



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wednesday, March 15, 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)**
Consent agenda moved to June 21st Meeting.
- 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 CB Spring Storm Response*
 - 9.2 BOD Retreat Information/Update*
- 6:45 11. Development Report–Tony Nunez/ Anna Vaage (15 min)**
- 7:00 12. Finance Committee Update – Doug Underhill (20 min)**
- 7:20 13. Newspaper Articles**
- 7:20 14. Items for Next Agenda (10 min)**
- 7:30 15. Adjourn Regular Meeting**

Next Meeting: *Wednesday, June 21, 2023, 5 pm - 7:30 pm, Meeting Location TBD – Zoom will be offered.*

COMMUNITY BRIDGES Program Budget Summary January 31, 2023											
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	2,707,575	2,706,261	0	(1,314)	205,331	7.6%	-	0.0%	394,555
Early Education Division	500,512	2,344,980	2,770,781	2,743,948	750,000	(26,833)	473,679	17.1%	1,308	0.0%	327,507
Elderday	55,151	2,043,432	2,152,978	1,898,120	284,718	(254,858)	(199,707)	-9.3%	47,782	2.2%	310,951
Meals on Wheels	1,449,078	2,856,854	2,511,665	2,607,125	200,000	95,460	1,544,538	64.1%	18,460	0.7%	354,166
Lift Line	(86,780)	2,807,659	2,991,852	3,002,871	120,000	11,019	(75,761)	-2.9%	(9,703)	-0.3%	307,231
La Manzana Commty Res	328,607	1,135,721	1,602,423	1,620,062	50,000	17,639	346,246	21.8%	10,336	0.6%	227,225
Mountain Commty Res	377,584	674,721	986,387	974,264	75,800	(12,123)	365,461	37.4%	1,713	0.2%	81,588
Nueva Vista Commty Res	337,237	354,910	453,757	465,906	65,000	12,149	349,386	77.7%	8,278	1.8%	65,007
Live Oak Commty Res	194,821	308,834	474,105	439,504	98,000	(34,601)	160,220	33.8%	(37,931)	-8.0%	66,203
CACFP (CB FY)	65,606	4,233,196	4,011,270	4,048,628	40,000	37,358	102,964	11.2%	-	0.0%	67,619
Administration	67,026	2,283,002	2,330,290	2,394,389	220,259	64,099	131,125	5.6%	10,545	0.5%	16,064
Philanthropy	460,561	338,535	355,509	309,380	48,000	(46,129)	414,432	116.6%	(10,432)	-2.9%	51,595
TOTAL PROG OPERATIONS	4,213,302	22,002,319	23,348,592	23,210,458	1,951,777	(138,134)	3,817,913	20.18%	40,356	0.2%	2,269,711
LOCR-Capital Campaign	445,746		25,000	33,438	0	8,438	454,184	NA	22,167		0
CBHQ FY 22/23 Activity		-	186,320	170,322	0	(15,998)	(15,998)	NA	(12,629)		0
501 Main Street	621,951		3,709,951	3,088,000	0	(621,951)	-	NA	(121,353)		14,184
Fixed Assets & Gen'l Agy	4,157,435	-	1,780	28,752	0	26,972	4,184,407	NA	28,188		0
TOTAL AGENCY	9,438,434	22,002,319	27,271,643	26,530,970	1,951,777	(740,673)	8,440,506	20.18%	(43,271)	-0.2%	2,283,895

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

*582K of Prior Year Funds were in approved BOD budget for programs: 188K ELD, 54K Admin, 340K MOW

*Below the line 501 Main expenditures will turn into capitalized fixed assets and will affect -Cash-Flow / +Net assets in terms of neutral financial gain/loss

*501 Main projected expenses do not include a \$331,591 10% contingency in the budget - this contingency is unfunded by program funds at this time

Program Budget Summary
January 31, 2022

PROGRAM NAME:

WIC	+25K personnel (New WNA hire), +14K media, +22K supplies, +58K CDPH rev., new Vitamin Angels grant \$32.7K
Early Education Division	630K expenditures required (154K additional is proj personnel), HP enrollment increased 1
Elderday	+75K personnel, +20K other exp., +130K PATH CITED grant this FY (of total 489K)
Meals on Wheels	+18K personnel, -5K food, +25K proj donations (8K endowment)
Lift Line	+Vehicle Operating and Taxi
La Manzana CR	+20K CalFresh, +17K Outside Contraxts VEPS, +15K personnel, +10K other expenses
MCR	-15K personnel, +5K maint, +5K prog. Supplies
Nueva Vista CR	-10K personnel, -3K other exp., +6K CalFresh, -10.5K outside contracts
Live Oak CR	+20K personnel, +8K other exp., +5K CalFresh, -10K outside contracts, -2K LISC
CACFP	Oct DCH Count = 378, Projected Nov = 371 (less migrant homes), slight Increase personnel
Administration	Increased personnel costs (Overlap of Facilities), New G.A. Hire, +Indirect from programs
Philanthropy	Donations continuing to come in steady. +Media 10K, Proj 48K donations Feb to June
LOCR-Cap Campaign	Actual YTD less proj FY 22/23 expenses, 12/31/2022 \$479,184
La Manzana Property	Actual Revenue/Expense through 1/31/2022
501 Main Street	Minimal change form prior month, waiting on budget updates from Swenson
FAs & Agy Unrestr.	Actual YTD less projected FY 22/23 expenses, Endowment Balance 1/31/2022 \$724,613
Total Agency	Total Programs -138K, BOD aproved budget -582K



Contributed Paola Galan and son Daniel Vasquez at the Santa Cruz County WIC headquarters in downtown Watsonville.

