

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES CITY OF SANTA MARIA, CALIFORNIA

**April 7, 2026, 5:30 p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers
110 East Cook Street
Santa Maria**

Roll Call: Councilmember Maribel Aguilera, Councilmember Gloria Soto, Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores, Mayor Alice Patino

Staff Present: City Manager David W. Rowlands, Assistant City Manager Chuen Wu, City Attorney Thomas Watson, Director of Finance Rebecca Campbell, Fire Chief Bradley Dandridge, Director of Community Development Chenin Dow, Interim Director of Recreation & Parks Dennis Smitherman, Director of Public Works Brett Fulgoni, Library Director Dawn Jackson, Chief Human Resources Officer Graciela Reynoso, Director of Utilities Shad Springer, Police Chief Christopher Williams, Chief Deputy City Clerk Donna Schwartz, Assistant City Clerk Alexandra Valadez

CLOSED SESSION - 3:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Patino called the meeting to order at 3:39 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No public comment was received.

3. RECESS-CLOSED SESSION

3.a Conference with Labor Negotiators, Pursuant to California Government Code §54957.6

4. RECONVENE TO REGULAR SESSION

REGULAR SESSION - 5:30 P.M.

5. INVOCATION

Pastor Mark Wright from Heritage Evangelical Presbyterian Church gave the Invocation.

6. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Aguilera led the Pledge of Allegiance.

7. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Patino called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m.

8. PRESENTATIONS

8.a Proclamation Proclaiming April 6 through 10, 2026, as “National Community Development Week”

The City Council presented the Proclamation to Community Programs Staff.

8.b Proclamation Proclaiming April 13 through 20, 2026, as “International Dark Sky Week”

The City Council presented the Proclamation to Mike Wondolowski.

8.c Proclamation Proclaiming April 19 through 25, 2026, as “National Library Week”

The City Council presented the Proclamation to Kathleen Gabel, President of the Friends of the Santa Maria Public Library.

8.d Proclamation Proclaiming April 20 through April 25, 2026, as “Arbor Week”.

The City Council presented the Proclamation to Amanda Corcoran.

8.e Proclamation Proclaiming April 2026, as “Donate Life Month”.

Mayor Patino moved this item before item 8.a.

The City Council presented the Proclamation to Scott Burns, Donate Life Ambassador.

8.f Proclamation Proclaiming April 2026 as “Fair Housing Month”

The City Council presented the Proclamation to the Legal Aid Foundation.

8.g Proclamation Proclaiming April 2026 as “Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month”

The City Council presented the Proclamations to Ann McCarty, Executive Director of North County Rape Crisis & Child Protection Center.

8.h Presentation – Santa Maria Downtown Multimodal Assessment

The City Council received a presentation regarding the Santa Maria Multimodal Assessment (SMDMA) funded by Caltrans. The presentation was given by Vin James, Liaison, Santa Barbara County - Caltrans, District 5.

8.i Presentation – Value of Volunteering

The City Council received a presentation about the value of volunteering from Midge Nicosia.

8.j Presentation – Commander Daniel Rios’ Graduation from the FBI National Academy

The City Council received a presentation from Police Chief Christopher Williams on the recent attendance and graduation of Commander Daniel Rios from the FBI National Academy.

9. REPORT BY THE CITY ATTORNEY FROM CLOSED SESSION

City Attorney Thomas Watson reported that instructions were provided to the Labor Negotiators.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD (Not to exceed 15 Minutes)

Mayor Patino invited public comment. Speaking from the public was Gary Hall and Sofia Navarro.

11. CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent Calendar Items 11.a.1 through 11.i.1 (except 11.d.3) were approved as presented, including the adoption of Resolution Nos. 2026-37, 2026-38, 2026-39, 2026-40, 2026-41, 2026-42, 2026-43, 2026-44, 2026-45, 2026-46, 2026-47, 2026-48, 2026-49, and Ordinance No. 2026-01. The recorded vote appears with each item below.

Councilmember Soto pulled item 11.d.3 for discussion and a separate vote.

One written public comment was received from Nicole Bryant for 11.d.3.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Adopt the Consent Calendar as submitted.

