

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

MARCH 18, 2025

PRESENT:

**Alexis Hill, Chair**  
**Jeanne Herman, Vice Chair**  
**Michael Clark, Commissioner**  
**Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner**  
  
**Janis Galassini, County Clerk**  
**Eric Brown, County Manager**  
**Mary Kandaras, Chief Deputy District Attorney**

ABSENT:

**Clara Andriola, Commissioner**

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 10:02 a.m. in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, County Clerk Jan Galassini called roll and the Board conducted the following business:

**25-0172      AGENDA ITEM 3 Invocation.**

Mr. Rajan Zed, Universal Society of Hinduism President, provided the invocation.

**25-0173      AGENDA ITEM 4 Public Comment.**

Mr. Terry Brooks read an original poem about the history of politics, socioeconomics, and healthcare.

Ms. Cindy Bansen thanked the Commissioners for their service to the community and for the opportunity to speak. She commented that the invocation that day alluded to people being led into the light, which she viewed as one of the tasks of libraries. She said libraries were for everyone and provided a place for people to go under a variety of circumstances. She conveyed that libraries were an equalizing force in a world where the gaps between people were widening. She described librarians as dedicated and noted that they invested their time and money to educate themselves so they could share that dedication with others. She opined that librarians were good people who wanted the best for the patrons of their libraries. She hoped Commissioners would consider funding libraries as well as possible.

Ms. Tara de Queiroz spoke about libraries and the library budget. She disclosed that it was the third time she had attended a Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meeting to speak. She revealed that she did not know what she would have done without the library system when her children were young. She shared that they spent a lot of time in the library, and the librarians were important in raising her kids. She spoke about an executive order to eliminate the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) that was issued the prior Friday. She said the IMLS was the only federal agency for America's libraries. She explained that the IMLS provided grants to states and libraries, including the grant that allowed the Washoe County Library System (WCLS) to buy the mobile library known as the Bookmobile. She determined that the elimination of that federal funding source meant it was even more important for the County to fully fund the WCLS. She acknowledged that the County budget outlook for the upcoming fiscal year was not positive, but she reasoned that, in some ways, that made library funding even more essential. She stated that the WCLS represented a relatively small part of the overall budget but provided a huge return on investment. She discerned that some of the greatest needs in the community were for services for seniors, children, and unhoused people. She felt that the WCLS had demonstrated success in all of those areas. She predicted that if people went into a WCLS library on any day that week, they would find unhoused people getting out of the cold. She expected that they would also find librarians helping seniors access technology and children there for Kids Café, which she mentioned was a nutrition program provided in partnership with the Food Bank of Northern Nevada (FBNN). She summarized that, in all cases, trained library staff could be observed helping people access services. She thought it would be a waste if those librarians lost their jobs and the community lost their expertise and dedication. She concluded that the WCLS had already trained staff and built infrastructure to provide those essential community services, and it would greatly benefit all County residents to preserve the WCLS services without interruption.

Ms. Sandee Tibbett thanked Commissioner Clark for a South Reno town hall meeting he held on March 12, 2025. She said it was very useful and informed her about Senate Bill 319 (SB319). She urged the BCC to oppose SB319, which she noted was sponsored by Senators Skip Daly and Angela Taylor. She discerned that a close look at SB319 revealed that it would be a financial drain with no limits. She stated it was not just a bill, but also a burden on all County taxpayers. She understood that SB319 would let the County and the Cities of Reno and Sparks merge fire services into a County district. She warned that SB319 promised efficiency but delivered an unfunded mandate with unchecked taxing power. She specified that Section 8 of the bill allowed for limitless property assessments and authority for the County to increase rates as costs rose. She viewed it as a hidden tax trap that would hit residents the hardest. She thought if people dug deeper, they would find that the bill was a backdoor bailout for the Reno and Sparks Fire Departments, which she noted were funded by taxpayers. She remarked that Reno's budgeting had been murky for years, unlike the clarity provided by the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) and the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District (NLTFPD), which she found superior. She described that under SB319, the BCC was directed to create a new board comprised of two BCC members and two members from the Cities of Reno and Sparks. She said the new board would require a majority vote and agreement from every group for any action. She believed that structure risked gridlock,

eroded the control of the BCC, and prioritized urban needs over rural communities. She supposed that mismatched departments would be merged, which she theorized could weaken firefighting. She said the bill ignored labor contracts and left staffing and costs unclear. She warned that Truckee Meadows residents faced double taxation by having to pay for old debts and fund the new district. She observed that, per Section 11 of the bill, taxpayers were still liable for outstanding indebtedness even if the new district was dissolved. She thought augmented funding and mutual aid agreements would be better, and advocated for keeping control local. She concluded that SB319 was a risky, expensive overreach that burdened taxpayers to fix shortfalls of the Cities of Reno and Sparks. She asked Commissioners to reject the bill and champion a solution that protected the safety, finances, and local voice of residents. Ms. Tibbet spoke about concerns she had with trees being removed near her residence in the Horizon Hills neighborhood of District 5. She noted that her neighborhood was adjacent to Peavine Peak and had become surrounded by warehouses. Ms. Tibbett displayed an image, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. She described that the image showed a small sample of the concerning activity, which she theorized was happening all over the County. She said she would send additional pictures by email.

Mr. DeAndre Burleson stated that he was homeless. He disclosed that he had an active case with the Reno Municipal Court for sitting or lying in a prohibited doorway. He informed that he had been in communication with the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) and was waiting for additional correspondence from them about approval for housing assistance. He expressed his desire to submit a number of documents for the public record that included hotel receipts, medical records, and his Social Security verification letter. Mr. Burleson divulged that he had no food, no place to sleep, was assaulted at night, and experienced hate crimes daily. He said he had no money to wash clothes or take care of himself. He shared that he received \$23 of credit each month on his Nevada Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card, and the balance on his Wells Fargo account was currently \$5. Mr. Burleson provided documents, copies of which were placed on file with the Clerk.

Chair Hill recalled efforts to connect Mr. Burleson with services and stated that efforts to help him would continue.

Ms. Penny Brock displayed an image, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She spoke about the BCC's passage of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) the prior week. She said the BCC was advised that there was no funding for the CAP, which she took issue with. She commented that the County Sustainability Department had at least two employees, who she supposed were included in the budget. She recalled that Sustainability Manager Brian Beffort reported that he would get federal funds, private funds, and local funds for grants. However, she noted that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) planned to eliminate funding for climate change. She wondered where the funding for the County CAP would come from. She stated that there was a budget meeting planned for the following week and questioned whether CAP funding would be included. She observed that the Sustainability Manager was not elected and remarked that the voters in the County and across America overwhelmingly elected

Donald J. Trump as President. She said one of the reasons was because he promised to get rid of what she referred to as the radical climate change agenda that she felt put an undue tax and business burden on Americans. She opined that President Trump had kept his promise and appointed Lee Zeldin as the EPA Secretary. She read from the image she displayed and theorized that the County might be in trouble with the EPA, who she advised had indicated they wanted reports of activities at the local level that were not in line with the current federal administration. She expressed her interest in learning how Commissioners planned to fund the CAP.

Mr. John Belfort explained that he was at the meeting to provide an update about his \$5 million claim against the County. He reported there was also another \$5 million claim against the County by Mr. Jeffrey Wilson. He intimated that Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Mary Kandaras had become selective about which Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests she answered. He questioned the legality of that and did not think it seemed right. He revealed that he sought help from the Commissioner for his district, Vice Chair Herman, but remarked that she failed to disclose her conflict of interest in a 211-acre subdivision directly adjacent to his property. He challenged project approval from the fire department on the basis of resident complaints and documentation of impeded Emergency Medical Services (EMS) access to the area. He stated that he was being prosecuted and persecuted by Code Enforcement, and observed that there were at least three properties surrounding his that were being allowed to operate with less restriction. He spoke about disparities he observed, and said he knew that Chair Hill had been provided with information about Wilcox Ranch. He pronounced that a YouTube channel related to Wilcox Ranch had been created, and revealed that the names and pictures of all Board members were on it. He declared that he only wanted the building permits and extensions promised to him and vowed that he was not going to give up. He stated his belief that there was racketeering going on within the County and proclaimed that he would not be racketeered out of his property.

County Clerk Jan Galassini advised the Board that she received an emailed public comment, which was placed on file.

**25-0174      AGENDA ITEM 5    Announcements/Reports.**

County Manager Eric Brown shared that the 9th Street Senior Center would reopen on May 1, 2025. He noted that the date coincided with the beginning of Older Americans Month. He announced that an event would be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. that day to mark the occasion, and more information would be forthcoming. He reported that County Human Resources (HR) was following up on a request for information from Commissioners regarding the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and remote work. Manager Brown said information would be provided at a later date. He revealed that the former Department of Alternative Sentencing (DAS) Chief Justin Roper had resigned from DAS. Manager Brown understood that a criminal investigation of the matter was underway. He advised that, in accordance with policy, the County would await the outcome of the investigation before determining the next steps or making further comments. He stated that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting scheduled for March 25, 2025, was

canceled. He explained that the Open Checkbook presentation would be included in the first BCC meeting in April 2025 instead, which he informed would be on April 8, 2025. He added that the Budget 101 workshop would be delayed until new budgets were approved in May 2025, and there would be more information about that in the future.

Commissioner Clark drew attention to astronauts who were returning to Earth that day. He recalled that the mission was originally planned to last a week or two, but the crew was ultimately there for a number of months. He disclosed that he was recently in Washington, D.C., had to get on and off the same airplane three times, and was stuck in the airport for many hours. He could not imagine being stuck in a spaceship for eight months and was happy to hear that the astronauts were returning. He talked about a meeting he had the prior day, which he described as distressing. He shared that some 9th Street Senior Center staff members were concerned that the mobile kitchen would be removed. He wanted to know the exact date that the mobile kitchen would vacate County property. He was curious about whether the kitchen might be moved before the grand opening and wondered what the gap was predicted to be between the mobile kitchen moving and the remodeled permanent kitchen opening.

Commissioner Clark remarked that he heard on the news that morning that the average price of a gallon of gas in the County was \$1.02 more than the national average. He calculated that if everyone put 20 gallons of gas in their car weekly, they would pay an extra \$20.40 every week for the same amount of gas in the County as compared to other places. He observed that disparity could add up to more than \$1,000 over the course of a year, and he stated that handicapped County residents. He compared it to running a marathon while wearing an extra 20 pounds and remarked on the burden that was placed on people who relied on their vehicles to get to and from work, doctor appointments, and the grocery store. He reported his distress about learning at a meeting the prior day that the County did not have enough money to repave roads properly. He noted a budget shortfall of \$5 million to \$8 million for road maintenance. He advised that he would find out what was going on, and he encouraged everybody to look into it.

Commissioner Clark commented on the Sober 24 program mentioned by Manager Brown. He recalled that he expressed concerns over a year ago about things not being right at Sober 24. He said he was vilified for voicing his concerns at the time, and nobody followed up on them, but federal officers had recently seized records from the program. He acknowledged that the details were not yet known, but he theorized that seizure by federal agents was never a good thing. He wanted to know about employee management at Sober 24.