Featured News Local News

Changes proposed to Women, Infants and Children program

By: TODD GUILD February 14, 2023

WATSONVILLE—The United States Department of Agriculture is asking for community input as it updates its Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program for the first time since 2014.

The shift includes offering more nutritious food geared to meet a larger variety of cultures.

Anyone can make suggestions through Feb. 21. The agency will review the suggestions and implement the changes later this year.

The changes, [announced in November](#), come from recommendations from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) and the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) 2020-2025 edition.

Also included in the changes is lowering children's sugar intake and shifting from juice to whole fruit.

In addition, the proposed package offers a wider array of food that reflect different cultures, such as quinoa, teff, wild rice, millet, cornmeal and whole wheat naan flour, all of which make up important aspects of various cultural diets.

The proposed changes also include non-dairy substitution options for milk such as soy-based cheese, and requiring lactose-free milk to be offered.

Santa Cruz County's WIC program is overseen by Community Bridges.

"I am super excited about the proposed changes to the WIC Food Package," said Santa Cruz County WIC Director Dana Wagner. "There is more variety and healthier food options for families. These changes would allow low-income families to purchase high quality foods that might not normally be available to them. It is a huge win."

According to the USDA, WIC food packages are designed to supplement the food participants already eat and fill in "key nutritional gaps to support healthy growth and development."

The changes will not only give WIC state agencies the ability to allow for personal and cultural food preferences and individual dietary needs, it will also allow them to make the program more appealing for both current and potential participants, the USDA said.

"For the more than 6 million moms, babies and young children who participate in WIC—and the millions more eligible to participate—these proposed revisions have the potential to make positive, life-long impacts on health and well-being," said Stacy Dean, deputy undersecretary for food, nutrition and consumer services. To make comments about the proposed changes to WIC benefits through Feb. 21, visit bit.ly/3lzR7AT.

By [natalie gutierrez](#)

February 21, 2023 8:40 PM

published [February 21, 2023](#) 6:24 PM

Food on Wheels of Santa Cruz could relocate



SANTA CRUZ, Calif: (KMUV-TV): Santa Cruz food services, Comida sobre Ruedas, an adult-serving nonprofit operated by Community Sources, could end at the headquarters location, something that worries many adults.

Located at 1777 Capitola St is the Live Oak Senior Center in Santa Cruz, which serves as the distribution center for the Food on Wheels program for Santa Cruz County.

Your duty is to feed hundreds of seniors. There they deliver healthy food to at least 800 people.

"Tomorrow at 6 pm the school district will make the decision to remove the Live Oak senior center," said Community Bridges CEO Raymon Cancino. "To remove the kitchen from the program and to evict our community services."

In 2018, the Live Oak school district informed Puentes Comunitarios that they planned to use the property where the adult center is located to convert it into housing for district workers.

Cancino added that simply moving location could affect many adults.

"This can affect a lot of people," Cancino said. "We are going to spend \$18,000 a year more."

Cancino added that \$18,000 different meals that can be given to seniors will be affected.

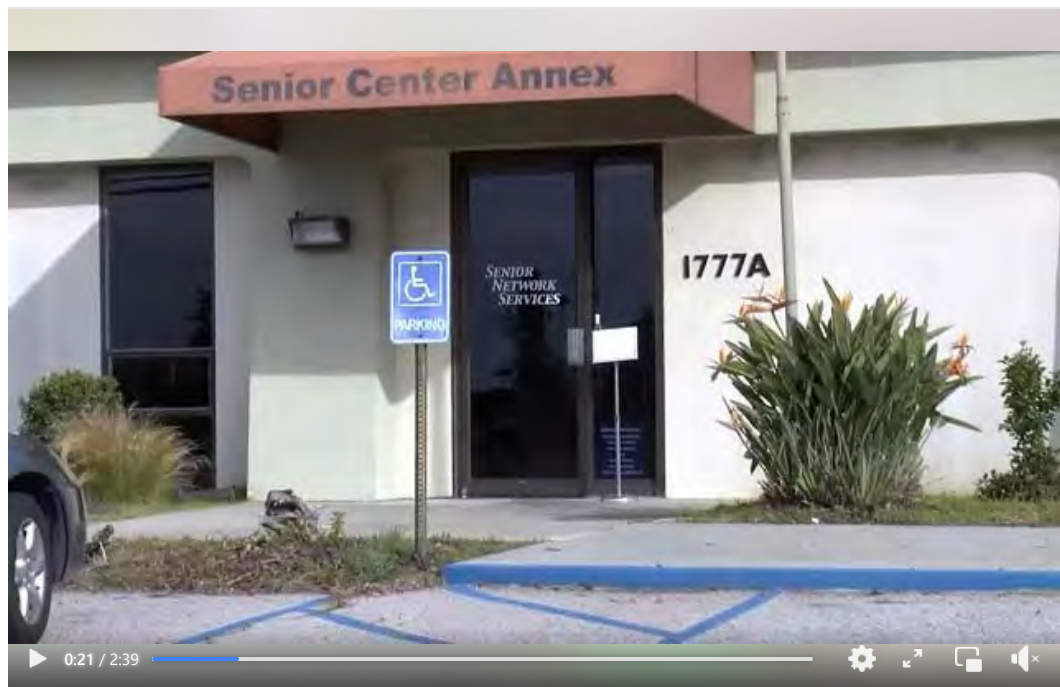
Something that Cherry Walsh, who has been coming to the center for 10 years, is sad to know.