Ayes (4): Councilmember Aguilera, Councilmember Soto, Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores, and Mayor Patino

Motion carried by a recorded vote (4 to 0)

11.a CITY MANAGER/CITY CLERK DEPARTMENT

11.a.1 Ordinances and Resolutions

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Waived the reading in full of all Ordinances and Resolutions. Ordinances on the Consent Agenda will be adopted by the same vote cast at the first meeting, unless City Council indicates otherwise.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.a.2 Approval of Minutes

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Approved the Minutes of the regular City Council meeting of March 3, 2026, and special meeting of March 17, 2026.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.a.3 Support for CommUnify Head Start/Early Head Start Child Care Center

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Authorized support for the nonprofit organization CommUnify's grant application to the County of Santa Barbara for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to establish a Head Start/Early Head Start Child Care Center at 420 East Fesler Street, including a local match in the form of in-kind contributions that may include a waiver of City permitting fees; parking lot striping; and the waiver of City business licensing fees in an amount not to exceed \$25,080; and
2. Authorized the City Manager, or designee, to execute all related documents.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.b CITY ATTORNEY DEPARTMENT

11.b.1 Adoption of a Resolution Approving the Donation of Salvador Dali Destino Paintings from John and Nina Baldwin

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-37.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Adopted a Resolution approving the donation of Salvador Dali *Destino* paintings to the City of Santa Maria from John and Nina Baldwin.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.c COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

11.c.1 Adoption of a Resolution Approving Entering into the California Home Energy Renovation Opportunity (HERO) Program and Approve Amendment to Joint Powers Agreement

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-38.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution consenting to the inclusion of properties within the City's jurisdiction in the California HERO Program to finance distributed generation renewable energy sources, energy and water efficiency improvements and electric vehicle charging infrastructure and approving the amendment to a certain Joint Powers Agreement between City of Santa Maria and Western Riverside Council of Governments related thereto;
2. Authorized the membership of the City of Santa Maria in the WRCOG; authorizing WRCOG to accept applications from property owners, conduct contractual assessment proceedings and levy contractual assessments within the territory of the City; and
3. Authorized the City Manager, or designee, to execute all related documents; and authorize related actions.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.c.2 Adoption of a Resolution Approving Las Brisas Apartments Planned Development Permit Request for a Time Extension

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-39.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Adopted a Resolution approving Permit Amendment A2026-0003 granting a two-year time extension for Planned Development Permit PD2022-0011 located at Lots 1 and 2 of Tract 6008 (APNS 117-990-001 and 117-990-002).

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.d FINANCE DEPARTMENT

11.d.1 Payment of Warrants

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Order ratified subject to having been certified as being in conformity with the budget and having been approved for payment by the Director of Finance.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.d.2 Payment of Payroll

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Order ratified subject to having been certified by the proper Department Directors, as shown on records on file in the Department of Finance, and having been approved for payment by the Director of Finance.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.d.3 Adoption of a Resolution Approving an Updated General Fund Reserve Policy and Section 115 Trust

The City Council received a staff report from Director of Finance Rebecca Campbell.

This item was continued to a later date alongside budget discussions.

11.d.4 Adoption of a Resolution Retroactively Approving Agreement with Paymentus Corporation for Electronic Payment Processing Services

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-40.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution retroactively approving a purchase agreement with Paymentus Corporation, a Delaware Corporation, for electronic payment processing services; and
2. Authorized City Manager, or designee, to execute the eight-year agreement.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.e FIRE DEPARTMENT

11.e.1 2025 Annual Fire Department Report

The City Council received and filed the 2025 Annual Fire Department Report.

