guide who understands the entire

process of fire recovery — both emotional and technical — from salvaging personal items from the smoldering pile of ash to receiving a final signoff from the government on a new home.

"I learned early about temporary power poles vs. permanent power poles, and the size of tanks you need, and just those sort of technicalities that help you through the process more quickly," Switzer says. "I know how to work the system. And just knowing the people in different departments, knowing who the right person is for different things, it's very helpful for people."



(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Beatrice Easter, a 70-year-old Bonny Doon resident whose house of 35 years burned down in the CZU fire, says Switzer was "instrumental" in helping her get home.

"I've dealt with many heartbreaks in my life," says Easter, whose husband died five years before the fire. "This was very painful. It's very weird to find yourself all the sudden with just your cat, your car and a few clothes."

Easter says she was "banging her head against the wall" when she met Switzer. Many of her important documents were lost in the fire and she was having difficulty navigating insurance claims and permits. She says Switzer introduced her to prefabricated homes, a solution that significantly sped up the process of putting a house together. Switzer also helped her in getting appropriate estimates from contractors and approved her application with Mountain Community Resources to finance the final \$90,000 of the rebuild after Easter ran out of money.

Easter expects the prefabricated home to be delivered by the end of the year.

"Without Tonje, I would probably have to live on my property in a tent," Easter says. "To me, she is an angel."

Switzer's work with Mountain Community Resources isn't only CZU-focused. She also leads the coalition of organizations distributing COVID emergency rental assistance. Earlier in the pandemic, when the vaccine was released to the public, she led an effort to set up a helpline to help get people connected to vaccination centers.

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Switzer says CZU is still only a small part of what she does, but if she could, she says would work on CZU recovery full time. She knows people today are still stuck and struggling to navigate the rebuilding process.

"It's my community, so I think it's important," Switzer says. "It's my own experience in this community, and I want to leverage that to the benefit of others."

Outside of her work with Mountain Community Resources, Switzer is also working to set up a local branch of the national Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, which will help with coordinating future disaster relief among local and national organizations.

"With wildfires, it's not a matter of if the next one comes, but when," Switzer says.



Flood water fills Cynthia Drive and surrounding streets in Pajaro Village Monday. —Tarmo Hannula/The Pajaronian

Featured News Local News

Flood recovery information session to be held Thursday

By: STAFF REPORT January 11, 2023

3 133

WATSONVILLE—The public is invited to a flood recovery information session in Watsonville today to learn and ask questions about flood recovery and insurance issues.

The meeting will be held at the Pajaro Village Community Room, 739 Bronte Ave., from 4-5pm.

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<https://pajaronian.com/flood-recovery-information-session-to-be-held-today/>

1/2

Chief executive officer of Community Bridges Ray Cancino, Santa Cruz County Supervisor Felipe Hernandez, insurance experts and others will be on hand to answer questions.

Cancino said that a group of volunteers will be canvassing the areas of Pajaro and Bay Villages between 9am and 3pm today to inform residents of the meeting.

Support services organize amid ongoing storm impacts in Santa Cruz County

By **PK HATTIS** | pkhattis@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel

PUBLISHED: January 11, 2023 at 3:52 p.m. | UPDATED: January 11, 2023 at 3:53 p.m.

SANTA CRUZ — Even as heavy rainfall from a series of atmospheric river storms continues to batter the region, efforts are already underway to mobilize Santa Cruz County organizations and individuals looking to participate in ongoing support and recovery work.

The Santa Cruz County Community Foundation – which was founded in the aftermath of historic flooding that devastated the region in 1982 – recently announced it had launched a disaster fund to help kick-start the recovery effort.

"The Disaster Fund is ready and is a trusted place for residents to help their neighbors who have been harmed by these storms. This fund will benefit those whose homes, businesses and lives have been upended. Contributing to this fund is one of many ways in which everyone can make a difference," Community Foundation CEO Susan True said in a prepared release.

Using its network of connections with local nonprofits, the foundation says the grant money will help serve vulnerable residents and businesses in both the immediate response and long-term recovery effort.

Since the fund was activated during the New Year's weekend storms, it has collected more than \$225,000 in charitable dollars from more than 400 donations. It also announced Monday that a local family had pledged to match gifts of \$75,000 or less to help meet financial needs that are continuing to grow.

Dave Reid, director of the county's Office of Response, Recovery and Resilience, said Tuesday that the estimated damages in unincorporated regions of the county alone were in excess of \$29 million.