"I was sad," Walsh said. "I was frustrated because it's a good benefit."

Community Bridges representatives said that Food on Wheels services will continue in different locations, even if they have to move out of the district and although they warn that they have to reduce the number of beneficiaries.

We have contacted the Live Oaks ISD for their response to this controversy but have not received a response.

<https://kion546.com/t23/2023/02/21/santa-cruz-meals-on-wheels-may-relocate/>



EL FUTURO DE UN CENTRO QUE PROVEE RECURSOS A LAS PERSONAS DE LA TERCERA EDAD EN LIVE OAK ES INCIERTO. ADRIANA FREDERICK,...



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NoticiasYa Costa Central

February 21 at 4:14 PM ·

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EL FUTURO DE UN CENTRO QUE PROVEE REC LAS PERSONAS DE LA TERCERA EDAD EN LIVE INCIERTO. ADRIANA FREDERICK, SUTTON EXP CUÁL ES LA SITUACIÓN QUE PODRÍA AFECTA COMIDAS QUE RECIBEN DECENAS DE ANCIAN

Most re

- Marta Cancino

Que triste situación y complicado para Raymond que ha luchado para que est personas tengan todo tipo de apoyo

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Community Bridges CEO Ray Cancino (right) speaks about the impending eviction for Meals on Wheels and Senior Network Services in Live Oak during a press conference on Tuesday. Photo: Todd Guild/The Pajaronian

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Live Oak School District to decide fate of senior programs

By: **TODD GUILD** February 21, 2023

LIVE OAK—Officials from Meals on Wheels and Senior Network Services are asking the community to make its voice heard about an impending decision by the Live Oak School District (LOSD) to evict the organizations from the building they have called home for nearly five decades.

The LOSD Board of Trustees is set to discuss the issue Wednesday night.

The District and the Senior Center Organization purchased the property at 1777 Capitola Road in Live Oak in 2004. When the Senior Center disbanded in 2016, it turned over its claims to the buildings to LOSD, which has continued to rent the space to Meals on Wheels and Senior Network Services.

But in 2018, the LOSD announced plans to create teacher housing on the property, reasoning that it would help recruit and retain teachers.

The Oct. 21 eviction date forced the organization to scramble to find a replacement site, and LOSD in December gave MOW an extension through June.

In an informational packet for the upcoming meeting, the district has signaled it plans to uphold that date.

“The Board has determined that the eviction notice will stand,” the District states. “No more funds, even from the non-profits organizations, should be used on a building which will be torn down.”

That leaves Community Bridges—the organization that runs MOW—less than four months to find a new site with the amenities it needs, including freezer space, a dining area and a commercial kitchen.

“We know this is not a permanent location,” says Community Bridges CEO Ray Cancino. “We know that we have not been wanted, yet I think there is a reality that we have only asked for one thing, which is more time. More time for us to make the right decision in choosing the right location and investing in the right program”

At the time of its eviction, LOSD told Community Bridges the Senior Center needed roughly \$500,000 in maintenance. Community Bridges responded with an estimate of its own for a little more than \$100,000, and offered to foot that bill on the condition that the lease was extended for two years.

Cancino questions why LOSD is moving forward with plans to demolish the building, despite having no immediate plans to develop the site. In addition, he says, Community Bridges has been negotiating with LOSD on the possibility of a mixed-use housing project that could include Meals on Wheels.

“There is actually a long road ahead for them, from pre-approval to pre-development plans to assessment fees to the analysis that is needed that they haven’t even committed to doing,” he says. “I don’t think they even have the \$300,000 for demolition.”

Community Bridges estimates that setting up in a temporary location would cost \$180,000 per year for the next two years, which he says would lead to 18,000 fewer seniors that they could serve.

Seniors Council Area Agency on Aging Executive Director Clay Kempf says that, if the LOSD Board votes to move forward with the eviction, it would violate an agreement in Measure E, a \$14.5 million bond measure approved in 2004 that allowed LOSD to purchase the property.

The language of that bond, Kempf says, explicitly states that the funds would be used to keep Meals on Wheels running.

“To renege on that promise, not only does it affect those 18,000 meals per year but it really calls into question, do senior organizations want to partner with other parties going forward?” he says. “It creates a real lack of trust which only harms all of us.”

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

...

If you go

What: Live Oak School District Board of Trustees meeting

When: 6pm, Wednesday Feb. 22

Where: Via Zoom. For information, [click here](#).

BUSINESS

Live Oak School District board will vote to evict Meals on Wheels

The board will vote Wednesday



Lisa Berkowitz, Program Director for Meals on Wheels Santa Cruz County speaks to the importance of continued senior services in Live Oak. (Aric Sleeper / Santa Cruz Sentinel)

By **ARIC SLEEPER** | asleeper@santacruzsentinel.com |

PUBLISHED: February 21, 2023 at 4:10 p.m. | UPDATED: February 21, 2023 at 6:34 p.m.