11.f LIBRARY DEPARTMENT

11.f.1 Adoption of a Resolution Approving the Receipt of Donation from the Friends of the Santa Maria Public Library

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-41.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Adopted a Resolution approving the receipt of a \$28,900 donation from the Friends of the Santa Maria Public Library.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.g PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

11.g.1 Adoption of a Resolution Approving a Partnership with People's Self-Help in Support of an Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Grant Application and Authorization to Submit a Partnership Letter

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-42.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution authorizing the City of Santa Maria to partner with People's Self-Help Housing in support of an Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities grant application and authorizing submission of a partnership support letter; and
2. Authorized the City Manager, or designee, to execute and submit a partnership support letter and any related documentation necessary to support the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities grant application.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.g.2 Adoption of a Resolution Approving the Award of a Construction Agreement with Main Line Engineering Construction, Inc. for the REAP Pedestrian Improvements – 2026 Phase 1, Project No. 2026-04

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-43.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution awarding a Construction Agreement to Main Line Engineering Construction, Inc. for the REAP Pedestrian Improvements – 2026 Phase 1, Project No. 2026-04, in the amount of \$240,238; and
2. Authorized the City Manager, or designee, to execute the agreement and any future amendments or change orders necessary provided such amendments are within the scope of the project and consistent with the adopted project budget; and
3. Authorized the City Manager, or designee, to execute necessary project amendments to the agreement not to exceed the contingency amount.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.g.3 Adoption of a Resolution Approving the award of a Construction Agreement with Main Line Engineering Construction, Inc. for the REAP Pedestrian Improvements – 2026 Phase 2, Project No. 2026-05

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-44.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution awarding a Construction Agreement to Main Line Engineering Construction, Inc. for the REAP Pedestrian Improvements – 2026 Phase 2, Project No. 2026-05, in the amount of \$107,995; and
2. Authorized the City Manager, or designee, to execute the agreement and any future amendments or change orders necessary provided such amendments are within the scope of the project and consistent with the adopted project budget; and
3. Authorized the City Manager, or designee, to execute necessary project amendments to the agreement not to exceed the contingency amount.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.g.4 Adoption of a Resolution Approving the Award of a Construction Agreement with Baja Coast Fence Inc. for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Security Fencing Project, Bid No. 2025-06

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-45.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution approving the award of a Construction Agreement with Baja Coast Fence Inc., for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Security Fencing Project, Bid No. 2025-06, in the amount of \$680,810.60 and approve appropriation of additional funding in the amount of \$58,582.04 with the approved Wastewater Enterprise Fund budget (SC7300|CC0260|FD640) for Fiscal Year 2025-26; and
2. Authorized the City Manager, or designee, to execute the agreement and any future amendments or change orders necessary provided such amendments are within the scope of the project and consistent with the adopted project budget

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.g.5 Adoption of Resolution Approving Amendment No. 6 to the Operations & Maintenance Agreement with RATPDev

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-46.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution approving Amendment No. 6 to the Transit Operations & Maintenance Agreement with RATPDev to extend the term until June 30, 2028, and approve an increase to compensation for a total amount of \$16,383,897.90 for Fiscal Years 2026-27 and 2027-28; and
2. Authorized City Manager, or designee, to execute agreement and implement the service enhancements and wage augmentations.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.h RECREATION & PARKS DEPARTMENT

11.h.1 Adoption of Ordinance No. 2026-01 Amending Ordinance No. 2025-03 Revising Titles 2 and 10 of the Santa Maria Municipal Code to Clarify Final Approval Authority for All Recreation Fees Rests with the City Council

Action: Adopted as Ordinance No. 2026-01.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Adopted Ordinance No. 2026-01, Amending Ordinance No. 2025-03, Amending the Santa Maria Municipal Code Title 1 "Administration," Chapter 2-14 "Recreation and Parks Commission," Section 2-14.06 "Recommendations to Council: Powers Generally" and Title 10 "Recreation and Parks," Chapter 10-1 "Administration," Section 10-1.02 "Adoption of Regulations".

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.h.2 Adoption of a Resolution Amending Agreement with Wallace Group for the Sports Complex Design Project

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-47.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution approving an amendment to agreement with Wallace Group for the Sports Complex Design Project approving an increase in the amount of \$518,467 for a total contract amount of \$772,940 for additional design phasing and engineering and landscape architectural design services; and
2. Authorized City Manager, or designee, to execute agreement.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.h.3 Adoption of a Resolution Approving the Purchase of Playground Equipment for the Santa Maria Sports Complex from Landscape Structures, Inc. (RecWest Outdoor Products, Inc. Representative)

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-48.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution approving the purchase of playground equipment for the Santa Maria Sports Complex from Landscape Structures, Inc., represented by RecWest Outdoor Products, Inc., in the amount of \$343,772.50; and
2. Authorized the City Manager, or designee, to execute all necessary documents to complete the purchase.