Those interested in donating can visit cfscc.org/disaster.

The Santa Cruz Volunteer Center is also coordinating efforts across the county for people looking to donate their time and energy. The Volunteer Center's Executive Director Karen Delaney told the Sentinel on Wednesday that a total of about 300 people have signed up to help with sandbagging at shelters and warming centers through its program. The center's neighborhood-based efforts are on hold until Monday, as more rainfall and impacts are expected later this week and safety must first be insured before mobilizing.

"For all those people eager to help, we are going to need hundreds of us to step up with the clean-up of our neighbors' homes and businesses," Delaney said in an email. "Our goal is to get shovel ready projects no later than Monday to celebrate Dr. King's call to service."

Capitola has been reeling from a massive tidal surge last week that destroyed local homes and businesses and tore off a large section of its more than 150-year-old wharf. It also must ensure its streets and infrastructure are safe prior to putting boots on the ground, but says those who are interested in volunteering should leave their information with the Recreation Division at 831-475-5935. Gift cards to local hardware and supply stores can also be dropped off at the Jade Street Community Center at 4400 Jade St.

Community Bridges, a close partner of the Volunteer Center and Community Foundation, has also been engaged in a robust support and recovery effort since the storms arrived, including shuttle services for the elderly and supply replenishment for communities in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

The nonprofit organization will also be hosting a series of information sessions to share flood recovery resources including insurance details, flood claims and rental assistance. The first multilingual session is 4 p.m. Thursday. Zoom links and event locations are at communitybridges.org/events or at its Facebook page.

"These floods, ... they're going to have impacts that we don't even know yet," said Community Bridges spokesperson Tony Nunez. He added that "we're here to try to get as many people prepared as possible," but stressed that the threat is still active and residents should heed evacuation warnings if and when they get them.

How to help

Community Foundation disaster fund: cfsc.org/disaster.

Santa Cruz Volunteer Center: scvolunteercenter.org.

Flood recovery information sessions: communitybridges.org/events.



Quick Take

Several local organizations are providing info sessions on filing storm damage claims Thursday and Friday while at the same time preparing for coming storms. Officials say recovery efforts have been hampered by the fact that the damage is so widespread, from Pajaro to Boulder Creek, and involve everything from power outages and flooding, to destruction from ocean swells. Find a complete list of resources for residents and small businesses [here](#).

Storm recovery: Find resources here as Santa Cruz County agencies, community groups scramble to coordinate

Published 19 Hours Ago

Updated 17 Hours Ago

BY HILLARY OJEDA

Source: Lookout Santa Cruz
A friend of Aptos homeowner Eric Stark helps remove thick layers of sand and debris that lay inside of Stark's beachfront home after it was damaged Jan. 5.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Have something to say? Lookout welcomes letters to the editor, within our policies, from readers. Guidelines [here](#).

Santa Cruz County community organizations and government agencies are scrambling to both respond to current urgent storm-related conditions as well as provide recovery resources.

Several organizations and officials are providing info-sessions on filing claims Thursday and Friday, starting at 4 p.m. each day, while at the same time preparing for coming storms.

JUMP TO RESOURCES AND EVENT INFORMATION

"We're doing these webinars right now, but then come Friday morning, I think we'll probably be out in the community again, trying to get people prepared with sandbags. And get people prepared with emergency radios and food and water," Tony Nuñez, communications manager for local nonprofit Community Bridges, said of his agency's current balancing act. "So it almost feels like we're doing it all over again trying to get ready for Saturday."

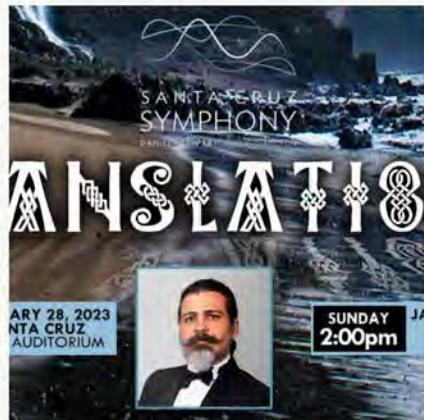
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 PROMOTED CONTENT

Santa Cruz Symphony kicks off 2023 season with guest pianist Hakan Ali Toker

Kick off the new year with "Translations" by the Santa Cruz Symphony, featuring the work of Hakan Ali Toker, Gabriella Smith, and Maurice Ravel.