LIVE OAK — The Live Oak School District's Board of Trustees is expected to vote Wednesday evening on whether to go ahead with the planned June 30 eviction of Meals on Wheels for Santa Cruz County and Senior Network Services from the Live Oak Senior Center on Capitola Road.

“After ongoing conversations and communications with the Live Oak School District, they put something on their meeting agenda without communicating it to us,” said Community Bridges CEO Ray Cancino. “We were all caught off guard, especially without any future plan or project.”



Community Bridges CEO Raymon Cancino expresses his frustration with the Live Oak School District's impending vote to evict Meals on Wheels and Senior Network Services from the Live Oak Senior Center in June. (Aric Sleeper / Santa Cruz Sentinel)

Live Oak School District Superintendent Daisy Morales is recommending that the board vote Wednesday to evict Meals on Wheels and Community Bridges from the building by June 30.

“Since 2004, the Live Oak School District has been pleased to lease space at the Live Oak School District Community Center to several local not-for-profit organizations, including the Senior Center until 2016, Meals on Wheels, and the Senior Network. It has been a privilege to support these organizations, who provide great services to our community,” wrote Morales in the meeting’s agenda. “While we recognize that these services benefit our community, the Live Oak School District Board of Trustees has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that all district assets are optimized for service to students, staff and families in our public schools.”

The Live Oak Senior Center has served as the primary kitchen and distribution center for Meals on Wheels for Santa Cruz County since 1977 and serves about 800 clients. In late 2018, the Live Oak School District informed Community Bridges that it wanted to develop workforce housing for teachers on the property that houses the senior center.

“There’s a lot that’s lost with the fact the two sites here are going away,” said Lisa Berkowitz, Meals on Wheels for Santa Cruz County program director. “There are real people who receive these services and a lot of those people will be affected.”

Community Bridges, which operates Meals on Wheels, has been actively engaged in conversations with the school district since that time and was hoping to be included in the district’s recently formed ad-hoc committee to explore the possibility of a mixed-use development on the property that could also house Meals on Wheels and other senior services.

“We were hoping that we could work with the school district to come up with a multiuse housing project here,” said Tony Nunez, Community Bridges communications manager. “We were hoping to keep our services on the first floor with the housing on top, but it doesn’t seem like that’s something the Live Oak School District wants to explore at this moment.”

The county sold the Live Oak Senior Center to the Live Oak School District in 2004 as a part of a bond measure passed in 2004, known as Measure E.

The argument made in favor of the measure, compiled by Bruce McPherson, John Laird and Jack O’Neill and others, states, “Measure E funds will also be used to make sure the Live Oak Senior Adult Education Center is able to continue to serve our community. The Senior Center will lose its lease and be forced to close if the land on which it is located is not purchased by someone willing to lease it back to the Center. Allowing the Senior Center to close, which supports many valuable programs like Meals on Wheels, Senior Network, and the Alzheimer’s Association would be a loss to the entire community. If the District buys this land, the Senior Center will remain open. In addition, this purchase will provide additional parking space for Live Oak Elementary School.”

Seniors Council Executive Director Clay Kempf expressed his confusion about the school district’s urgency to remove the senior center’s service providers, which will result in a reduction of about 18,000 fewer meals per year, he said.

“We’re going to see a reduction of meals because of something completely arbitrarily done by the Live Oak School District,” said Klempf. “It’s really disappointing in a lot of ways. I feel like the school district doesn’t want to honor the commitments they made in 2004 with the ballot measure.”

According to Nunez, Community Bridges has made some progress in finding a new home for Meals on Wheels and the other senior services, but it will take years to retrofit a similar commercial kitchen space, which means Meals on Wheels would have to split its operations to multiple smaller facilities and purchase a mobile kitchen. This would result in hundreds of thousands of dollars in increased costs and impact the food options and services currently provided to seniors around Santa Cruz County, according to Nunez.

“If they follow through with the June 30 deadline to evict us, we’ll have to enact other contingency plans to continue services until another kitchen is ready, which could take about a year and a half to two years,” said Nunez. “What we’ve been asking from the school district is to stay for about a year and a few months to help us get going, but right now they are sticking to the June 30 deadline.”

To attend the virtual meeting, visit losd.ca.

If you go

What: Live Oak School Board meeting.

When: 6 p.m. Wednesday.

Where: Virtual Meeting held on Zoom.



Community Bridges CEO Ray Cancino (right) speaks about the impending eviction for Meals on Wheels and Senior Network Services in Live Oak during a press conference on Tuesday. Photo: Todd Guild/The Pajaronian

Featured News Local News

Eviction decision tabled for Meals on Wheels

By: **TODD GUILD** February 23, 2023

LIVE OAK—The Live Oak School District (LOSD) Board of Trustees on Wednesday tabled a decision of whether to enforce an eviction notice to the senior programs using their building in Live Oak.

Meals on Wheels—overseen by Community Bridges—and Senior Network Services both use the building at 1777 Capitola Road.

But LOSD has announced its intentions to build teacher housing at the site, and last year gave the organizations a June eviction notice.

The delay will allow the board to consider the possibility of including the senior services organization in future development plans.

"I believe there is much hope for the possibility of an intergenerational facility here, which will be a benefit to all of Live Oak for many many years past when any of us are involved in this project," says Senior Network Services Executive Director Corey Azevedo.