Commissioner Clark spoke about the Washoe County Library System (WCLS). He did not think any Board members wanted to see libraries harmed in any way, but he noted that WCLS funding was part of budget considerations for the County. He observed that citizens voted to not renew a tax that had been in place for the prior 30 years to provide funding restricted to the WCLS. Additionally, he communicated that the Library Board of Trustees (LBOT) Chair, Ann Silver, had asked the library director to provide a budget for several months. Commissioner Clark reported that Ms. Silver was not allowed

to see the budget until he brought it up at the dais. He stated his intention to speak more with Ms. Silver about WCLS funding and budgeting, and he suggested that people refrain from assuming that the worst-case scenario about library funding would be realized. He said the failure of the tax renewal proposed in Washoe County Question Number One (WC-1) did not mean the WCLS would collapse. He wanted to state on the record that Commissioners would not allow the WCLS to fail, and he voiced his support for what happened in the library. He also stated his support for the vote of the citizens and supposed they would not want their vote overturned by Commissioners. He was certain that the WCLS would be retained, but he maintained that the vote on WC-1 had to be respected. He said Commissioners needed to look carefully at the budget, and he disclosed that the County was in bad shape in a number of areas. He highlighted shortfalls in consolidated tax (c-tax) and property tax revenues and reiterated that County roads needed repair. He concluded that the County needed ideas about how to find some extra money. He theorized that part of the problem was that some time-limited funds that came into the County related to COVID-19 (C19) were used to hire people. He contended that the County had a spending problem, not a tax problem, and the County could not tax its way out of the problem. Commissioner Clark theorized that the middle class in the country was under a lot of financial pressure, which informed his concern about proposals to raise taxes. He discerned that raising taxes was often supplied as an answer to budget shortfalls, but he suggested the better response was to trim the budget. He recalled the County manager had recently been awarded a significant pay raise and a bonus which he viewed as in conflict with the budget deficit. He expressed concern about the deferral of the County Open Checkbook discussion and the budget discussion. He thought the deferral demonstrated a lack of transparency, and he expressed his disgust.

Commissioner Clark commented that there was a desire from other local municipalities for the County to provide them with a larger share of the c-tax revenue that was generated. He supposed the municipalities did not realize everything the County provided. He spoke about contributions from several County departments, including the County jail, the Cares Campus, the County Clerk, the County Recorder, and the County Treasurer. He mentioned that the Cities of Reno and Sparks did not have their own treasurer or assessor. He summarized that the County provided a lot of services to the other municipalities, and it cost County taxpayers money to do that. He said c-tax revenue was needed to keep those County government offices open. He thought that a public commenter at the meeting that day, Ms. Sandee Tibbett, brought up some good points, which he revealed were discussed the prior week at his town hall meeting, though he noted the points were not discussed by him. He thought Ms. Tibbett provided a good summary of Senate Bill 319 (SB319) and could be the spokesperson for the anti-proposal for it. He argued that SB319 did not make any sense for County residents, especially those who wanted the libraries refunded. He said if money were committed to fire efforts, it would be more challenging for the County to pay for other things residents wanted. He spoke about public comment made by Ms. Penny Brock and thought she brought up some great points about changes in the federal government. He cautioned that the County had hired people and paid a lot of money for things that the federal government did not think were good ideas. He concluded that the budget needed to be reviewed and balanced.

Chair Hill expressed appreciation to the Human Services Agency (HSA) team for reacting so quickly to a Reno Suites guest who was recently at risk of being unhoused because of a change to the ownership of the building. Chair Hill explained that she emailed Manager Brown about the situation over the weekend, and HSA developed a plan and had staff on site to assist the individual on Monday. She stated her pride in being part of Washoe County and a team that was deeply committed to supporting vulnerable neighbors. She disclosed that she had an opportunity to go to the Fire Adapted Nevada (FAN) Summit earlier that morning and was excited about the presentation in the next agenda item to discuss more about fire insurance.

Commissioner Clark spoke about an example of what he viewed as an illogical decision made by the County. He recalled the BCC's approval for a collaboration with the Nevada Museum of Art to relocate the Seven Magic Mountains (SMM) installation to the County, which he expressed disbelief and disagreement with. He said that it seemed as though the County was going to spend half a million dollars for some used, painted rocks from Las Vegas.

**25-0175      AGENDA ITEM 6** Presentation by Commissioner Scott J. Kipper, Nevada Division of Insurance, to discuss insurance challenges in Northern Nevada. (All Commission Districts.)

Nevada Division of Insurance (DOI) Commissioner of Insurance Scott J. Kipper conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: State of Nevada Department of Business and Industry Insurance Challenges in Northern Nevada; Division of Insurance Protect Consumers, Ensure Solvency; Nevada Division of Insurance (DOI) Mission and Functions; Key Market Trends in Nevada; Auto Insurance Market Challenges; Homeowners Insurance & Wildfire Risk; Affordability & Access; Questions?.

Chair Hill thanked Mr. Kipper for taking the time to present to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). She noted that he was speaking later that day at the Fire Adapted Nevada (FAN) Summit.

Mr. Kipper reviewed the mission of the Nevada DOI on the *Division of Insurance Protect Consumers, Ensure Solvency* slide. He elaborated that part of their mission was to ensure the financial solvency of insurance companies so that insurance companies had the resources to pay on the claims from consumers. He said the DOI took both components of their mission very seriously, and he directed people to visit the Nevada DOI website at <https://doi.nv.gov> for more explanation. Mr. Kipper showed his *Nevada Division of Insurance (DOI) Mission and Functions* slide. He calculated that the industry total of \$30 billion equated to roughly \$1,000 of insurance premiums for every person in the State. He defined *domestic carriers* as carriers situated in Nevada. He noted that the number of individual producers licensed by the DOI had increased to approximately 265,000. He explained that *producers* meant insurance agents and brokerages. He described that the State collected a tax on insurance premiums. He stated that the DOI was an enterprise-funded agency, which meant that the regulatory fees charged were the source

of the DOI's operating expenses and budget. He shared that, due to the intervention and advocacy of the DOI, the State generated an additional \$9.4 million for Nevada consumers in calendar year 2024.

Mr. Kipper informed that his agency worked diligently to address the trends shown on his *Key Market Trends in Nevada* slide. He revealed that the insurance landscape was evolving, and he recalled that when he first started his position, health insurance was a greater concern, and the DOI worked hard to ensure that health insurance was accessible and affordable for Nevadans. He discerned that the challenges had shifted towards homeowners and auto insurance. He disclosed that the rate increases were not exclusively affected by circumstances in Nevada but also by national and international trends. He advised that increased claim costs from wildfires, tornadoes, hurricanes, hailstorms, and floods were driving costs up. He related that increased costs and claims put pressure on the insurance industry and insurance carriers, who needed to manage their risk and ensure they had the means to pay on claims. He summarized that was why premiums had increased, and he predicted that premiums would continue to increase to be able to manage the risk and be able to keep up with payments on expensive claims.

Mr. Kipper established that the DOI had a level of oversight on some lines of insurance. He said they reviewed lines of homeowners insurance and personal automobile insurance to ensure that the rates were fair. He noted the actuarial standard used was that policies should neither be excessive nor inadequate, and not unfairly discriminatory. He emphasized the importance of ensuring carriers had enough money to pay claims. He said the DOI reviewed rates and either approved them or recommended that the company offer a different level of coverage, usually an increase. He reported that what had been seen in California was that because of those challenges, insurance companies were increasingly reluctant to write insurance in the homeowners' marketplace. He said the DOI was working diligently to ensure that it did not happen in Nevada. He articulated that the DOI worked closely with insurance companies to provide a good regulatory environment and ensure a reasonable spectrum of choices for consumers. He disclosed that auto insurance was a challenge. He described that a year and a half prior, a virtual symposium was held to discuss factors that drove the increased cost of automobile insurance. He revealed that Nevada was generally one of the more expensive states in which to purchase automobile insurance. He cited increased repair costs, parts shortages, supply chain issues, increased population, and, particularly in Clark County, the high level of activity at all times of the day and night. He said those factors all contributed to increased claims costs and impacted premiums.

Mr. Kipper showed the *Homeowners Insurance & Wildfire Risk* slide and divulged that wildfire was essentially the current priority for the DOI. He shared that they were working to find ways to manage the challenges of wildfire risk, which included ensuring that carriers had an adequate base policy and additional policy options to address wildfire issues. He remarked that the impact of the Davis Fire on Northern Nevada was significantly less than it could have been. He commented that it was extremely fortunate that the Davis Fire did not turn into an event like the 2018 Camp Fire, the 2023 Lahaina Fire, or the 2025 Los Angeles (L.A.) Fires. He said he had visited extensively with



professional firefighters and the firefighting service and was impressed by their foresight, thoughtfulness, and dedication not only to fighting fires but also to prevention efforts. He reported that the DOI was focused on prevention efforts and was working with the insurance industry on that subject. He explained that insurance companies bought insurance to protect themselves from catastrophic losses, and he noted that costs from the L.A. County fires were approaching eight digits in cost. He conveyed there could be \$50 to \$55 billion of insured losses from those fires. He said insurance companies were not able to pay for all of that themselves but instead had their own insurance, which was termed *reinsurance*, from large, global reinsurance companies. He commented that because of the nature of the fire and the catastrophic challenges, more claims had to be paid. He said the additional claims increased the risk and caused rates to increase, which impacted Nevada consumers. He stated that there were efforts at the State and federal levels to maintain rates and coverage in the insurance marketplace, including several bills that had been introduced to the Legislature to address the challenges he had just outlined. He offered to entertain any questions Commissioners had for the DOI.

Chair Hill observed that Mr. Kipper had one slide remaining in his presentation and offered him a time extension to share his additional slide.

Mr. Kipper showed the *Affordability & Access* slide and described how the DOI evaluated affordability and access, particularly with wildfire. He defined access as the ability of an insurance consumer to find a carrier. He restated the ongoing challenges in California and advised that several insurance companies had left the marketplace or limited the number of policies that they were going to issue, which impacted consumers. He remarked that it was a challenge for the DOI to ensure that consumers still had access to policies. He listed reasons that contributed to the trend, which included higher rates, increased reinsurance costs, and the potential for further elevated costs as the climate changed and drier, more flammable opportunities were created in forested areas. He said those factors led to an affordability issue as companies felt that they needed to charge higher rates to manage risk better. He added that the DOI did not have any rate oversight of condominiums, apartment buildings, or commercial properties. He explained that those policies were individually reviewed and underwritten by specialized carriers. He acknowledged that the DOI had found significant challenges as Homeowners Associations (HOAs) or owners of condominiums tried to insure their properties. He informed that people who were participating in that market were closely evaluating it and reducing what they were willing to insure. Mr. Kipper offered to answer questions from the Commissioners.