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Community Foundation Santa Cruz County CEO Susan True said recovery efforts have been hampered by the fact that the damage is spread across such a wide swath of the region, from Pajaro to Boulder Creek, and involves power outages, flooding and destruction from ocean swells.

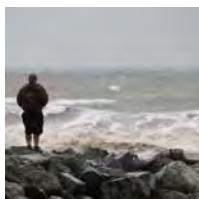
"We have both residential, business and public damage in so many different parts of the county that it's hard to even know exactly what people need," she said.

Nuñez added that local agencies and community groups are eventually aiming to have one location or platform for recovery resources for everyone in the county, but it's a difficult goal.

"We're so spread out, and the needs of, say Capitola Village are going to be totally different than the needs of the community in Watsonville, or our neighbors over in Pajaro or people up in Felton," he said. "There have been conversations about having a one-stop shop for where nonprofits can come together and triage."

He recommended that people who don't know where to start reach out to their nearest community resource center. These centers are programs run by Community Bridges.

- **Felton/San Lorenzo Valley:** Mountain Community Resources 831-335-6600
- **Capitola/Soquel:** Live Oak Community Resources 831-476-7284
- **Watsonville:** La Manzana Community Resources 831-724-2997
- **Santa Cruz:** Nueva Vista Community Resources 831-423-5747



Santa Cruz County Storm Central: The latest on the winter storms, swell damage

True added that one challenge local agencies are still trying to figure out is the enormous amount of debris removal.

"Where do we put all of this mud?" she asked. "When you look at some of the streets, some of the mobile home parks in the county, there is just so much mud." She added that the county is working to figure out how to remove all of the mud and where to take it.

As for businesses damaged by the storms, it's still unknown when they can reopen and how best to support employees affected by lost wages, particularly in Capitola, True said.

"We'd love for people to get back into Capitola Village — shopping and eating and supporting those businesses, but we don't know what closures look like and how that will affect both small business owners and employees," she said. "So there's just so much, and the rains are still coming. So planning for door-to-door outreach, planning for big volunteer events is difficult when we haven't had much of a break."

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28:04

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Get your tickets for The Lost American Jazzbook benefit performance for New Music Works featuring Tammi Brown, Dan Zemelman, and Mads Tolling – the Winner of the “Jazz with Vocals Album of the Year.”

True said the community learned a lot about disaster recovery after the CZU Complex fire in 2020. Particularly, that while the immediate needs are great — evacuations, displacement and loss of wages — the long-term needs can turn out to be greater. For instance, True said that community groups were giving out

more money 2½ years after the CZU fires than they were in the immediate aftermath of the blazes because the costs of rebuilding were so high.

"What we know is that, while we need to be in absolute immediate response, giving people relief right now, the big work is ahead," True said.

Lookout compiled several resources for local residents and businesses hoping to get started on storm recovery.

Resources and event information

Community Bridges hosts info sessions on resources, insurance information

Thursday and Friday, local nonprofit Community Bridges is helping host a series of information sessions on flood recovery resources where experts on insurance information and flood claims will also be available to respond to questions.

The meetings will be held virtually and in person; [click here](#) for more information. If you can't attend, the meetings will be recorded and shared online. The dates and locations include:

Zoom meetings

South County webinar public link — Thursday, Jan. 12, at 4 p.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81375946466>

669-444-9171 | ID: 813 7594 6466

North County webinar public link — Friday, Jan. 13, at 4 p.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86782037739>

669-900-6833 | ID: 867 8203 7739

In person

Thursday, Jan. 12, 4-5 p.m.: Live Oak Family Resource Center, 1740 17th Ave., Santa Cruz

Thursday, Jan. 12, 4-5 p.m.: Pajaro Village Community Room, 739 Bronte Ave., Watsonville

Friday, Jan. 13, 4:30-5 p.m.: Mountain Community Resource Center, 6134 Highway 9, Felton

Santa Cruz Volunteer Center

The Santa Cruz Volunteer Center is working with community organizations and local governments to coordinate where volunteers are needed. It also has a sign-up for people to request help for flood clean-up.

- To request flood clean-up help, [click here](#).
- To sign up to volunteer, [click here](#).
- Volunteer center website: [click here](#).
- To contact the volunteer center, call 831-427-5070.

Community Foundation of Santa Cruz

The Community Foundation has launched a disaster fund to support those affected by the winter storms. To donate, [click here](#).

True added that there is a \$75,000 match for donations to the foundation's disaster fund. Funds will go toward small food-service businesses, individuals who have lost wages and housing, and to help renters and homeowners with remediation of their homes.