LOSD with the Senior Center Organization purchased the property in 2004. The Senior Center disbanded in 2016, and LOSD has continued to rent the space.

In an informational packet for the Wednesday meeting, the district signaled that it planned to uphold that date.

It is unclear what the upcoming discussions will bring.

But if it is forced to move, Meals on Wheels would have to find a space with an industrial kitchen, in addition to industrial refrigerators and freezers, among other things. Setting up a temporary location would cost nearly \$200,000, says Community Bridges CEO Ray Cancino.

At the time of its eviction, LOSD told Community Bridges the Senior Center needed roughly \$500,000 in maintenance. Community Bridges responded with an estimate of its own for a little more than \$100,000, and offered to foot that bill on the condition that the lease was extended for two years.

Cancino questions why LOSD is moving forward with plans to demolish the building, despite having no immediate plans to develop the site. In addition, he says, Community Bridges has been negotiating with LOSD on the possibility of a mixed-use housing project that could include Meals on Wheels.

"There is actually a long road ahead for them, from pre-approval to pre-development plans to assessment fees to the analysis that is needed that they haven't even committed to doing," he says. "I don't think they even have the \$300,000 for demolition."

Community Bridges estimates that setting up in a temporary location would cost \$180,000 per year for the next two years, which he says would lead to 18,000 fewer seniors that they could serve.

Seniors Council Area Agency on Aging Executive Director Clay Kempf says that, if the LOSD Board votes to move forward with the eviction, it would violate an agreement in Measure E, a \$14.5 million bond measure approved in 2004 that allowed LOSD to purchase the property.

The language of that bond, Kempf says, explicitly states that the funds would be used to keep Meals on Wheels running.

"To renege on that promise, not only does it affect those 18,000 meals per year but it really calls into question, do senior organizations want to partner with other parties going forward?" he says. "It creates a real lack of trust which only harms all of us."



Run by nonprofit Community Bridges, Meals on Wheels of Santa Cruz County has been headquartered at the Live Oak Senior Center.

(Via Community Bridges)

BY JESSICA M. PASKO

Source: Lookout Santa Cruz



Quick
Take

Meals on Wheels, which has served more than 10 million meals to older Santa Cruz County residents in almost 50 years on the scene, is facing some uncertainty after being asked to move from its headquarters in a building belonging to the Live Oak School District. The program could also use some helping hands.

MAR 7, 2023 | 12:00 PM

This story was originally featured in this week's Lily Belli on Food newsletter. Be first the first to hear about food and drink news in Santa Cruz County — sign up for Lily's email newsletter [here](#) and text alerts [here](#).

Meals on Wheels of Santa Cruz County is hosting its 10th annual Food for the Heart luncheon fundraiser next week, which comes as the organization faces relocation and a shortage of volunteers. Run by Community Bridges, the program has

been serving meals to older adults in the county for almost 50 years — with over 10 million meals served during that time.

For years, the program has been headquartered at the Live Oak Senior Center on Capitola Road, which serves as the primary kitchen and distribution facility. The property is owned by the Live Oak School District, which plans to use the space for much-needed teacher housing and has ordered Meals on Wheels to move on or before June 30.

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District officials say they understand the benefits these services bring to the community, but that the school district's primary responsibility is to ensure all district assets are being optimized for service to students, staff and families.

Tony Nuñez, spokesperson for Community Bridges, says the organization has asked the district for more time to find a new home and retrofit a new location so it can continue its services without interruption.

"If the current move-out date is not changed, we expect to incur additional operating costs of \$180,000 annually," says Nuñez. "We think there is a mutually beneficial solution to this issue, and we're encouraged by the board's decision to pull a vote on the item off their Feb. 22 agenda to conduct more research into some of these potential decisions."



Volunteers from Meals on Wheels in action.

(Via Community Bridges)

A new date for the vote hasn't been scheduled, and school district officials haven't confirmed whether there will be one.

In addition to seeking a new location, Meals on Wheels also needs more volunteers. Demand for its services has risen in the past few years, but the program lost around half of its volunteers when COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders went into place.

"Volunteers are really the lifeblood of community-based organizations like Meals on Wheels," Nuñez says, "and we strongly encourage folks who are interested in helping to reach out to us."

JESSICA M. PASKO

Santa Cruz County CalFresh, Medi-Cal recipients to see less money, more paperwork

By Jesse Kathan | March 7, 2023 | Tags: City of Santa Cruz, City of Watsonville, food insecurity, health, Live Oak, Medi-Cal



Nueva Vista Community Resources in Santa Cruz provides food at its pantry in 2020. (Kara Meyberg Guzman — Santa Cruz Local file)

SANTA CRUZ >>> About 31,000 Santa Cruz County residents who receive food money through CalFresh are expected to receive fewer dollars in April when a pandemic related program expires. Nearly 86,000 county residents on Medi-Cal health insurance also must renew their coverage starting in June, county leaders said.

CalFresh and Medi-Cal are changing because a federal public health emergency is expected to end May 11.

- CalFresh monthly money is expected to drop to pre-pandemic levels in April. Food banks remain an alternative place to get free food.
- Starting in June, Santa Cruz County staff plan to send requests to patients who need to renew their Medi-Cal applications.
- Medi-Cal recipients whose mailing address has changed in the past three years must renew their coverage or notify the county to receive renewal forms, staff said.

