

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

JANUARY 21, 2025

PRESENT:

Jeanne Herman, Vice Chair
Michael Clark, Commissioner
Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner
Clara Andriola, Commissioner

Janis Galassini, County Clerk
Eric Brown, County Manager
Michael Large, Deputy District Attorney

ABSENT:

Alexis Hill, Chair

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 10:00 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:

25-0031 AGENDA ITEM 3 Invocation.

Pastor Craig Dyson from the CONVO Church provided an invocation.

Vice Chair Herman said she appreciated the invocation.

25-0032 AGENDA ITEM 4 Public Comment.

Mr. Paul White asked how long the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) would ignore the issues happening in the County. He indicated that five years ago Reno was ranked the fourth best city in the Nation by the Milken Institute. He noted that Milken Institute ranked Reno 93rd the previous week. He questioned if the ranking was due to the Cares Campus crime in the community or if it was because the Board of County Commissioners BCC did not address the Washoe County School District (WCSD) giving diplomas to 90 percent of their students. He believed the students were minimally literate and that 50 percent of them were drug abusers with disrespectful behavior. He commented that the Downtown Library had been taken over by vagrant, addicted, and criminally inclined individuals. He reported that those individuals participated in activities, such as urination, drug use, and pornography at the library. He said the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) wanted to get rid of Library Director Jeff Scott who allowed the activities to persist; however, the District Attorney (DA) attempted to scare them off by falsely claiming an at-will employee required infinite procedures to be fired. He communicated that a former

Cares Campus resident had settled a lawsuit against the contractor for the abusive way the facility was run. He voiced that County Manager Eric Brown told Media and Communications Program Manager Bethany Drysdale not to allow anyone to visit the Cares Campus. He felt the BCC had done nothing to address the issues. He said the BCC's lack of effort to put meaningful agenda items together was strangling the County's future and that if the BCC cared, they needed to do something or stand down.

Mr. Terry Brooks read an original poem regarding politics and homelessness.

Mr. Rich Bissett addressed Mr. White's comments and said the reason the Milken Institute gave Reno a low rank was due to affordable housing. He noted that he would attend a Reno City Council meeting regarding three new data centers. He recommended the BCC not take Mr. White's comments so seriously and thought the BCC had done a good job. He believed that the air quality index (AQI) sensors were great and needed along Interstate 80 (I-80) and Interstate 580 (I-580) to investigate the impact of air quality. He explained that he would try and provide measurements of his own. He received daily AQI alerts from Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH). He was surprised that, on many days, the County was over an AQI of 50. He indicated that many people did not know about AQI and speculated they did not receive emails from NNPH. He commented that television (TV) and radio newscasts focused on temperature and only reported AQI due to fires or fireworks. He communicated that there were barriers along the Reno Indian Colony and felt that Sparks needed barriers as well. He asked that newspapers and radio stations inform people of the AQI daily to help them understand the risks.

Mr. Roger Edwards complained about the water recharge bill he received. He mentioned that the water recharge had been shut off for almost eight years. He did not believe he should be receiving a bill for services he was not getting. He could not understand why the County had a problem recognizing the issue. He speculated it would take a lawsuit to get the County's attention, which he said he could pursue. He expressed a desire to be a candidate for the Senior Advisory Board.

Mr. Bruce Foster displayed a document, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. He implored the BCC to research the diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) program. He questioned if the people of Los Angeles, California, benefited from former Presidents Barack Obama and Joseph Biden's executive orders. He asked if Manager Brown received his bonus and raise based on DEIB or merit. He said he was a part of the community impact team at Calvary Chapel Reno Sparks and CONVO Church. He challenged other churches in the County to join the movement into the new era of golden age biblical citizenship.

25-0033 **AGENDA ITEM 5** Announcements/Reports.

Commissioner Clark provided documents, copies of which were placed on file with the Clerk. He indicated that the Community Homelessness Advisory Board (CHAB) was repeatedly canceled. He said Chair Hill emailed him explaining that unless

he had a good reason for a CHAB meeting, they were not necessary. He thought the Commissioners needed to hear from the people who lived on the streets to have a better understanding of their concerns. He mentioned that the partnership with the Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ann Silver was great. He commented that Ms. Silver had many jobs available for those who wanted to be trained, have an education, and get assistance with career goals. He recalled being informed that the County told Ms. Silver when the Cares Campus intake building was finished, a classroom would be available for education; however, that had not come to fruition. He asked why the County was reluctant to have a nonprofit organization teach people how to get a job and a better life.