Vice Chair Herman recalled her request for Commissioners to talk to insurance professionals and thanked Mr. Kipper for his presentation. She felt like he had a big responsibility in his job, and she hoped that there would be some more breaks for the people. She hoped that in the future there would be a way to figure out how to make it all work. She commented that costs ruled and if people wanted to have insurance, they had to pay the cost. She surmised that insurance would sometimes not be available.

Commissioner Garcia stated her appreciation to Mr. Kipper for illuminating some of the systemic issues with insurance coverage in Nevada and nationally. She asked for help understanding how Commissioners could assist constituents who struggled to navigate the insurance system. She wondered what the best way was for people to get help and whether there were specific resources in the State of Nevada to which Commissioners could direct constituents. She expressed her alarm about changes to insurance availability and said people were scared. She stated her appreciation for Vice Chair Herman's interest in the topic as natural disasters continued. She predicted that the trend would continue, and she emphasized the need for leaders in the County and State to be prepared to help people experiencing insurance problems in their communities.

Mr. Kipper suggested that consumers be directed to the DOI, either through the DOI website or by telephone. He advised that there was a DOI office in both Carson City and Las Vegas staffed by trained consumer affairs specialists who were able to answer most questions. He announced that the DOI was working on a public outreach program that they wanted to implement later in 2025. He described that the program would primarily be focused on wildfire but would include resources for responding to any emergency. He disclosed that the DOI planned to provide tips on shopping for insurance, a methodology of how to conduct a home inventory to ensure that home contents were adequately covered, a reminder to review emergency evacuation routes, and other preparatory items. He said the DOI was a proud participant in the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, which he noted shared resources that had withstood the test of time and energy on challenges in other states. He reported that he toured a tornado-ravaged community in Oklahoma several years ago, from which he learned a lot of tips about preparation for a potentially catastrophic event in Nevada.

Commissioner Garcia agreed that prevention and mitigation were extremely important. She asked where to send people who had been denied homeowners insurance, which she recognized could happen for a variety of reasons.

Mr. Kipper advised that the DOI had a tool on their website that previously insured people in Nevada could use if their insurance was not renewed. He said people could enter their zip code, and the site would generate a drop-down list of all insurers who had indicated that they were still writing policies in that zip code. He added that the list included contact information for the listed companies, which people could use to connect with them. He encouraged consumers to work with a broker or producer and, in some cases, several brokers or producers in order to get multiple comparative quotes.

Commissioner Clark thanked Mr. Kipper for his presentation and said he found it very informative. He wondered if there was a way for the County to help connect people to the resources and information on the DOI website that Mr. Kipper mentioned, particularly the tool for finding insurance coverage by zip code. He also queried what cooperation was possible between the County and the DOI to make Mr. Kipper's presentation available to citizens if they had questions about insurance and other future programs that the DOI might introduce. He wanted to ensure people had an easy way to get information straight from the DOI.

Mr. Kipper related that he gave presentations on occasion and was always surprised that more consumers were not aware of the resources and information that they could get from the DOI. He said that was why the DOI was doing more promotion and outreach, and he thought sharing their content through more organizations like the County would be fantastic.

Chair Hill stated her appreciation to Mr. Kipper for his presentation and for his efforts to get information out. She said Commissioners would do what they could to help support the DOI and ensure that people knew what the DOI could do to assist them. Regarding automobile insurance, she asked if states that utilized red light cameras or speed cameras had auto insurance rates that were as high as Nevada. She theorized that those systems were a preventative measure. She recalled being in Clark County recently, where she observed many people driving through intersections rather than stopping for red lights. She perceived it as part of the driving culture there and said it was very scary.

Mr. Kipper said the question about insurance rate correlation with red light cameras and speed cameras was interesting and advised that he would do some research to see if there was a connection. He conveyed that he would communicate his findings to Chair Hill.

Chair Hill reported her attendance at the FAN Summit earlier that morning and said that she talked to someone who revealed that Fire Adapted Community grants in California were paid by energy companies because they had created many of the fires. She summarized her understanding that if companies provided energy in California, they were also expected to provide Fire Adapted Community grants. She observed that the relationship with energy providers was different in the County because NV Energy worked with local fire departments to do preventative work around their facilities. She was curious whether any of the bills Mr. Kipper mentioned contained potential support for communities who did work of that type.

Mr. Kipper thanked Chair Hill for the question and shared that there were a number of states doing innovative work along those lines. He provided the examples of Alabama, Minnesota, and Oklahoma, which had all established programs to provide individual consumer grants to help residents harden their homes or undertake other mitigation efforts to prevent property damage from a catastrophic event. He described that the program paid consumers up to \$10,000 along the Alabama Coast for hardening improvements, including placing their homes on stilts. He noted that challenges in Oklahoma were related to tornadoes, but regardless of the specific catastrophe being guarded against, the money went directly to consumers from state grants. He theorized that similar opportunities could be investigated in Nevada. He reported there had previously been interest from the federal government in similar efforts, but he cautioned that the new administration might not have had an opportunity to fully explore all avenues yet. He knew there was a bill in Congress to address the problem, but he was not certain whether it had been introduced or if it was still pending.

Chair Hill thought the County might be able to undertake a pilot project in conjunction with the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD). She knew it would help communities and supposed that direct financial support might be a good incentive to invest. She asked if there was a bill that addressed condominiums where the DOI did not have oversight. Mr. Kipper believed there was a bill that would provide the DOI oversight of rates for commercial property of that type, though he was unsure of the status of the bill. Chair Hill noted the legislative update on the agenda that day, and suggested that Government Affairs Liaison Cadence Matijevich might be able to provide insight on related legislative action. Chair Hill remarked that the issue was important for her constituents, many of whom were retired and had fixed incomes, resided in Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas, could not get insurance, and did not want to move. She concluded that figuring out the best way to manage the challenges would be tough.

Mr. Kipper recalled a DOI presentation he gave at a town hall meeting in Incline Village the prior summer. He acknowledged that of all the items people brought to his attention, the challenge of retaining insurance in WUI areas was one of the most important.

Chair Hill mentioned that she had talked to numerous constituents who had pre-existing conditions and could not get healthcare on the Silver State Health Insurance Exchange. She recognized that the problem could be due to something the individuals were doing incorrectly, but she reported that she had spoken with a number of people who were not traditionally employed and, therefore, did not have traditional insurance. She remarked that many of them experienced difficulties and tried to negotiate with doctors. It reminded her of the insurance landscape before the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and she was curious if Mr. Kipper had heard anything similar. She asked if she should have those individuals reach out to the DOI.

Mr. Kipper responded that he found it extremely odd that policies through the Silver State Health Insurance Exchange could not contain provisions excluding people with pre-existing conditions. He encouraged people to contact the DOI if they continued to have trouble enrolling.

Commissioner Clark thanked Mr. Kipper for speaking about mitigation measures, including home hardening. He pointed out that he planned to use County Commission District Special Funds to make a contribution to Senior ResQ. He understood that Senior ResQ would soon begin a program in which members of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Local Chapter 2487 would volunteer during their time off to create defensible space around the homes of seniors. He commented that it was a local initiative that was similar to the programs Mr. Kipper mentioned in other states.

Chair Hill thanked Mr. Kipper for his time, his work, and his commitment to the State. She expressed disappointment about missing an insurance panel Mr. Kipper was participating in at 1:30 p.m. that day. She was eager to hear about the panel and the discussions. Mr. Kipper said he would be happy to follow up with her.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 7A1 THROUGH 7E1**

- 25-0176**      **7A1** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' regular meeting of February 11, 2025. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0177**      **7A2** Acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Clerk on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, including the following categories: Monthly Statements/Reports and Budgets. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0178**      **7B1** Recommendation to 1) approve roll change requests, pursuant to NRS 361.765 and/or NRS 361.768, for errors discovered on the 2022/2023, 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 secured and unsecured tax rolls 2) authorize Chair to execute the changes described in Exhibits A and B and 3) direct the Washoe County Treasurer to correct the error(s). [cumulative amount of decrease to all taxing entities \$205,938.30]. Assessor. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0179**      **7C1** Recommendation to approve an amendment to an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) between Washoe County (County), and the City of Reno (Reno), to reimburse Reno for professional engineering services provided by HDR Engineering, in support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood map revision/updates for certain areas in the South Truckee Meadows. This amendment to the approved ILA identifies Washoe County's additional, not-to-exceed cost of \$56,954.00. [County's total professional services cost is the not-to-exceed amount of \$136,297.50]. Community Services. (Commission District 2.)
- 25-0180**      **7D1** Recommendation to accept the Opioid Settlement Funds subaward through the Director's Office of the State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services in the amount of [\$130,563.00; no county match] retroactive to March 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025 to provide coordinated services to individuals with Severe Mental Illness (SMI), Substance Abuse Disorders (SUD), and/or Co-Occurring Disorders (COD) through an Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) program; authorize the Director of the Human Services Agency to execute the grant agreement; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0181**      **7E1** Recommendation to approve budget amendments totaling an increase of [\$160,152.19; no county match] in both revenue and expenditures to the FY25 HIV Prevention Program, retroactive to August 1, 2024 through May 31, 2025 for the Community and Clinical Health Services (CCHS) Division to support HIV Prevention Program agreement, and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)

On the call for public comment, Mr. Richard Borman thanked Vice Chair Herman for returning his phone call, Nevada Division of Insurance (DOI) Commissioner of Insurance Scott J. Kipper for introducing his topic of discussion in the prior presentation, and Commissioner Clark for his earlier mention of the topic of transparency. Mr. Borman reported that he and his wife had recently relocated to Reno from the Midwestern United States (US). He noted that they had waited to find a home to purchase in the area, had located one of interest in Golden Valley, and had undertaken the process of buying the property. He stated that it was revealed to them during that process that the home was located within a floodplain. He reflected that it had been difficult to obtain information from the builder of the house regarding plans to remove the property from the flood zone. He reported that he gathered nearly two-year-old pre-approvals from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which included a letter addressed to an individual no longer affiliated with Washoe County. Mr. Borman reported that on February 17, 2025, he attempted to contact two engineers employed with Washoe County for clarification on a timeline and possible mitigation work that was done to remove the property from the flood zone. He reported being told that the Washoe County engineers had nothing to do with that. He attested that one of his personal goals was to endeavor to persevere, which he stated he had acted on as he entered into escrow on the property. He stressed the closing date on the property was quickly approaching and scheduled for March 31, 2025, and he had yet to receive definitive answers that addressed the issue. Mr. Borman reported that following his conversation with Vice Chair Herman, he received the name of an individual to contact. He noted that he subsequently sent that individual an email that included specific and direct information provided by the developer of the property and indicated that the issue would need to be addressed by the County. He recalled that he received an immediate response from project engineers employed with Washoe County who he reported had instead blamed the developer for the issue. He attested that he had been put into a situation where he was directed from one party to another without resolution. He asserted that his purpose for speaking at the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting was to ask what role Washoe County had in creating unmitigated insurance issues, which he speculated had been the instigating cause of the incident. He expressed frustration that he could not receive a clear answer. He reported that he received a phone call from the property developer, who he suggested was alarmed by the amount of information Mr. Borman had gathered. He opined that he had seen no indication of the transparency Commissioner Clark mentioned previously. He reiterated his concern for the issue.