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Community Bridges CEO Ray Cancino said the process of having to apply annually for Medi-Cal can be a “deterrent” to maintaining coverage, particularly for first-generation immigrants or others unfamiliar with government processes.

Losing automatic re-enrollment “means people are also probably not going to the doctors and not getting proper visits early enough, because they don’t know they have to reapply or they don’t remember that they have to reapply,” Cancino said.

CalFresh changes

CalFresh is California’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Since March 2020, households enrolled in CalFresh have received at least \$95 more a month in emergency allotments. That extra money will end this month, according to CalFresh.

This summer, CalFresh also will reintroduce work requirements for students who receive food assistance. During the pandemic, some students from low-income households could receive CalFresh food stamps without working. Starting this summer, students will have to work at least 20 hours a week. There are some work exemptions, such as a disability that prevents work.

The reduction in allotments will be a blow to the county’s low-income residents, said Ray Cancino, CEO of the Watsonville-based nonprofit Community Bridges.

“The additional dollars were a huge help and support for not only families and children, but also seniors and individuals on fixed incomes,” Cancino said. Last year in Santa Cruz County, CalFresh recipients included about 9,660 children and about 5,000 people age 60 and older.

Community Action Board Director Paulina Moreno said the end of emergency allotments is concerning to farmworkers. “Especially with what many of them experienced in January, which is a huge loss of income,” Moreno said, referring to the floods and delayed agricultural work. Many farmworkers will continue to have less work as January’s storm damage delays harvests, she said.

Cancino pointed to an Urban Institute report that suggested that states with emergency allotments reduced poverty by 9.6% and reduced child poverty by 14% relative to anticipated poverty levels without the increased funds.

“It’s a shame that we’re reverting back and not continuing such programs that had some rich data outcomes,” Cancino said. “I think that we should look at this as a failed policy decision.”

CalFresh is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The start and end of the emergency allotments were enacted by federal laws. CalFresh recipients may be eligible for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s other food assistance programs.

More information about CalFresh is available at Santa Cruz County’s CalFresh Customer Service Centers:

- 1020 Emeline Ave., Building B, Santa Cruz.
- 18 West Beach St., Watsonville.
- By phone at 888-421-8080.

For additional support, contact USDA's Hunger Hotline. The Hunger Hotline connects callers with emergency food providers in their community, government assistance programs, and various social services. Call 1-866-3-HUNGRY (1-866-348-6479) or 1-877-8-HAMBRE (for Spanish 1-877-842-6273) 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Medi-Cal changes

California residents on Medi-Cal increased by 22% between February 2020 and October 2022, according to state data. That increase is largely due to automatic enrollment, according to the Public Policy Institute of California.

In Santa Cruz County, 85,964 people were enrolled in Medi-Cal as of February 2023, up about 25% from February 2020, according to county data.

Medi-Cal recipients need to submit their renewal paperwork on the month they first applied for coverage. Those who applied in June, for instance, will be the first who need to renew coverage, said Josie Montes, senior human services analyst for the County of Santa Cruz.

County staff plan to start to mail renewal paperwork to June applicants in May, Montes said. Large, flat manila-style envelopes are expected. Medi-Cal patients must submit renewal paperwork by the end of June to keep their health insurance active.

The county plans to process 5,000 to 6,000 renewals per month, Montes said. The process includes verification of applicants' income.

Some applicants can be verified through federal databases and won't have to fill out paperwork. "That usually works for about 20% to 25% of the caseload," said Montes. Medi-Cal patients with verified incomes below the program's limits will be notified by mail that they've been automatically re-enrolled, Montes said.

Most Medi-Cal recipients will need to submit pay stubs or other documentation of their income. Medi-Cal recipients who have moved in the past three years will need to update their mail address with the county, Montes said.

Recipients can submit a form with new contact information in several ways:

- In person at 1020 Emeline Ave., Santa Cruz and 18 West Beach St., Watsonville.
- By mail at P.O. Box 1320 Santa Cruz, CA, 95061.
- By fax at 831-786-7100.
- Online at MyBenefitsCalwin.org, CoveredCA.com and GetCalFresh.org.
- Recipients also can update their contact information, or ask when they will need to renew their application, by calling the county's Human Services Department 1-888-421-8080.

Once re-enrolled, Medi-Cal recipients need to report changes to employment or income within 10 days, Montes said. If patients are no longer eligible for Medi-Cal, they'll be offered a paid plan through Covered California, the state's insurance marketplace. Covered California plans include partial subsidies for lower-income customers.

Community outreach

Watsonville nonprofit Community Action Board is partnering with the county to reach out to Medi-Cal recipients who may need help reapplying.

Part of the effort includes reaching non-English speaking farmworker communities in South County, said Moreno. Beginning in April 2022, Community Action Board staff have conducted presentations

about Medi-Cal at farms across South County.

“One of the biggest needs in our community is language support,” said Moreno. About 40% of Santa Cruz County Medi-Cal recipients primarily speak Spanish, she said. Others speak the indigenous languages Triqui, Mixteco and Zapotec indigenous languages.

The county has created one-page fliers for Medi-Cal renewal in English, Spanish and Mixteco.

Low-income immigrants often don’t apply for or renew their benefits because they’re afraid of a record of public assistance negatively affecting their immigration status, Moreno said. According to a Department of Homeland Security rule effective December 2022, public assistance for food and housing cannot be held against an applicant in immigration proceedings.