Commissioner Clark was interested in getting information about deaths on the streets and at the Cares Campus. He believed death was the foremost reason the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) should have a better understanding of homelessness concerns. He said there were several deaths at the jail when former Sheriff Chuck Allen was in office, which caused issues with Sheriff Allen's political career. He noted that the Cares Campus was run by the County, which made it the BCC's responsibility to ensure safety. He indicated that deaths were reported by *Our Town Reno*. He said a Volunteer of America (VOA) employee who worked at the Cares Campus ran over a homeless person but did not stop to render aid. He wanted to know if the homeless person survived. He requested more information regarding the Rural Emergency Assistance Project (REAP), which he said was dropping people off at the Cares Campus. He asked for the total number of people brought in from other counties to the Cares Campus. He felt the taxpayers were supporting homeless people from other counties. He understood other counties did not have facilities but said they should share in the cost.

Commissioner Clark relayed that Governor Joe Lombardo and the federal government encouraged employees to go back to work instead of working from home. He asked to discuss recent federal guidelines and how they impacted the County. He recalled Mr. Paul White's comments regarding the library and felt Mr. White's comments should not include himself because he had already asked questions about the library. His focus was the library, the Cares Campus, and the seniors. He believed that most of the homeless population were seniors. He was pleased to see Mr. Terry Brooks and recently found out that Mr. Brooks was on the City of Reno Senior Advisory Board. He questioned why 343 employees were hired if there were budget constraints. He requested more information regarding the cost for those newly hired employees. He said he supported Senior ResQ and explained it is a nonprofit organization that assisted seniors with rental finances for up to one year. He said Senior ResQ started *Senior ResQ Magazine* which covered information for seniors. He mentioned a meet and greet that Senior ResQ would have the next day.

Commissioner Andriola requested Agenda Item 6 be heard after Agenda Item 9. Vice Chair Herman agreed.

Commissioner Garcia said she had arranged for someone to join her on Agenda Item 6 and asked if there was a reason to move the item.

25-0034 **AGENDA ITEM 7** UNR Extension Meeting, Abbey Pike and Holly Gatzke, to present the Washoe Extension's Annual Impact Report. They will share details of activities in the County relating to the 4H Youth Development, SNAP-Ed, Horticulture, and Living With Fire programs. (All Commission Districts.)

University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Washoe County Coordinator Abbey Pike conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: *4H Youth Development; Horticulture – Community Education; Horticulture – Workforce Development; Master Gardeners; Living With Fire; Health and Nutrition; Additional Programs*. Regarding the *4H Youth Development* slide, she commented that the 4H program included youth from ages 5 through 19 to help develop life skills, build character, and connect with the community in a safe and supportive environment. She voiced that there were many projects for the youth to be involved in, including science experiments, training dogs, showing goats, or raising reptiles. She explained that UNR was expanding the 4H team and increasing retention to ensure the programs could continue.

Ms. Pike referenced the slide titled *Horticulture – Community* and noted the horticulture team empowered residents to develop productive and efficient landscapes, grow their own food, and support pollinators. She indicated that education was important for developing the local ecosystem and decreasing food deserts. She said the Horticulture team offered workforce development programs and continuing education units and ensured workers were up to date on the best research and practices. She highlighted the Bartley Ranch Gardening in Nevada Horticulture Education series, which was offered every Tuesday in February and March.

Ms. Pike reviewed the *Living With Fire* slide and reported that the Living With Fire program worked with regional partners to implement programming and provide workshops that helped people prepare for wildfires. She referenced the photos on the slide titled *Health and Nutrition*, which indicated the activity allowed children to create fun names for different foods to make healthy eating more accessible and fun. She said the Health and Nutrition program worked with Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) eligible adults to ensure they understood SNAP benefits could be used at farmers markets.

UNR Extension Area Director and Professor Holly Gatzke continued conducting the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: *FY2023-2024 Fiscal Report*. She announced that instead of rushing into hiring new employees, UNR was strategically looking at and getting input from the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and other agencies on what types of areas they would work in. She believed that UNR worked hard and had a portion of their team paid with funds. She indicated the opening and ending balances were high, but UNR was holding back money as growth occurred. She mentioned that some of the UNR classes were moved to other facilities to accommodate size.

Commissioner Clark asked how he could get involved with the Master Gardeners program. Ms. Gatzke informed Commissioner Clark that the Master Gardeners program was available for a fee. She mentioned there was financial support available to some individuals. For anyone interested in the program, she recommended that they call the Washoe extension office or visit the website. She believed there was a new Master Gardeners series in the spring and fall. She said the program was being realigned to investigate what UNR could handle due to increased interest in the program. She indicated that there would be classes introduced online and with community partners in person. She voiced that there was a wide range of classes offered and encouraged individuals interested to discuss options with the Washoe extension team.