Ms. Penny Brock indicated her desire to address Agenda Item 7A2 regarding the monthly statements, reports, and budgets. She attested that she and other taxpayers wanted the Washoe County Treasurer or the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Washoe County to provide reports on the budgets. She asserted both of those employees dealt directly with the transparency of taxpayer funds. She referenced the topic of accountability and mentioned Commissioner Clark's previous conversation regarding the discussions scheduled for Open Checkbook. She asked why the taxpayers were not receiving reports on the budgets of Washoe County. She speculated that there might be a connection between Commissioners not receiving verbal reports from the Washoe County Treasurer and the CFO and the County's budgetary issues. She opined that the BCC was

ignoring the budgets. She asserted that the problem could not continue. She speculated that the taxpayers might receive some information during the meeting scheduled for the following week. She contended that the County and the BCC would not exist without the taxpayers, who she asserted the Board worked for. She opined that no business in existence would operate without accountability for how its funds were handled, which she affirmed was the expectation for County and city entities. She reiterated her right to transparency and information and asked why she was blocked from those rights. She reported that she had a similar problem obtaining public records requests (PRR). She opined that the law, which stipulated that citizens would receive the requested information within five to seven days, was not being followed. She reflected that she submitted a public records request on February 1, 2025, and received a late response on March 17, 2025. She expressed disagreement with the reasons she was provided for the denial of the requested information. She acknowledged her understanding of the situation and noted that the requests went through the County Manager. She reported that she was told that the District Attorney (DA) reviewed the PRR. She reiterated her belief that the reasons for the denial of her request were unacceptable. She stated that including Agenda Item 7A2 in the Consent Agenda was similarly unacceptable as the taxpayers wanted transparency and accountability for the budget and how funds were spent. She asked again for the Washoe County Treasurer or the CFO to provide reports on the County's use of taxpayer funds. She opined that taxpayers disliked hearing that there was a budget deficit.

Commissioner Clark asked County Manager Eric Brown if he had previously stated that the budget meeting scheduled for the following week was canceled. Manager Brown noted that he had said that the meeting scheduled for March 25, 2025, had been canceled. Commissioner Clark asked if that canceled meeting had been scheduled to discuss the budget as mentioned by Ms. Brock. Manager Brown clarified that the March 25, 2025, meeting was not a budget meeting but was instead scheduled to present Open Checkbook. He reiterated that those discussions would instead be held at the upcoming BCC meeting planned for April 8, 2025. Commissioner Clark thanked Manager Brown and indicated that his question had been answered.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Vice Chair Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Andriola absent, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 7A1 through 7E1 be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 7A1 through 7E1 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

#### **BLOCK VOTE – 8, 9, 10, AND 12**

**25-0182**      **AGENDA ITEM 8** Recommendation to approve the increase to the existing Olin Chlor Alkali Products (Olin Corp.) purchase order (PO No. 65-2659) for sodium hypochlorite chemicals used in the disinfection process at the Washoe County wastewater reclamation facilities, in the not-to-exceed amount of [\$350,000.00] and authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the necessary change order for the continued

delivery of chemical through the end of the contract period, June 30, 2025. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Vice Chair Herman stated that she had questions regarding Agenda Items 8 and 9. Chair Hill asked if Vice Chair Herman wanted to ask those questions or if she intended to pull the items from the Block Vote. Vice Chair Herman clarified that she only wanted to be given information on those items.

Chair Hill asked if Vice Chair Herman would like to make a motion on the Block Vote before the Board returned to the discussion to address her questions. Vice Chair Herman agreed to make the motion, with the exception that her questions would be answered.

Vice Chair Herman stated that she needed to know the frequency at which the County would spend the stipulated \$350,000 on purchasing the chemicals for water disinfection, as outlined in Agenda Item 8. Vice Chair Herman stressed that her inquiry was due to the high costs.

Eric Crump, Director of the Community Services Department, responded to Vice Chair Herman's question regarding Agenda Item 8. He reported that the contract was for a multi-year term. He noted the Board was voting on the approval of an amendment to an existing agreement that the County had bid on in 2022 to standardize rates. He acknowledged that the expense was significant but reiterated that the contract period covered multiple years.

Vice Chair Herman asked Mr. Crump if the purchase was for use in the old sewers. Mr. Crump confirmed that the contract's purpose was to treat wastewater. Vice Chair Herman indicated her belief that the treatment plant had expired at the end of the previous year and asked when the County planned to close it and prevent that expenditure. Mr. Crump expressed confusion regarding what she had meant by mentioning the expiration of a treatment plant. Vice Chair Herman clarified that she had referred to a treatment plant that was supposed to be shut down as it had reached the end of its period.

Chair Hill asked whether the contract was related to the South Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility (STMWRF) instead. Mr. Crump clarified that the contract covered all of Washoe County's sewer areas, including STMWRF and the Cold Springs Water Reclamation Facility (CSWRF), and confirmed that the contract did not exclusively include the Lemmon Valley Water Reclamation Facility (LVWRF). He indicated that STMWRF was the primary figure included on that list of facilities.

Vice Chair Herman expressed that the information she was provided had lessened her concerns but opined that the expense was still significant.

Chair Hill noted that she remembered Dwayne Smith, the Division Director of Engineering and Capitol Projects of the Community Services Department, having mentioned that the County would be bidding again on that contract. She suggested that, as



a result, they could ensure the County received the best deal as the end of the contract's term was approaching.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Herman, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Andriola absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 8 be approved and authorized.

**25-0183**      **AGENDA ITEM 9** Recommendation to approve the award of the Washoe County's Independent Audit Services to Eide Bailly LLP, in accordance with NRS 354.624, that states each local government is required to provide for an annual audit and in accordance with the State of Nevada Department of Taxation the Board of County Commissioners, for a contract period of one (1) year effective March 2025 for fiscal year ending 2025; fees are based on the amount of time required at various levels of responsibility, plus actual out-of-pocket expenses, including administrative charges. Estimated fees for the financial statement audit will not exceed \$300,000 and \$25,000 for each major program in relation to the compliance audit over major federal award programs which includes a newly instituted technology fee and if approved, staff will submit the notification of award to the Nevada Department of Taxation. Comptroller. (All Commission Districts.)

Vice Chair Herman indicated that she had a question that pertained to Agenda Item 9. She reflected that Washoe County had utilized the services provided by Eide Bailly LLP for many years. She asked if the County had ever approached other companies to inquire about conducting similar auditing work.

Chair Hill stated that she would look through the Staff Report for more information regarding the last time the County utilized a Request for Quotation (RFQ) for the annual audit. Chair Hill asked County Manager Eric Brown if he could answer Vice Chair Herman's questions or if a staff member was present to answer instead.

Manager Brown responded that Abbe Yacoben, Washoe County's Chief Financial Officer (CFO), was present and requested that she answer those questions. He recalled that a bid was recently taken out but noted that Ms. Yacoben might have more specific information.

Ms. Yacoben greeted the Board and reported that before Eide Bailly LLP was awarded the audit services for several years, a company called BDO LLP was awarded them. She noted that after that, the County conducted an RFQ, which resulted in BDO LLP being awarded the services before they were again awarded to Eide Bailly LLP. She emphasized that best practices recommended the County switch service providers approximately once every five years, and reported that the County was currently in the second year of working with Eide Bailly LLP. She noted that if the item were approved, the contract would cover a third year.

Chair Hill asked if the County would conduct another RFQ following the end of that contract. Ms. Yacoben answered that she was uncertain if that decision had been made at that time. She assumed that continuing for three to five years would be preferred for consistency prior to conducting a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP).

Cathy Hill, Washoe County Comptroller, agreed with Ms. Yacoben's comments. She reported that an RFP was conducted two years prior for audit services, and the County had received responses from Eide Bailly LLP and BDO LLP. She reflected that BDO LLP had been chosen initially but could not handle an audit of such complexity and was subsequently met with challenges and additional charges. She attested that Eide Bailly LLP comparatively could handle the complexities of the services needed for Washoe County.

Vice Chair Herman expressed that she had received the answers she needed.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Penny Brock stated that she would discuss accountability and transparency. She opined that any business would utilize an RFP and indicated her disagreement with the recommendation of switching services every five years. She expressed disbelief that no other competitors were available to bid for those services and referred to the presence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other recent technological advancements. She opined that the taxpayers wanted RFPs to be conducted annually to encourage the best performance rather than awarding bids for terms of two to five years. She speculated that such a long-term process encouraged complacency and awareness that the awarded company would not face accountability. She reiterated her belief that annual RFPs would improve accountability and requested that the audit services bid go out for an RFP.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Andriola absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 9 be approved.

**25-0184**      **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to accept an award from Anthem, Inc. in the amount of [\$400,000; no county match] for the period of April 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026, to support the installation, maintenance and operation of an OnMed CareStation; and recommendation to award an agreement to OnMed LLC in the amount of [\$400,000] annually, beginning April 1, 2025 and continuing as long as sponsor funding is available, for the installation, maintenance and operation of one (1) CareStation, a standalone, on-site unit that will provide hybrid medical care at the Reno Senior Center; authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute all relevant documents; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Hybrid medical care consists of live, virtual access to licensed clinicians via high-definition audio-video capabilities along with a comprehensive suite of medical devices contained within the unit whereby clinicians can assess a patient's needs. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Andriola absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be accepted, awarded, authorized, and directed.

- 25-0185**      **AGENDA ITEM 12** Recommendation to (1) accept donation from Greg Nelson 1993 Living Trust, Frankie Sue Del Papa, Trustee, in the amount of [\$21,101.60, no match] to provide Washoe County with funding for a Public Service Intern to assist the Emergency Management Administrator with issues surrounding wildfire prevention, evacuations, and any other needs of Washoe County and its residents and surrounding areas in the event of wildfires., (2) direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments, and (3) authorize Human Resources to make the necessary changes for the creation of one new intermittent (part-time) 0.40 FTE Public Service Intern position, pay grade 012, as reviewed and approved by the Job Evaluation Committee; the position is 100% financed by the donation and will end when funding is exhausted. Manager. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Andriola absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be accepted, directed, and authorized.

- 25-0186**      **AGENDA ITEM 11** Request by the Washoe County Manager, through the Washoe County Clerk, and pursuant to Washoe County Code (“WCC”) 2.030, to initiate amendments to WCC Chapter 5 (Administration and Personnel) to update provisions relating to citizen advisory boards (CABs). The amendments may include, but are not limited to: renaming the boards; clarifying that the purpose of the boards is to provide feedback on community-wide issues within Washoe County’s governmental jurisdiction as part of the commissioner support program; requiring the geographical boundaries of the boards to fall within a single commissioner district; updating provisions for appointment of members; removing the prohibition on CAB members from concurrently serving on the County’s planning commission or board of adjustment; amending various provisions to comply with current open meeting law requirements; and updating provisions related to bylaws; and direct the County Clerk to submit the request to the District Attorney’s Office for preparation of a proposed ordinance in accordance with WCC 2.040. Manager. (All Commission Districts.)