Hundreds of homes damaged in Santa Cruz County

Some 300 homes have been damaged by rising floodwaters in the Watsonville area, according to Ray Cancino, CEO of Santa Cruz County nonprofit Community Bridges, an organization providing aid throughout the region. Those impacted are predominately residents in low-income senior housing. Some of those properties are so severely flooded and damaged that elderly residents have not been able to return home, Cancinco said, despite floodwaters dissipating and the bulk of evacuation orders being downgraded to warnings.

Watsonville issues mandatory evacuation orders for flood prone neighborhoods

By: JOHANNA MILLER January 3, 2023

2 317

WATSONVILLE—Mandatory evacuation orders have been issued for Watsonville neighborhoods with a high risk of flooding during this Wednesday's storm, which is said to hit the region early tomorrow morning.

City officials urge residents who live within [this map's](#) blue-shaded area to evacuate tonight. Choosing not to evacuate puts you and your family at risk and will delay rescue operations, they said.

Watsonville City Council member Jimmy Dutra said in a video posted to Facebook that officials are currently going door-to-door asking people in the senior villages to evacuate.

"We cannot guarantee that our emergency services can get to you if you decide to stay behind," he said. "I know this is a very emotional time for people, but we want you to be safe."

An overnight shelter has opened at Cesar Chavez Middle School (440 Arthur Road). This site will serve as the central location to accommodate residents.

Ramsay Park (1301 Main St.) will serve as a meeting place for residents to get information on available services. There will be limited onsite services.

For those who need transportation services, Lift Line and Santa Cruz METRO will be available to assist. Call **831-688-9663** for information.

Sandbags are still being filled and distributed by Public Works and nonprofit volunteer teams. Currently bags are available at Joyce-McKenzie Park (500 Joyce Court). Supply is limited, and officials are trying to prioritize residents of high-risk areas.

Community Bridges program helps residents with tax benefits

By **PK HATTIS** | pkhattis@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel

PUBLISHED: January 8, 2023 at 2:36 p.m. | UPDATED: January 8, 2023 at 2:36 p.m.

SANTA CRUZ — For many, the tax-filing process can be notoriously difficult to navigate. But one Santa Cruz County nonprofit is helping guide residents through that process so they can access the benefits they are eligible for.

Watsonville-based Community Bridges announced that last year it helped about 100 local community members access nearly \$500,000 in tax benefits through its Santa Cruz County Individual Taxpayer Identification Number and Child Tax Credits outreach programs. It also assisted with state and federal Earned Income Tax Credits.

According to a Community Bridges release, the organization's four Family Resource Collective locations have helped 61 individuals and families renew or file for new taxpayer numbers since December 2021, providing them with roughly \$122,000 in IRS benefits and more than \$4,000 in savings for document preparation fees.

Additionally, 97 program participants successfully applied for state and federal Earned Income Tax Credits, resulting in an estimated \$232,800 in benefits.

"Undocumented immigrants across the nation leave billions on the table that they are legally eligible to receive," Community Bridges CEO Ray Cancino said in a statement. "Our goal has always been to improve the well-being of families through creative and focused asset-building work such as this project and we are thankful for the support from David and Lucile Packard Foundation and Community Foundation Santa Cruz County for their support in sponsoring this program."

Those who do not have and are not eligible to obtain a Social Security number can simply file for and obtain a taxpayer ID to become eligible for dozens of taxpayer benefits, according to the release. The Community Bridges program essentially helps eligible residents obtain and prepare paperwork to receive their ID numbers through a paid contractor and then pays for the participant's tax filing fees.

Some public benefit programs that the project helps community members navigate include MediCal insurance and the supplemental nutrition assistance program CalFresh.

"This brings in local dollars into the community, strengthens a person's case for future citizenship reviews, and provides low-income community members needed funds for basic needs, improving local outcomes for individuals and families," wrote Community Bridges Marketing and Communications Manager Tony Nunez in the release.

Federal and statewide Earned Income Tax Credits keep about 840,000 Californians – 376,000 of whom are children – out of poverty, according to the California Poverty Measure, which does research on poverty and inequality. Another taxpayer report from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy estimates that undocumented taxpayers contribute more than \$21 million in state and local taxes and represent 10% of the state's workforce.

During this recent tax cycle, Community Bridges processed more than 400 calls to its taxpayer helpline and scheduled 167 appointments.

For information on the program, visit communitybridges.org.