Commissioner Clark asked how to get involved in the landscaping program. Ms. Pike noted the program worked with local nurseries and landscape companies. She reported that the program was advertised towards people already involved in the landscaping workforce. She said the team could send Commissioner Clark further information if desired.

Commissioner Clark responded that he was not in the landscaping industry but would like to know more about the proper way to landscape since he had planted almost 200 trees and 800 bushes on his property. He felt that self-education was not always the best way to learn.

Ms. Pike mentioned that the NevadaScapes and Grow Your Own programs might be the best way for Commissioner Clark and community members to learn about their own properties.

Commissioner Clark commented that he took a tour of the County courthouse where he was informed of a radon tunnel under Sierra Street. He asked Ms. Pike if the Courthouse had ever been tested for radon.

Ms. Pike did not know if UNR had tested that area. She noted that UNR was offering free radon test kits during January and February due to Radon Awareness Month. She said the team could send free kits to Commissioner Clark if he was interested. Commissioner Clark indicated he would not be testing the area but wanted to find out if the area was tested recently.

Commissioner Garcia thanked Ms. Pike and Ms. Gatzke for their hard work and outreach. She asked for Ms. Pike to discuss the Living With Fire program more.

Ms. Pike believed the Living With Fire team was doing a good job of reaching out to the community with information. She referred to the Living With Fire website which included resources and information for those interested. She felt it was better to be prepared. She said the second session of the Fire Adapted Nevada Summit

was in March and indicated that the summit was open to the public to continue discussion regarding community resilience and adaptability.

Ms. Gatzke believed that people did not realize they had the opportunity to make their homes more fire-resistant. She said the Living With Fire website had great information that she had utilized when the community she lived in was under fire watch. She felt more comfortable and prepared with the information. She speculated that people believed they were resistant and did not think fires were a reality for them. She reported that the community was a high-risk fire area.

Commissioner Andriola felt that the team's impact spanned over all of Northern Nevada. She asked if Ms. Pike and Ms. Gatzke could expand on their outreach and flexibility. She mentioned she enjoyed previous meetings with the Washoe extension program, receiving updates on trends, and community feedback.

Ms. Gatzke commented that they had offices in 15 counties with outreach in all 17 counties. She said there were different types of programming happening across the State. She noted that staffing had been realigned over the past two years to create a statewide network. She oversaw the Northern Nevada region and said the team focused on local knowledge, agencies, and nonprofits. She indicated that it was essential to work together.

Vice Chair Herman said she had worked with the 4H program for years and appreciated their work.

25-0035 **AGENDA ITEM 8** Presentation regarding Reno Justice Court's Housing Court Program by the Honorable Judge Kendra Bertschy, Reno Justice Court, Jayna Litz, Housing Manager, Housing & Neighborhood Development, City of Reno, & Jeremy Wilson, Assistant Court Administrator, Reno Justice Court. (All Commissions District.)

Honorable Judge Kendra Bertschy conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed a slide with the following title: *Eviction Diversion*. She introduced City of Reno Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) Management Assistant Katelynn Piepmeier, City of Reno HAND Director Monica Kirch, Nevada Legal Services Executive Director Alex Cherup, and Northern Nevada Legal Services Self Help Managing Attorney Elena Butko. Judge Bertschy reported that, according to the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), millions of families face the threat of eviction every year. She indicated that several states had initiated eviction diversion courts and programs to address the need. She noted that in 2023, the Reno Justice Court (RJC) processed approximately 4,433 new landlord-tenant cases. She reported the Administrative Office of the Courts Annual Report of the Nevada Judiciary, Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, indicated that Reno had processed 3,328 real property cases. She further noted the RJC processed 4,719 new landlord-tenant cases in 2024.

Judge Bertschy commented that Housing Court was a program that worked with those who were facing eviction due to non-payment of rent. She noted the Eviction Diversion Court was based on the best national practices. She said the Housing Court was a problem-solving court designed to address the root causes of eviction while balancing the needs of landlords and tenants. She indicated that the Housing Court gave tenants expedited access to rental assistance tools while giving landlords prompt payment for past due rent. She communicated that the program was targeted at tenants who face temporary financial hardships. She said the goal was to reduce homelessness, stabilize housing, and minimize the financial and emotional burdens of eviction while preserving judicial efficiency. She voiced that the program was based on no additional funding and that it used existing resources. She thanked the stakeholders who took the time to meet with her. She felt that the pilot program was addressed due to collaboration.

City of Reno HAND Housing Manager Jayna Litz continued conducting the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed a slide with the following title: *Funding & Eligibility*. She indicated that in FY24 there was an eviction diversion program with funding from Assembly Bill (AB) 396. She said that over 200 households were assisted with the funding, but the program lacked the ability to prepare tenants for future obstacles properly. She noted that with the new program, the applicants would need to be able to pay their rent after the assistance. She mentioned the required financial literacy training was conducted with Opportunity Alliance Nevada.