Deputy District Attorney (DDA) Jennifer Gustafson indicated the first document to update regarding the Citizens Advisory Boards (CABs) was the Washoe County Code (WCC), which governed the authorization and description of the procedures involved in the CABs. There were various sections of the WCC that discussed the

establishment, purpose, membership, terms, vacancies, removal of members, adaptation of bylaws, dissolution, and procedural aspects of the CABs. The second document regarded the standard bylaws related to the CABs. The bylaws provided the operating procedures for the meetings. The third document was the CAB Handbook which included the CAB Training Manual. She indicated the manual had been updated recently; however, if WCC and bylaw amendments were updated, the handbook needed to be as well.

DDA Gustafson noted a Chapter 2 request required a three-meeting process with the current meeting being the first in the series. The first meeting requested the approval of WCC Chapter 5 be opened for amendment. If the opening were approved, the County Clerk would request the District Attorney's (DA) Office to start working on the ordinance. She noted the working copy of the ordinance would be brought to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) at the second meeting in the series for the first reading and introduction of the ordinance. The third meeting would include the second reading, public hearing, and possible adoption. If the opening was approved, she hoped the first reading would occur at the beginning of May and the second reading at the end of May or the beginning of June. At the second reading, she would bring a draft of the standard bylaws for possible adoption and as the documents were updated, staff would work on the training materials.

DDA Gustafson mentioned that the WCC was last updated in 2013. The first proposal renamed the CAB to the Constituent Advisory Board, which she felt better reflected the CAB's purpose of providing a forum for people to express their ideas and concerns. The CABs were part of the Commissioner Support Program. The second proposal added language to the purpose section to reinforce that the CAB's purpose was to provide feedback on issues within Washoe County's governmental jurisdiction and that the CABs should not speak on behalf of the County or making recommendations to County agencies. The third proposal amended the geographical boundaries of the CABs to fall within a single Commissioner district to provide autonomy for the BCC and remove limitations when appointing CAB members. She noted one of the primary purposes of the CABs was to provide feedback to the Commissioner in whose district the CAB was in. She believed the change would ward off any community confusion. The fourth proposal updated WCC provisions related to the appointment of the CAB members and the length of time to keep applications on file. The fifth proposal removed a WCC provision that stated CAB members could not serve on the Planning Commission or the Board of Adjustment. The sixth proposal amended provisions to comply with Open Meeting Law (OML). Since 2013, there had been updates to OML and she reported the WCC should reflect the changes. The seventh proposal updated the process provision related to the enactment of bylaws. She noticed some aspects of the WCC did not pertain to how the County performed the process of amending the bylaws.

Chair Hill thanked DDA Gustafson for obtaining the information and the support team for their work. She knew some of the changes were overdue and there were areas in the County not included in the CABs. She believed it was confusing when Commissioners overlapped such as herself and Vice Chair Herman in Verdi and

Commissioner Garcia and Vice Chair Herman in Sun Valley. She wanted to ensure the County was using the best resources and time of the Commissioners.

Vice Chair Herman indicated she felt differently and was upset about the changes to the CABs. She wanted to ensure the CABs were done right and reflected what the citizens wanted. She noted that the CABs were created to give the citizens a voice to advise the government and provide guidance. She mentioned that *citizen* meant a participatory member of a community, a person who enjoyed freedom and privileges, and a person who owed allegiance to and was entitled to protection from the government. Whereas a *constituent* was a voter in a representative district with the power to elect or appoint representatives and legislative bodies. She believed the definition of *constituent* was political while *citizen* was a person who lived in America. She did not see a reason for changing the name.

Vice Chair Herman noted the purpose of the CABs were to advise and give feedback to Commissioners and the County Manager. She indicated the CABs gave the citizens a voice and the ability to advise the County of concerns taking place in their community. She felt that to advise the CABs needed to be updated regarding development projects by the developers to benefit the Commissioners in making sound decisions. She believed the CABs provided constructive facts that aided in understanding the reasons behind the decisions of the citizens who understood the community's impacts. She remembered that historically, the Commissioners looked at the CAB documentation when deciding on an item. She mentioned that CABs were business meetings that included opportunities and training, not social gatherings. She believed the County should not pay for social gatherings.

Vice Chair Herman thought CABs should have at least one meeting per month to accommodate development requirements; however, she opined one meeting per month was being discouraged. She indicated the BCC did not know everything about the community and that the comments and votes of the CABs were helpful. She noted that former Commissioner Kitty Jung had the idea of overlapping CAB districts which also helped with budgeting. Vice Chair Herman believed the CAB's boundaries were changed because of gerrymandering and thought they should be kept as communities. She believed restrictions were set to avoid problems such as a County Commissioner not being allowed on a CAB and vice versa. She thought if Commissioners could not be on the CABs, then members of the CABs could not be Commissioners. She advised DDA Gustafson to reconsider the changes. She said she would help with the considerations or the recommendation of a committee to look at options.

DDA Gustafson thanked Vice Chair Herman and agreed with her on many of the concerns. She clarified that the WCC would not allow CAB members to be on the BCC because it could be construed as a conflict. She explained that having a CAB within a single Commissioner district allowed the Commissioner autonomy to adjust the boundaries of the CAB. She noted the CABs that shared districts would not entail two separate CABs because the Commissioner could decide to allow that portion to join another

CAB. She noted the change would also allow for adjustments to be made only in CABs within a single Commissioner district due to holes in the County.

DDA Gustafson indicated the meeting frequency was in the Standard Bylaws and not in WCC due to irrelevance. She noted that updating the WCC took three meetings and only entailed high-level, broad procedures, while small, precise details were in the bylaws. She confirmed CABs were subject to OML and considered public bodies. She was willing to research the legal definition of *constituent*.

Vice Chair Herman noted she looked at the dictionary definitions of *citizen* and *constituent*.

Chair Hill asked Ms. Gustafson if the BCC was only opening the chapter and not making changes. She assumed there would be individual Commissioner discussions before the first reading occurred.

DDA Gustafson confirmed that the purpose was to open the chapter without any changes. She had begun drafting the working copy of the ordinance; however, there was plenty of time for feedback.

Commissioner Garcia supported opening Chapter 5.

Commissioner Clark understood the item was only opening the chapter; however, he agreed with many of Vice Chair Herman's concerns. He indicated the name change did not appeal to him. He did not believe the citizens understood the imaginary district lines drawn in the County. He often heard things he did not agree with or like but they needed to be heard to make proper decisions. He had a desire for people to attend CABs and express their voices. He referred to his recent town hall meeting with roughly 50 people in attendance, while he thought the CAB meetings had minimal attendance. He wanted to ensure the community knew their voice counted and he encouraged people to attend the meetings. He noted there were approximately 100,000 citizens in each district, but when only three or four people showed up for each CAB meeting, the community concerns were not being heard. He wanted people to understand their concerns were for the whole community and not imaginary lines.

DDA Gustafson clarified that anyone could attend CAB meetings and the WCC did not prohibit that. She knew one of the goals of the BCC was to increase CAB attendance and to ensure the topics were of public interest. She indicated the WCC would not prescribe those wishes; however, the confines of the CABs could allow the Commissioners to change the boundaries if they chose.

Commissioner Clark mentioned that his point was based on the term *citizen* versus *constituent*. He indicated his constituents lived in his district, whereas citizens lived in the whole County. He did not want anyone to feel excluded. He referred to the dictionary definitions. DDA Gustafson appreciated the clarification. Chair Hill indicated the topics could be discussed further with more research into the definitions.

On the call for public comment, Sun Valley CAB Vice Chair Ms. Heidi Soper indicated she had heard from people in the community who did not like the CAB name change. She noted the term *constituent* was confusing for Hispanics and older citizens. She felt the CAB needed topics to discuss with the citizens. She believed the CAB was an information board, not an advisory board. She thought topics for citizen input and advertisements would greatly increase attendance. She opined topics regarding county-wide information were beneficial. She was limited to conversations that pertained to Sun Valley and noted there were Sun Valley topics brought to the CAB, such as Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), and Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), but the information was discussed at other CABs. She mentioned if the boundaries of the Sun Valley CAB were changed to one Commissioner district, she would lose a large population of interested people. She did not agree with the CAB members being on the Planning Commission or Board of Adjustment. She said the Planning Commissioners denied the Chocolate Drive project while there was a CAB member on the Planning Commission. She mentioned that Ms. Amy Owens was part of the Planning Commission and the Sun Valley CAB.

Ms. Pat Davison strongly supported the role of the CAB as a liaison and advisor because it meant there would be information shared before changes and decisions were made. She believed CABs focused on resident and business feedback at the local or grassroots level and reinforced the need for communication. She recommended holding a casual workshop before the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) procedures started.

Ms. Veronica Cortes indicated she was a new member of the Sun Valley CAB. She said she started a non-profit that partnered with the court systems to provide community service and also worked with churches through volunteer services. She mentioned she worked with the homeless by providing day jobs and noted she had worked closely with Commissioner Garcia, Vice Chair Herman, and County Manager Eric Brown. She relayed she started attending the CAB roughly a year ago and loved the concerns of the BCC; however, the Sun Valley CAB was small and needed representation. She voiced the importance of the CAB on social media platforms and in person. She wanted the name to stay the same since she joined the CAB because she was a citizen, not a constituent. She attended the CAB for the citizens and not because she needed money. She believed it would be detrimental if Sun Valley only had one representative. She said she was 15 years clean from methamphetamine, was a notary, and would like the CAB to stay active in the community with the same name.

Ms. Penny Brock noted that she was on the South Valleys CAB. She indicated there was a CAB workshop six days before Christmas and questioned why the workshop was scheduled at a busy time of the year. She did not feel the changes proposed were based on anything the CAB discussed previously. She did not like the name change because she was a citizen. She asked where the consultant report was and wanted the CAB to meet monthly. She did not understand what the changes were about and mentioned the changes were not sent to the South Valleys CAB members. She asked where the transparency was. She did not feel represented, and she requested to know why the CAB

was not included in the proposals. She hoped the information would be sent to the CAB prior to the discussion.

Mr. Roger Edwards said he was the Vice Chair of the North Valleys CAB and had attended his first CAB meeting in January of 2000. He speculated that the CAB was not an advisory board if the CAB was not advising the County of community concerns. He noted that Manager Brown and his Commissioner attended the CAB meetings regularly; however, the announcements did not go out to the community. He mentioned that the Golden Valley community would be happy to put a sign or banner up before each meeting; however, it was \$40 per copy. He said the Deputy County Manager wanted development to be removed from the meetings. He believed that development was the main topic for the CABs and referred to a 200-home development in Golden Valley. He said he had lived in Golden Valley for 35 years and had never received an announcement even when told he should. He believed the North Valleys were exploding with developments.

Chief Deputy Clerk Cathy Smith advised the Board she received emailed public comments which were placed on file.