“We’re still dealing with the aftermath of an administration that was very open about targeting the immigrant community,” said Moreno. “That’s been the biggest challenge, is the fear that continues to perpetuate in the community.”

Medi-Cal or CalFresh applicants who need help in Spanish or indigenous languages can contact Community Action Board:

- In person at 406 Main St., Suite 207, Watsonville.
- By phone at 831-763-2147.

Evacuation Order Issued in Watsonville

Evacuation warnings throughout Santa Cruz County are likely to become orders overnight <https://www.goodtimes.sc/evacuation-order-issued-in-watsonville/>

By Todd Guild

March 9, 2023



Sandbag preparation in Watsonville. PHOTO: Tarmo Hannula

The light rain that fell all day Thursday was “just the very, very top-tip of the iceberg” of a storm system expected to dump several inches of rain through Friday, says National Weather Service Meteorologist Brian Garcia.

“We still have a lot to get through overnight,” Garcia says.

The city of Watsonville late Thursday issued evacuation orders for several streets west of Corralitos Creek at risk for flooding in advance of storms expected Thursday night.

The evacuated areas include Union, Lincoln and Marchant streets, north to East Lake Avenue.

Just half an inch fell on Thursday, but the already saturated ground has sent much of the water into the San Lorenzo River—which is already seeing a sharp rise—raising new flood concerns. And several more inches are expected over the next 18 hours, he says.

“We’re already seeing that churn up, just with half an inch of rain up in the mountains,” he says. “So that just speaks to how wet the soils already are, that they cannot absorb any more moisture.”

Soquel Creek was beginning to rise Thursday afternoon, and officials will monitor that, along with Corralitos Creek and the Pajaro River, which is not expected to reach flood stage. In addition, winds are expected to knock over trees across the county, Garcia said.

Garcia’s message to the community is to heed evacuation orders if they come and to protect yourself as much as possible.

“If you haven’t taken preparations by now to get yourself to a safe location or to harden your structure, it’s probably too late at this point,” he says.

County officials issued evacuations for several areas of unincorporated Santa Cruz County. Still, Undersheriff Chris Clark says there is a “high likelihood” that those warnings could transition to orders overnight.

To see if your residence is in the evacuated area, visit community.zonehaven.com
Overnight shelters are being established at the following locations:

Watsonville Veterans Memorial Building

215 E. Beach St., Watsonville

Cabrillo College Gymnasium opens at 7pm

6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos

Ramsay Park on Main St. will serve as an information and reunification center.

Santa Cruz County will establish a daytime temporary evacuation point at the **Scotts Valley Community Center at 370 Kings Village Road.**

Each shelter site will provide a place to sleep, food, supplies and support services. Pets are allowed at the Cabrillo site if kept within carriers.

For those needing transportation services, Lift Line will be available to assist by calling **831-688-9663**.

Emergency notifications will be made through **CodeRED**, an emergency phone notification system.

Register to receive information at www.scr911.org or text **SCR911** to **99411**.

Flooding, high winds bedevil Pajaro in Monterey County as Bay Area braces for new atmospheric river

Warnings say Salinas River could inundate roads between Monterey Peninsula and rest of county

[Kevin Fagan](#)

March 12, 2023 Updated: March 12, 2023 9:29 p.m.

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/california/article/pajaro-river-floods-rain-17834719.php>



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Anais Rodriguez comforts her dog, Mile, Saturday at an evacuation center at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds in Watsonville. They were evacuated from their Pajaro home. Nic Coury/Associated Press

Evacuation centers filled up Sunday with people fleeing Monterey County floods -- Pajaro was emptied of its 1,700 residents, and parts of Watsonville also saw people leaving their homes -- as more rains and high winds bedeviled Northern California, and threatened more to come.

Monterey County officials warned Sunday night that the Salinas River could crest in Spreckels at Highway 68 before daylight Monday, and said the overflow “is expected to result in significant flooding of nearby agricultural land and may affect structures and critical infrastructure.”

“The projections now include a probable inundation of roadways between the Monterey Peninsula and the rest of the county to include the city of Salinas through Blanco Road and Highway 68,” said the notice tweeted by the county.

A 120-foot-wide section of a levee on the Pajaro River crumbled Friday night, causing surging waters to inundate Pajaro homes, many of whose residents are Latino farmworkers. Shelters were quickly set up in Watsonville fairgrounds and other locations while rescue crews went door to door to take those trapped to safety. Those rescues continued throughout the area Sunday.

The levee, built in 1949, has failed several times over the past decades and was set to be shored up next year as part of a state flood risk project.

Levee break on Pajaro River in Monterey County forces more than 1,000 to evacuate



Monterey County spokesperson Nick Pasculli said the entire town of Pajaro was finally evacuated Sunday, with no apparent holdouts left behind. But with rain still falling, heavily at times, emergency crews were girding for more trouble — particularly along the Salinas River, where evacuation orders went out in the afternoon.

Some residents were reluctant to come into shelter because they lacked immigration authorization, but county spokesperson Maia Carroll said they should not fear being turned over to federal agents. “We want them to come in,” she said. “They shouldn’t worry.”

State and local crews were trying to plug the levee breach by dumping riprap and rocks into it nonstop, day and night. But officials gave no estimate on when they could fully block the water from rushing into the town.