Motion carried by a recorded vote

11.i UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

11.i.1 Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing and Appropriating Additional Funding for the Well 15 Equipping Project, Bid No. 2025-04

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-49.

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution authorizing and appropriating additional funding of \$1,045,000 for the Well 15 Equipping Project, Bid No. 2025-04; and
2. Approved the additional funding for Fiscal Year 2025-26 in the Water enterprise fund (SC7340|CC0280|FD620).

Motion carried by a recorded vote

12. APPOINTMENTS

12.a Appointments to Block Grants Advisory Committee

Moved by: Mayor Patino

Seconded by: Councilmember Soto

Block Grants Advisory Committee

Councilmembers Aguilera and Soto considered appointments for unexpired terms ending in July 2026, appointed by the Mayor, and confirmed by Council.

Three new applications were received by Mauricio Ambriz, Grace Paluck, and Jose Ramirez.

Councilmember Aguilera postponed her appointment.

Councilmember Soto appointed Jose Ramirez to serve an unexpired term ending in July 2026.

Ayes (4): Councilmember Aguilera, Councilmember Soto, Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores, and Mayor Patino

Motion carried by a recorded vote (4 to 0)

12.b Appointments to Fill a City Council Vacancy on Outside Boards, Commission, and Committees Requiring City Council Representation

Moved by: Mayor Patino

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Mayor Patino appointed Director of Utilities to Central Coast Water Authority and the City Council to ratify.

Mayor Patino directed staff to postpone the remaining appointments.

Ayes (4): Councilmember Aguilera, Councilmember Soto, Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores, and Mayor Patino

Motion carried by a recorded vote (4 to 0)

13. PUBLIC HEARING

13.a Fiscal Year 2026-27 Community Development Block Grant Program Drafted Action Plan

The City Council received a staff report from Community Programs Manager Rosie Rojo.

Mayor Patino opened the public hearing at 7:46 p.m. Speaking from the public was Dawnette Smith, Melissa Chatfield, Michelle Ward, Bradlee Kirkman, Ann McCarty, Nikki Freeman, Pearl Garza, Marco Quintanar, Danielle Garcia, Hilda Zacarias, Marla Landreth, Roberto Rodriguez, and Ken Dahmen.

Written public comment was received from Brittany Avila Wazny.

The City Council considered the Block Grants Advisory Committee's recommendations for allocation for Fiscal Year 2026-27 Community Development Block Grant Program Public Services and Capital funds.

Moved by: Councilmember Soto

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Allocated the remaining \$37,500 to Public Services programs in keeping with the BGAC's recommendations; and
2. Reviewed and approved the overall allocations and contingencies of the drafted Fiscal Year 2026-27 Community Development Block Grant Action Plan.

Ayes (3): Councilmember Soto, Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores, and Mayor Patino

Noes (1): Councilmember Aguilera

Motion carried by a recorded vote (3 to 1)

14. REGULAR BUSINESS

14.a Automated Red-Light Camera Program Research Summary

Moved by: Councilmember Aguilera

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

The City Council directed staff to move forward with the development of a proposal for an Automated Red Light Camera Pilot Program, including contingencies on the Request for Proposal.

Ayes (4): Councilmember Aguilera, Councilmember Soto, Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores, and Mayor Patino

Motion carried by a recorded vote (4 to 0)

14.b Drone as a First Responder and Real Time Crime Center Program

The City Council directed staff to move forward regarding implementation of the proposed Drone as First Responder and Real-Time Crime Center programs.

Speaking from the public was Glenn Morris.

14.c Update on Senate Bill 707 (SB 707) Amendments to the Ralph M. Brown Act and Implementation Status

Received and filed an informational update regarding SB 707 amendments to the Ralph M. Brown Act and the City's implementation status. Staff report was given by Chief Deputy City Clerk Donna Schwartz.

14.d Consideration of a Resolution Declaring Intent to Rename Cesar E. Chavez Drive or Return with Replacement Name Options and an Implementation Plan or Adopt Resolution Renaming Drive

The City Council received a staff report from Assistant City Manager Chuen Wu.