Vice Chair Herman noted Sun Valley had advertisements in front of a casino, which she speculated brought more attendees to the CAB. She indicated each area used to have a sign at the entrance of the community that referred to the CAB meeting times. She thought signage was important. She said she was on the Palomino CAB for a long time before becoming a Commissioner and believed CAB signage was the cheap advertisement that could be displayed at both ends of the community. She reported that someone removed CAB signage when she was fighting for the CABs. She indicated that the signs would be a one-time cost that new residents would see and benefit from.

Chair Hill believed signs could be pursued with Commissioner Discretionary Funds.

Vice Chair Herman agreed and noted she had paid for the signs herself.

Commissioner Clark thought the point of the CAB meetings was to hear from the citizens. He thought Ms. Cortes was enthusiastic, and he looked forward to meeting her. He liked the idea of having an open forum before the formal meeting to allow neighbors to meet neighbors.

Chair Hill wanted to ensure the concerns of the citizens and the CABs were heard and considered when the chapter was opened.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Andriola absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be initiated and directed a first reading be set.



25-0187

**AGENDA ITEM 13** Discussion and direction to staff regarding legislation or legislative issues proposed by legislators, by Washoe County, or by other entities permitted by the Nevada State Legislature to submit bill draft requests, or such legislative issues as may be deemed by the Chair or the Board to be of critical significance to Washoe County. Pending legislative bills can be located here: <<<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/83rd2025/Bills/List>>>. Current bills the County is tracking that may be reported on or discussed are listed under Government Affairs at <<https://www.washoecounty.gov/mgrsoff/divisions/government-affairs/index.php>>. Due to time constraints inherent in the legislative process, a list of specific bills that staff will seek direction from the Commission on during this item will be posted on the web site under Government Affairs at <<https://www.washoecounty.gov/mgrsoff/divisions/government-affairs/index.php>> by 6:00 p.m. the Friday before the meeting. Due to the rapid pace of the legislative session, additional bills upon which comment may be sought from the Board of County Commissioners will be posted as soon as known. Manager. (All Commission Districts.)

Government Affairs Liaison Cadence Matijevich indicated that 958 bills and resolutions had been introduced as of week seven of the 2025 Legislative Session. The previous day was the deadline to introduce bills, and she did not have any of the recently introduced bills to discuss because there was no time to review them. She noted that Washoe County was tracking 849 bills, bill draft requests (BDRs), and budgets. She explained that there were 197 requests for fiscal impact evaluation from the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB). She had heard the end of Nevada Division of Insurance (DOI) Commissioner of Insurance Scott J. Kipper's presentation and indicated she would read Assembly Bill (AB) 376 in more detail regarding a regulatory experimentation program for insurance product innovation and provide Chair Hill with an update.

Ms. Matijevich noted that Senate Bill 319 (SB319) was posted to the County website on Friday afternoon. She explained that SB319 was Nevada State Senator Skip Daly's bill which established provisions relating to County fire protection districts (District).

County Manager Eric Brown wanted the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to know that the community's managers and chiefs planned to meet with the LCB to research the bill and compile a list of amendments. He indicated the BCC should share thoughts or concerns with himself or Ms. Matijevich.

Chair Hill thanked Manager Brown for supplying the information and collaborating with the Cities of Reno and Sparks. She asked Ms. Matijevich if there was a rush for BCC feedback.

Ms. Matijevich reported there was no rush due to a lack of a scheduled hearing date; however, the deadline for the first House Committee passage was

approaching, and the bill needed to be passed out of Senate Government Affairs by April 11, 2025. She noted that Senator Daly understood the complexity involved with Open Meeting Law (OML) when local governments collaborated. She indicated it would be helpful for the BCC to remember that she was trying to present the bill to the Board as the BCC and not the Board of Fire Commissioners (BOFC).

Ms. Matijevich mentioned that Section 15 was the only portion of the bill that was a mandate, while the remaining portions were enabling. Section 15 required the BCC to, by interlocal agreement, establish a board to study the creation of a District that would be formed in accordance with the structure that was enabled by Sections 2 through 11 to consolidate fire protection services within the territories of Washoe County, Reno, and Sparks. The board required under the section had to be composed of two members of the BCC appointed by the BCC, two members of the Reno City Council appointed by the Reno City Council, and two members of the Sparks City Council appointed by the Sparks City Council. The board would evaluate the impact of a consolidated District regarding response times, preparations, and costs of providing fire protection services in Washoe County, Reno, and Sparks. The board would determine any legal mechanisms necessary to consolidate fire services between the County and the Cities of Reno and Sparks and determine assessments to support the consolidated District no later than July 1, 2026. The board would prepare and submit to the BCC a written report with the results and recommendations of the study and legislation. She said most boards created were subject to the mandate which constituted a quorum; however, any action of the board should be approved by a majority of the members and at least one member appointed by each participating governing body. The board was authorized to contract with other entities to assist with carrying out the requirements set forth in Section 15. She reported Section 15 would become effective on passage and approval and would expire by limitation on July 1, 2027. She explained that the board would complete its work, submit the report, and would no longer be authorized beyond July 1, 2027. She thought the date was important because it would allow the Board to reconvene during the 2027 Legislative Session.

Ms. Matijevich noted that Section 2 of the bill authorized the BCC and cities to enter an interlocal agreement to consolidate a contiguous unincorporated territory within the County and any incorporated territory within the Cities of Reno and Sparks into a District. Section 2 required the interlocal agreement to establish the boundaries of the district, which should include only the area the District was to serve. Section 2 required all debts, obligations, liabilities, revenues, expenditures, and assets of a former district or fire department consolidated into a district pursuant to the section to be assumed or taken over by the new District. Section 2 authorized the County and each participating city to negotiate concerning the manner of contributing to the budget of the new District in proportion to the sum of revenue derived from each, including special assessments, taxes, licenses for business and gaming fees, and services performed in the District. Section 2 set forth that a District formed under the act was a political subdivision of the State and had perpetual existence unless dissolved by interlocal agreement. Section 2 established that the District should be governed by a BOFC composed of two members of the BCC, and two members of each participating city. The bill established that unless the BOFC directly appointed a Clerk, the County Clerk would be the ex officio clerk of the District, and unless the BOFC

directly employed a treasurer, the County Treasurer would be the ex officio treasurer. The section required that any action of the BOFC be approved by a majority of members and at least one member appointed by each governing body.

Ms. Matijevich reported that Sections 3 and 4 set forth the duties and authorities of the BOFC while Section 5 authorized the BOFC to hire a fire chief. The fire chief would hire such employees as authorized by the BOFC, administer all fire control laws in the District, and perform any other duties as may be designated by the BOFC and the State Forest or Fire Warden. Section 5 authorized the BOFC to provide the fire protection activities required by the bill by entering agreements with other agencies, arranging land fire protection associations, or supporting volunteer fire departments within the District. Section 6 authorized the BOFC to, by resolution, acquire systems, equipment, structures, and property and established that the title to any property must be vested in the District. Section 6 authorized the issuance of bonds and other municipal securities payable by general or ad valorem taxes. Section 7 required the BOFC to prepare an annual budget which would be based upon the amounts needed to defray the expenses of the District and meet unforeseen emergencies. The amount negotiated between the County and the cities under Section 2, in the amount of any assessment levied pursuant to Section 8, should be sufficient to raise such sums. Section 8 required the BOFC to determine if it was necessary to levy an assessment to pay the expenses of the District and to submit the proposed assessment to the BCC. Upon receipt of a proposed assessment from the BOFC, the BCC would certify the assessment to the County Assessor. The County Assessor should enter the amount of the assessment on the Assessment Roll against the assessed property. The assessment should be collected at the same time and manner as ordinary County taxes and subject to the same penalties, procedures, and a sale in case of delinquency as provided for ordinary County taxes. All laws applicable to the collection and enforcement of County taxes were applicable to the special assessment.

Ms. Matijevich explained that Section 9 established the debt limit for the District while Section 10 set forth how the accounts, bills, and demands against the District were to be audited, approved, and paid. Section 11 established a provision regarding the dissolution of the District, including a requirement that the taxes for payment of any bonds or other indebtedness should continue to be levied and collected until satisfied. Section 12 set forth provisions for adjustments of the District boundary including approval processes, notices, and required findings. Section 13 addressed the elimination and removal of fire hazards from private property when the owner of such property was directed to do so by the District and failed to comply. Section 14 amended the City of Reno charter requirement that the City Manager appoint a fire chief, to allow an exception from the requirement if a fire chief was appointed subject to the provisions of the bill. Section 16 specified that the provisions of the bill should not be applied to modify directly or indirectly, any taxes levied or revenues pledged in such a manner that would adversely impair any outstanding obligations of any county, city, or town, including without limitation bonds, medium-term financing, letters of credit, or any other financial obligations until all such obligations were discharged in full for provision of payment, or redemption had been made. Section 17 specified that the provisions of Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 354.599 did not apply to the bill. NRS 354.599 specified that if the Legislature directed one or more local

governments to establish a program, provide a service, or increase a program or service already established the legislature must provide a revenue source to pay the expenses if additional funding was required and the expense was more than \$5,000. Section 18 established that Sections 1 through 14 and 16 become effective on July 1, 2027.

Chair Hill explained that Section 15 was important because the bill needed work and amendments. She noted the initial stakeholder group of elected officials could make recommendations to bring back to the next legislative session. She asked if the bill made the new board official and if the board had the potential to make changes at the 2027 Legislative Session.

Ms. Matijevich believed the bill contemplated that the board would make recommendations for the 2027 Legislative Session, but a BDR was not guaranteed. She indicated that government agencies were entitled to BDRs, and thought the legislative delegation would be open to sponsoring changes. She agreed with Chair Hill regarding Section 15 requiring the new board to start processes already put into motion. She indicated the bill provided a framework enabling legislation to allow for a District creation. She noted that if there were specific aspects of the study that needed to be included, they could be addressed by the study. She opined there was an opportunity to address the concerns through amendments to the bill, but there may be concerns found in the study that could be taken to the 2027 Legislative Session.

Commissioner Garcia asked about the fiscal impact of Section 15 regarding the Clerk and Treasurer and if there were any absorptions the BCC needed to be aware of.

Ms. Matijevich did not know if there would definitively be a fiscal impact. She explained there was the thought of hiring a third-party consultant to conduct the study to understand the expenses. She indicated Section 15 authorized the board to contract other entities to carry out the study which could be an incurred cost to the County. She believed the direct cost to the County would pertain to the responsibilities of the County Clerk, County Treasurer, and potentially the County Assessor unless the BOFC appointed their own clerk and treasurer, which would be at the expense of the District. She opined there would be administrative time associated with levying the assessment or taxes; however, she envisioned those tasks being accomplished through the normal budgeting process.