“We might know more in 12 to 24 hours,” said Lew Bauman, interim general manager of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency. Most of the rock was coming from a nearby quarry, which was speeding up the work, he said.

Bauman also said nobody in the flooded areas should drink tap water until it’s been declared safe, as a precaution in case sewage lines become overfilled and contaminate the drinking water supplies.

County Sheriff Tina Nieto said that given the enormous clean up task ahead, it might be months before Pajaro residents could return to their homes. Crews were busy with flooding problems in the storms that hit January, she said, but the latest flooding is more intense.

“People are taking it seriously. This is real. Mother Nature is fickle,” she said. “It’s a holy moly situation.”

Two more shelters were opened Sunday late morning, in Greenfield and Castroville, bringing to five the number taking in evacuees. Drop-in centers where flood refugees can be directed to resources were also busy at the libraries in Prunedale, Carmel Valley and King City.

High-water rescue teams in trucks and boats did their heaviest work early Saturday, when they pulled more than 90 people from homes, cars and places where they were stranded, leaving Pajaro a virtual ghost town. But patrols were still finding people to help Sunday throughout the worst-hit areas of the county, Pasculli said.

No deaths or injuries were reported by early afternoon. More than 3,400 people were under evacuation orders or warnings in the county, from Aroyo Seco and San Ardo to Pajaro and Gonzales.

“The situation in the county is dynamic with lots of variables,” Pasculli said. “But people are rising to the occasion and really supporting the community.”

The busiest evacuation point was the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds shelter in Watsonville, where about half of the population of Pajaro was sleeping on cots, getting meals and clothing and being directed to disaster assistance. Some fled so quickly just after midnight Saturday as the Pajaro River surged around their homes that all they brought with them were their pajamas.

“People were woken up in the middle of the night and had to leave immediately,” said Ray Cancino, CEO of the nonprofit Community Bridges, which was helping with disaster relief at the shelter. “There’s a lot of good will out there, and people are really pitching in.

“The elephant in the room is that, based on the damage and the river still set to go up Monday, we’re going to be dealing with this for several more weeks.”

Floodwaters overwhelmed several roadways in the area Sunday, closing the northbound lanes of Highway 1 from Moss Landing to Watsonville and all lanes of the highway between Salinas Road and Highway 129, according to the California Highway Patrol. Pasculli said it may be days before all the roads are clear again, because after the water recedes they will have to be checked for damage.

It was an all-hands-on-deck crisis throughout the area.

Monterey County Supervisor Luis Alejo went door to door with rescue teams to help Spanish-only speakers during the weekend’s evacuations, and described a “hectic, a worst case scenario we hoped would never happen.” Recovery for displaced residents will stretch into the summer at least, he said, and in the meantime hundreds, if not thousands, of agricultural workers — and the industry itself — will be struggling.

“We know when the waters recede people will want to go back home as soon as possible, but the damage is expected to be very extensive from floodwaters and mud,” he said. “I was there in the 1995 floods (the last catastrophic breach of the river, causing two deaths and extensive damage), and what we learned is it will take months for people to rebuild and fix their homes. Floodwaters have contaminants and can carry health hazards and cause mold. That takes a lot to fix.

“And this couldn’t have come at a worse time for Pajaro,” he added. “These are low-income Latino families, and the start of the harvest season for strawberries, raspberries and other crops is in March. Now farmworkers will be out of work, and some crops won’t be harvested. And that’s going to have implications for our nation’s food supplies.”

Downpours also continued pelting the area further south on Sunday, and mudslides closed Highway 1 at Big Sur. In the Sierra Nevada, heavy snow made traveling risky on mountain roads. The Bay Area was smacked with off and on rains causing spinouts on the roads, and the Central Valley was enduring thunderstorms and wind gusts of up to 70 mph in the hills.

The CHP shut down several lanes of Interstate 880 heading both north and south around Thornton Avenue in Hayward in the afternoon as water turned part of the roadway into ponds.

Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency Sunday for six more counties to bolster storm response and relief efforts: Calaveras, Del Norte, Glenn, Kings, San Benito and San Joaquin. He has now issued the declaration for most of the state's counties over the past few days.

The Pajaro River was receding slightly Sunday, but the town was likely to remain underwater for days — and the river was expected to rise again Monday night as another atmospheric river sweeps into Northern California, said National Weather Service forecaster Ryan Walbrun.

“The next main event is the atmospheric river coming in Monday after midnight, and that will get the flood and high wind advisories up,” he said. “I don’t think there’s a county that’s going to be spared — all the usual suspects will have a lot of water, including the rivers in Sonoma and Napa counties, and the streets of San Francisco.

“It’s going to be very similar to what we had last Thursday.”

The current battering is expected to be more destructive than January's storms that flooded 20,000 acres in Monterey County and caused \$336 million in damage, with people from the Pajaro River area evacuated for eight days.

The weather service tweeted a warning Sunday: “A High Wind Warning has been issued for Monday night through Wednesday morning! Power outages and tree damage is expected!”

The area was expected to get a break Sunday evening, but that was minor solace to those dealing with the flood mess of the past couple of days.

Said Walbrun: “This is not a strong storm, even though we’re seeing thunder and high winds.”

San Francisco Chronicle staff writer Nora Mishanec contributed to this story.

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