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-50.

Moved by: Councilmember Soto

Seconded by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

1. Adopted a Resolution declaring its intent to rename Cesar E. Chavez Drive; and
2. Provided directions for staff to return with recommended replacement name options and an implementation plan with inclusion of views of residents living on Cesar E. Chavez Drive; or

Ayes (4): Councilmember Aguilera, Councilmember Soto, Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores, and Mayor Patino

Motion carried by a recorded vote (4 to 0)

14.e Discussion Filling City Council District 1 Vacancy Created by the Resignation of Former Councilmember Carlos Escobedo on March 3, 2026

The City Council discussed options to fill City Council District 1 vacancy. Chief Deputy City Clerk Donna Schwartz gave the staff report.

Speaking from the public was Jaime Cruz, Gloria Melgar, Carina Batalla, Gale McNeeley, Gary Hall, Gabrielle Hernandez, along with applicants Ricardo Batalla, Gary Michaels, Maria Salguero, and Osvaldo Sotelo.

Action: Adopted as Resolution No. 2026-51.

Moved by: Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores

Seconded by: Mayor Patino

Adopt a Resolution appointing Ricardo Batalla to fill the Councilmember District 1 vacancy created by the resignation of Councilmember Carlos Escobedo.

Chief Deputy City Clerk Donna Schwartz administered the Oath of Office to Councilmember Batalla.

Ayes (3): Councilmember Aguilera, Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Flores, and Mayor Patino

Noes (1): Councilmember Soto

Motion carried by a recorded vote (3 to 1)

15. REPORT BY CITY MANAGER

City Manager Rowlands reported that the next City Council meeting is scheduled for May 5th. Agenda items are anticipated to include the SB 1 Report, Annual Report regarding City of Santa Maria workforce vacancies, recruitment, and retention efforts pursuant to AB 2561, General Plan adoption, road maintenance, Block Grants Advisory Committee appointments, and Outside Board appointments.

16. ORAL REPORTS OF COUNCILMEMBERS AND OFFICERS (INCLUDING AB 1234 REPORTS)

Councilmember Flores stated she attended the Read Across America events at Tayloe Elementary School and Bill Libbon Elementary School; the 62nd Annual City of Santa Maria Employee Service Awards Dinner; City Council Closed Session; and the CommUnify meeting.

Councilmember Aguilera announced she attended the Santa Barbara County Subregional Reading Event, Allan Hancock Attorney Presentation, SBCAG Meeting, Barajas Foundation Career Day, Mayors Youth Task Force, Oasis Center Fundraiser, Housing Summit Chamber of Commerce, 2026 Rodeo Queen Kick-Off, and the EconAlliance Board Meeting.

Councilmember Soto indicated that she attended the Parent Graduation Ceremony; 62nd Annual City of Santa Maria Employee Service Awards Dinner; Budget Ad Hoc Committee meeting; Question and Answer event for the Santa Maria Youth Leadership Group; City Council Closed Session; Budget Workshop; General Plan Briefing; and the Santa Barbara County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council meeting.

Mayor Patino reported she attended the Ben Heighes Show, Santa Maria Police Department 2025 Annual Awards Ceremony, Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) meeting, 62nd Annual City of Santa Maria Employee Service Awards Dinner, Budget Ad Hoc Committee meeting, Read Across America events at Taylor Elementary School and Bill Libbon Elementary School, California Association of Councils of Governments Regional Leaders Forum in Long Beach, Rick Blaemire Show, Fighting Back Santa Maria Valley Board meeting, West Coast Kustoms meeting, meeting with the Office of External Affairs, Central Coast Community Energy Policy Board of Directors meeting, Chamber Mixer hosted by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Maria Valley, Mayor's Youth Task Force meeting, Food Truck Ordinance meeting, Marian Regional Medical Center Foundation Board meeting, Santa Maria Valley Housing Summit, LAFCO meeting, and the 2026 Rodeo Queen Kick-Off.

17. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the City Council, Mayor Patino declared the City Council meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Chief Deputy City Clerk

Alice M. Patino, Mayor