Commissioner Clark recommended asking the department heads about the potential fiscal impact. He indicated that affordable housing was a popular topic, and the new tax made housing less affordable. He noted the average home in the community was \$550,000 to \$565,000. He said the same home would have a new tax bill of about \$5,000, but it would not be called a tax. He wondered who, on a fixed income, would be able to come up with an additional \$4,000 to \$5,000 and contemplated how the tax would make housing more affordable. He mentioned that principal interest, taxes, and insurance made up a homeowner's monthly payment. He believed the increase was not transparent and wanted to know how it would affect property owners. He opined the bill was not being talked about enough in the community because, with half a million residents, no one attended the meeting to discuss it. He reported that subject matter experts thought the bill

would be costly and not provide the County with extra firefighters, trucks, or stations. He questioned who wanted to pay more for something they were receiving the same product for. He noted he was against the bill and said it would not fix the fire situation. He said he was told that automatic aid and one dispatch center would fix the fire issues. He speculated the bill was designed to bail out two municipalities that were having financial difficulties due to mismanagement. He said it was unfair to the citizens of unincorporated parts of the County, and he did not think Carson City should be meddling in the County's fire district.

Ms. Matijevich clarified that she was not suggesting there would not be a cost associated with the Clerk, Treasurer, or Assessor. She said she could not quantify the costs; however, the extent of capacity within the offices was a new mandate. She agreed there would be some burden on the offices in the form of staff time and capacity.

Commissioner Clark indicated he did not imply that Ms. Matijevich said there would be no cost. He believed the department heads should discuss the burdens. He knew someone would have to do the work, and progress would not be made magically. Ms. Matijevich asked if Commissioner Clark wanted to suggest his concerns in the study required under Section 15. Commissioner Clark suggested asking the department heads how the work would impact them. He opined that if someone were hired for a job, that person would need to compile the materials and time needed for the job.

Chair Hill referred to the last joint meeting and the discussion regarding automatic aid. She asked if it was appropriate to add automatic aid to the study.

Ms. Matijevich believed that any feedback regarding the bill was beneficial. She said she did not know if there were sections in the bill that would contemplate the consolidated District or if the issue of automatic aid between independent districts was germane. She thought automatic aid could be placed in the scope of the study conducted without being introduced to legislation.

Chair Hill thought the BOFC represented Reno and Sparks. She noted that roughly 80 percent of her district was in Reno and that she represented the citizens of Reno. She believed the existing BOFC made more sense than creating a new board. She said she had spoken to Senator Daly about her concerns regarding Sparks and Reno having more power than the County. She appreciated the process being similar to the Truckee River Flood Management Authority (TRFMA), which did not allow authorizations without at least one member from each jurisdiction voting for approval.

Commissioner Clark agreed with Chair Hill.

Vice Chair Herman opposed the bill and expressed concern about its cost and possible mismanagement. She felt the current BOFC worked well and did not need to be fixed. She agreed with Commissioner Clark and wanted a cost appraisal performed.

Chair Hill clarified that she was referring to the created board, not the board outlined in Section 15. She believed Reno, Sparks, and the County needed the study. She

said the State was interested in providing better fire services to the region, and she said she did not see the study moving forward if it was astronomical.

Ms. Matijevich said she heard the BCC's comments and felt they could be expressed in the discussions with the Cities of Reno and Sparks. She indicated that it was the BCC's choice whether to take an official position on the bill or to provide direction to staff regarding concerns. She asked Chair Hill if she was referring to the study board.

Chair Hill confirmed she was talking about the study board and indicated she did not want to amend that.

Ms. Matijevich asked if Chair Hill thought the study board's structure outlined in Section 15 made sense and if the newly created BOFC under the enabling provisions of the remainder of the bill was what she opposed to.

Chair Hill agreed that the study board made sense. She felt the current BOFC would be able to govern the District since they were already overseeing the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD). She understood that Reno and Sparks could want to create a similar structure; however, the current BOFC was an existing board.

Commissioner Clark agreed with Chair Hill and felt some of the best work was done on the BOFC. He felt the meetings were less contentious and that the board was agreeable with one another. He said he did not believe another fire board that included two cities was needed. He did not think the cities were doing well in their jurisdiction and did not want them bringing their problems to the BOFC.

Vice Chair Herman asked if the bill was preemptive and wondered if the project should continue.

Chair Hill said she felt that something was already being done for the first part of the bill. She disagreed with other elements of the bill because she thought aspects needed to be reconsidered and discussed. She did not differ with Section 15 because she thought it created a structure that she had heard other cities desired. She said the bill allowed the County to go to the Legislature and provide concerns or praises and allowed the cost to be analyzed. She said she did not want the same services for more money. Vice Chair Herman speculated the BCC would be wasting the Legislature's time. Chair Hill believed the Legislature wanted the bill to progress.

Vice Chair Herman indicated that only a certain number of bills would be heard, and she felt the BCC had many doubts about the bill. She asked if more research should be done before considering the bill for the 2027 Legislative Session because she believed the bill was rushed.

Chair Hill said she did not disagree with Vice Chair Herman's idea. She thought the bill mainly wanted a study conducted for a report in 2027. She mentioned other elements of the bill could be recommended for changes. She asked Ms. Matijevich if the

BCC should indicate a built-in BDR to the bill. She believed the problem with the city's BDRs was that they had a Charter Committee that told them what to do.

Vice Chair Herman wondered if the County would still have control if the bill were passed.

Chair Hill said that the two cities were in trouble in conjunction with the 2025 Legislative Session. She said she disagreed with others as to why the cities were in trouble; however, she noted that it was not up for discussion and not the County's problem to fix. She felt that even if the cities were insolvent, the County still needed to help them because that was how government agencies operated. She believed the fire issue needed to be studied to figure out how to support sustainable governance in the region.

Vice Chair Herman said she did not believe the County was prepared to put Ms. Matijevich into that situation and felt her job was difficult.

Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Mary Kandaras explained that if Section 15 passed, the creation of the study board and certain topics would be mandatory. She noted once the study board was created, the study had to be conducted.

Commissioner Clark thought that following the money was important and that haste made waste. He indicated the BCC was usually slow to implement policies; however, it seemed the bill was requiring the BCC to implement policies quickly. He referred to subject matter experts, such as the former Fire Chief, who he said advised him not to let this type of bill pass. Commissioner Clark believed subject matter experts and firefighters needed to be involved in the consideration of the bill. He noted the former Fire Chief and current interim Fire Chief were against the bill. He mentioned that good things did not happen when rushed.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Penny Brock indicated that SB319 was an unfunded mandate that was to be decided at the local level. She wondered why Senator Daly was taking the bill to the State, and she said she felt the State was interfering with local control. She opined the taxpayers did not know about the bill; otherwise, Chambers would be full. She asked Ms. Matijevich to take the bill back for reconsideration. She believed there were many bad bills being introduced that referred to elections. She referred to the previous Thursday when the Las Vegas delegation brought forward AB208 regarding an increase in ballot drop boxes. She explained that the bill was unmandated regarding how many drop boxes the rural counties would receive, but Clark County would receive 10 drop boxes while Washoe County would receive 5. She applauded a Democrat Assemblywoman who she said asked Assembly Speaker Steve Yeager how he arrived at the drop box numbers. She indicated that Assembly Speaker Yeager explained he did not have evidence for the drop box amounts. Ms. Brock did not feel the bill was right and asked the BCC to direct Ms. Matijevich to attend the hearing for AB208 and recommended that the BCC not support the Bill. She referred to a bill that she said would allow the Secretary of State (SOS) to take control of the Registrar of Voters (ROV) if an ROV was unavailable. She speculated there was a procedure in place if there was a lack of a ROV and thought that included the

County Manager, assistant ROV, and other staff. She felt the bill was removing local control and mandating State control of the elections. She believed elections should be controlled by the BCC at a local level. She would continue to monitor the election bills.

There was no action or public comment on this item.

**1:01 p.m.**      **The Board recessed.**

**1:32 p.m.**      **The Board reconvened with Commissioner Andriola absent.**

**25-0188**      **AGENDA ITEM 14** Introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending the Washoe County Code at Chapter 110 (Development Code) by adding and amending various sections in Division Three-Regulation of Uses, Division Four-Development Standards, and Division Nine-General Provisions. These updates include adding various sections to: establish minimum standards for guest quarters, cottage court developments, and employee housing; relocate lot coverage standards from article 306 to article 406; establish required findings for the approval of a common open space development; and establish minimum standards for alleyways. These updates also include amending various sections to: update the table of uses for residential use types to include middle housing, minor accessory dwelling units, guest quarters, multifamily minor, and employee housing; modify allowances in the table for duplexes and multifamily housing within regulatory zones in which those use types are already allowed; and reorganize that table; update the residential use types list to add and define multifamily minor, the middle housing use types of triplex, quadplex, and cottage court, guest quarters, and employee housing, and reorganize the list; update detached accessory structure regulations to reference lot coverage standards rather than enumerate them and to modify deed restriction requirements for connection to water and wastewater facilities; modify attached and detached accessory dwelling unit standards to regulate their use on parcels with middle housing types and specify their mutual exclusivity with guest quarters; modify Table 110.406.05.1 governing regulatory zone development standards to consolidate the separate tables into one table and to make modifications to minimum lot sizes, setbacks, and minimum lot widths for certain regulatory zones; modify the notes to Table 110.406.05.1 to add middle housing and to clarify density for single-family attached; modify common open space development standards to clarify that detention ponds and drainage facilities cannot be included in common open space; modify off-street parking requirements to add standards for the new housing types and modify the requirements for duplexes; modify landscaping exemptions to include middle housing types; modify residential common open space standards to add dog parks and pocket parks as permissible types of open space and require common open space for all multifamily developments with five or more units; and add or amend various definitions; and all matters necessarily connected therewith



and pertaining thereto. And if supported, set a public hearing for the second reading and possible adoption of the ordinance for April 8, 2025. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for Bill No. 1925.

Chair Hill acknowledged that there had been changes since the last time the Board heard it so a staff report on the agenda item was requested.

Katherine Oakley, Planning and Division Senior Planner, asked if the Board wanted a full presentation or a focused look at changes. Chair Hill said a focused look at the changes was acceptable. She mentioned a prior first reading of Housing Package 2.5a had previously gone before the Board and said that the ordinance had been discontinued to allow for changes to the language. The changes added increased the clarity and enforceability of the regulation. She said there had been an update to the guest quarters' definition to ensure something was not inadvertently included regarding accessory structures that would not be used as living spaces. She said the package specified the maximum square footage for guest quarters and defined employee housing to clarify that it was housing provided for compensation rather than housing that could be paid for or rented. She stated additional code standards for employee housing were added and would require a deed restriction to limit the use of the housing to ensure that it could be tracked and enforced over time. She mentioned several code standards were added to establish the process for identifying what the common open space for employee housing would be composed of when there was not a special use permit required. She added that the change was necessary specifically because employee housing was currently allowed under the name *bunkhouse* in the high desert planning area. She indicated there were various typographical errors addressed, and most of the changes focused on the clarity of the ordinance.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Pat Davison thanked the Board for the opportunity to discuss housing, which she said was very important to her. She compared the process to being on a long road trip, sitting in the rest area stretching her legs while checking her Global Positioning System (GPS), and referred to herself as the kid whining in the back seat impatiently anticipating the arrival. She said the matter had not been resolved yet, but the County was on the right track. She complimented staff for the improvements made to the package over the past several months. She said she specifically liked the master table, where six tables were taken and combined into one, so it was easier to see what applied where. She commended Ms. Oakley and Chris Bronczyk, Planning and Building Division Senior Planner, for those changes. She said she looked forward to being able to identify ways to help first-time home buyers enter the housing stream, whether it was using revolving funds that provided down payment assistance or other mechanisms. She hoped that the expertise and connections of groups like the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) and the Nevada Housing Coalition could be utilized. She mentioned the Board had heard from those representatives at the January 28, 2025, workshop and referred to them as a dynamic duo. She stated those groups would be the Board's allies in finding developers who approved of the code changes and could

deliver the diverse housing types for rent and the entry-level starter homes that Commissioner Clark had mentioned. She urged the Board's strong support for the package.

Mr. Matthew Chutter expressed his objection to multiple provisions of Agenda Item 14 and added that as a homeowner in Spanish Springs, he opposed mechanisms that encouraged any of the following: dispersed cottage court developments within single-family neighborhoods, employee housing except for remote rural employers, and the so-called missing middle housing. He believed middle housing had been missing, which was historically missing because it was unwanted and incompatible with many of the rural and suburban surrounding neighborhoods. He mentioned many people moved to rural areas because they did not want what the region was morphing into, which he felt was high-density urban and homogenous while lacking neighborhoods without distinct personalities, character, and diversity. He opposed the goal of imposition of affordable or higher-density housing within neighborhoods where it did not fit and opposed the mechanisms to implement it. He explained that affordable was a euphemism for small units clustered on a property and individual yards replaced with community dog walks. He said Agenda Item 14 was symptomatic of refusal by County planners to accept the area's inherent real resource limitations. He added that a series of myths were heard that conflicted with what could be seen with one's own eyes. He said he had been told that there was plenty of water, just not enough to allow watering lawns more than every other day. He mentioned he was told that infrastructure planners had everything under control. Meanwhile, toll roads would soon be necessary, and there would be no reduction in the high gas taxes. He believed it would not be long before payment would be required to travel on private toll roads. He said that police resources were inadequate for the planned growth, and mentioned graffiti-tagged structures, motorists who disregarded construction zone speed limits, and neighbors being burglarized. He believed speed limits were not enforced frequently. He recalled the Mayor of Sparks mentioning in a television interview that Spark's growth was resulting in government costs outstripping revenue as the County proceeded to replicate the budget problem. He felt emergency planning seemed to be an afterthought and said the previous week, a major three-car accident shut down the single north-south interstate traffic. He said a person would have assumed that dozens of vehicles were involved, but it was actually just one. He believed that County planners did not understand that road improvements often encouraged congestion by resulting in development, rather than making it disappear. He alleged smog chronically blanketed the valley despite the need for motorists to pay to get their tailpipes checked. He added the problem was overpopulation, and he felt it ruined the quality of life. He said the Board was eagerly overseeing the mess, and he felt the Board needed to fix it.

Ms. Melodie Shelta felt that a certain way of life was being forced onto others. She mentioned people had moved to avoid that way of life. She stated she and others, including an attorney, had spoken at Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meetings and felt they had not been paid attention to. She felt as though what she said and the time she spent at meetings did not matter. She thought the Board had not made an effort and did what they wanted. She thought that the ordinance would backfire, similar to what was happening with heavy traffic, crime, and more. She thought taxpayers would pay for it because she felt that was the Board's solution when they needed more money. She

assumed overpopulation resulted in homelessness, people losing their homes, and increased insurance rates. She believed overpopulation would result in criminals and negative activities. She said if the problem were ignored, it would backfire.

Bill No. 1925 was introduced by Chair Hill, and legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

**25-0189**      **AGENDA ITEM 15**    Introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending the Washoe County Code at Chapter 110 (Development Code), article 610 Final Subdivision Maps, to modify various sections in order to clarify requirements related to final subdivision maps. These amendments include requiring each final map submission to contain a minimum of 5 lots and specifying what type of parcels count toward the 5 lot minimum; updating language to ensure compliance with the Nevada Revised Statutes; adding the requirement for a water supplier certificate on the final map when served by a general improvement district; providing that an acceptable financial assurance document may be utilized in lieu of a faithful performance bond; increasing the number of days for the initial final map submittal from 60 to 120 days prior to the final date to present the map to the Director of Planning and Building for signature; removing the requirement for a phasing plan; further clarifying the timing requirements for the presentation date for the first final map and all successive final maps; and updating the names or titles of public officers and agencies as well as the names or titles of certain referenced reports/studies and all matters necessarily connected therewith and pertaining thereto. And if supported, set a public hearing for the second reading and possible adoption of the ordinance for April 8, 2025. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for Bill No. 1926.

Trevor Lloyd, Planning Manager, conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: WDCA24-0007 (Article 610 - Final Subdivision Maps); Overview of Draft Changes; 5 Lot Minimum; Water Supplier Certificate; Increase to 120 Days for Final Map Submission; Clarify Timing for Final Map Presentation; Cleanup and Additions to Article 610; Community Workshop; Planning Commission Recommendation; Findings; Recommended Motion.

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for Bill No. 1926.

Trevor Lloyd, Planning Manager conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Overview of Draft Changes; 5 Lot Minimum; Water Supplier Certificate; Increase to 120 Days for Final Map Submission; Clarify Timing for Final Map Presentation; Cleanup and Additions to Article 610; Community Workshop; Planning Commission Recommendation; Findings; Recommended Motion.

Mr. Trevor Lloyd, Planning Manager, said the package proposed amendments that cleaned up Article 610, the final subdivision maps. He mentioned the last amendment occurred in 2010, but most of the language was active in the mid-90s. He outlined the more substantive changes to the draft amendment and read from the slide titled *Overview of Draft Changes*. He referenced the slide titled *5 Lot Minimum* and said the amendments would provide clarity on what constituted a lot and what was part of the five-lot calculation. He noted that common area roadway utility parcels would not be included in that calculation. He referenced the slide titled *Increase to 120 Days for Final Map Subdivision* and said there was an increase in the number of days for the submission of a final map. Currently, it is required that the final map be submitted 60 days prior to the expiration of the map. The proposal was to extend that to 120 days, which was far more necessary given the timeline that it could take for review, corrections, and resubmittal. He referenced the slide titled *Clarify Timing for Final Map Presentation* and mentioned the primary reason for the submission was to clarify the deadlines for the ultimate recordation of a map using the State language of *presentation of a final map*. He noted that it had caused confusion among staff and the development community. He said the most amount of time was spent drafting language that provided clarity for what the presentation date meant. He clarified that the presentation date was the date for the final map to be presented for signature to the Director of Planning and Development, which was the last signature required for a final map. He reviewed the slide titled *Community Workshop* and said a workshop was held on December 18, 2024. There was a total of 31 attendees who raised minor concerns, and as a result, changes were made to the draft that was provided to the Board. Since the changes had been made and the issues were clarified, no additional concerns or issues have been heard from the community that were in attendance. He reviewed the slide titled *Planning Commission Recommendation* and mentioned the Planning Commission unanimously recommended the adoption of the draft ordinance at the February 4, 2025, meeting subject to all four of the required findings of Code.

Chair Hill commended Mr. Lloyd and his team and added that the Board had been seeing more clean-up items come before them. She said she understood how much work it took to go through old ordinances and mentioned clarification was important. She thanked him for taking the time to bring it to the Board.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Bill No. 1926 was introduced by Chair Hill, and legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

**25-0190**

**AGENDA ITEM 16** Public Hearing to: (1) consider objections to Resolution (R25-23), declaring Washoe County's intent to convey to Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), a joint powers authority entity created pursuant to a cooperative agreement among the cities of Reno, Nevada, Sparks, Nevada and Washoe County, Nevada, pursuant to NRS chapter 277, approximately 479.774 acres of land commonly known as American Flats (APN 079-332-37 and 079-332-36) without consideration as authorized in NRS 244.284. The conveyance benefits the public by

contributing to the OneWater Nevada Advanced Purified Water (APW) Facility, an initiative approach to diversifying the region's water supply; and (2) possible action to approve a Grant, Bargain and Sale Deed, With Possibility of Reverter, conveying American Flats (APN# 079-332-37 and 079-332-36) without consideration as authorized in NRS 244.284, TMWA; and (3) possible action to approve an Assignment And Assumption of Agreement with the County of Washoe and The City of Reno Swan Lake Land Application American Flat Road Site, assigning Washoe County's rights to TMWA; and (4) authorize the County Manager to execute any and all required documents necessary for the property transfer. Community Services. (Commission District 5.)

Chair Hill opened the public hearing.

Mr. Aaron Smith, Division Director of Operations, said he was available to answer any questions and mentioned representatives from the City of Reno and the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) were present.

Chair Hill said she was aware that the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) had given a large grant to the OneWater Nevada Advanced Purified Water (APW) Facility project and questioned if those funds had been received.

Mr. Smith asked Chair Hill if her questions were regarding the facility and its fruition, and she replied yes. Mr. Dustin Waters, City of Reno Systems Director of the Utility Services Department, confirmed the \$30 million grant from the BOR had been assigned to the project. Although he had received positive comments that funding would happen, due to the uncertainty with federal funding, the timing was unknown. He added the next step would be a review at the end of March by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). Chair Hill said she was pleased to hear that and thanked Mr. Waters for the clarification.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 3-1 vote, with Vice Chair Herman voting no and Commissioner Andriola absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 16 be approved and authorized.

**25-0191      AGENDA ITEM 17 Public Comment.**

There was no response to the call for public comment.

**25-0192      AGENDA ITEM 18 Announcements/Reports.**

Commissioner Clark commended Mr. Nico Colombant of *Our Town Reno* for his efforts to report current events in the community. Commissioner Clark indicated that certain individuals had attacked Mr. Colombant for some of the content within his

articles. Commissioner Clark noted that Mr. Colombant had not always acted as a friend to him based on what Mr. Colombant had written about him within his articles but attested that Mr. Colombant had always treated him fairly. Commissioner Clark stressed that he disliked seeing anyone called out for reporting.

Commissioner Clark mentioned a rally he would attend, which was being held in Carson City that night from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Brewery Arts Center. He indicated that the rally would be hosted by individuals who opposed making public records more challenging to locate. He encouraged anyone interested in public records or those who desired public records to be made easier to access to attend the rally. He urged support for the cause of making public records easier to access and come by, as indicated by its name, and opined that the public should have access to the records.

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**1:57 p.m.** There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

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**ALEXIS HILL, Chair**  
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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**JANIS GALASSINI, County Clerk and**  
Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners

*Minutes Prepared by:*  
*Brooke Koerner, Deputy County Clerk*  
*Lizzie Tietjen, Deputy County Clerk*  
*Heather Gage, Deputy County Clerk*  
*Jessica Melka, Deputy County Clerk*