Judge Bertschy continued conducting the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: *How a Standard Non-Payment of Reno Eviction Proceeds*; *How Housing Court Works*. She recommended that individuals take a tour of the Civil Self-Help Center.

RJC Assistant Court Administrator Jeremy Wilson continued conducting the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed a slide with the following title: *Additional Resources and Partnerships*. He believed that Housing Court would not be possible without partners. He said the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Division of Welfare and Supportive Services had an eligibility worker at the courthouse who helped people connect with Medicaid and additional statewide resources. He noted those workers were available for anyone, not only the Housing Court. He mentioned that Nevada Legal Services and Northern Nevada Legal Aid staffed the Civil Self-Help program. He commented that the Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce helped people find jobs in the community to ensure they were housed and sustainable. He felt that it took a collective community to keep people housed.

Ms. Litz continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed a slide with the following title: *City of Reno*. She noted that, as of December 2024, the Housing Court had helped 66 households.

Nation's Finest Veteran Liaison and Outreach Specialist Kimberly Pickens continued conducting the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed a slide with the following title: *Nation's Finest*. She believed that it was great to be a part of the Housing Court

because they could reach veterans who did not know they were eligible for services with Nation's Finest. She felt that being able to provide services such as case management, healthcare navigation, housing locators, transitional housing, and the food pantry was beneficial. She was excited to be a part of the collaboration.

Judge Bertschy continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed a slide with the following title: *What's next?*. She noted that the team was able to witness the program work. She mentioned that the Housing Court was not a solution to the housing crisis or homelessness but was one step towards stabilizing housing, supporting landlords, and strengthening the community. She said the team wanted additional resources to ensure individuals did not come back for another hearing. She indicated that the Housing Court was trying to incorporate therapeutic court models and that evidence-based practices were shown to reduce recidivism.

Commissioner Garcia thanked Judge Bertschy for showing how powerful legislation could be. She felt that the Housing Court was beneficial and built in a small amount of time. She commented that the Housing Court was proactive and encapsulated a holistic model that the County should be striving for. She thought evictions could be traumatic for adults and children, which could leave long-lasting stress and anxiety. She said that keeping people in their homes meant they were more likely to stay employed and maintain social collectiveness.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Judge Bertschy and the partners who collectively made the program successful. She asked if there were any indications someone would carry this idea to the Legislature and if there were other programs like the Housing Court within Nevada.

Judge Bertschy understood there were legislative officials looking at the program. She explained she noticed there were bills put forward regarding eviction diversion. She said the Housing Court was working with stakeholders and would be willing to work with the BCC's lobbyist to determine what else could be done to ensure a strengthened process. She noted Las Vegas Justice Court (LVJC) had an eviction diversion court, but it was slightly different.

Commissioner Andriola noted that it was clear the Housing Court was not a solution for affordable housing but a product. She mentioned affordable housing would be at the forefront of the Legislature. She looked forward to seeing how the Housing Court transpired.

Commissioner Clark saluted the efforts of the Housing Court. He thought keeping 167 people off the streets was commendable. He asked Judge Bertschy how many of those individuals were seniors.

Judge Bertschy reported the numbers were located online through the Administrative Office of the Courts for Nevada. She would get that information regarding

seniors and provide it to Commissioner Clark if the Housing Court had that data. She said they were focusing on tracking senior statistics with the new Housing Court.

Commissioner Clark liked that the Housing Court worked with landlords. He said the National Association of Realtors showed that most landlords were not big corporations and that landlords needed to pay their mortgage, property taxes, utilities, and insurance. He noted that landlords, in many cases, were one paycheck away from foreclosure, and tenants were one paycheck away from eviction. He was happy to help the Housing Court in any way he could. He appreciated that the Housing Court was working with the Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce. He thought that Senior ResQ would be a good resource because Senior ResQ was specifically interested in seniors with rent increases who were facing evictions. He felt it was important to address concerns before people became homeless.

Judge Bertschy highlighted the work the City of Reno did by expediting the rental assistance process for those involved in the Housing Court. She mentioned that with the City of Reno's dedicated personnel, decisions were provided prior to 30 days to ensure people were not coming back for continued hearings. She indicated that, on average, it took up to 12 weeks for a current rental assistance application. She felt that timely decisions were important.

Vice Chair Herman thanked Judge Bertschy for the presentation. She said the Housing Court provided a good service to the community.

25-0036 **AGENDA ITEM 9** Presentation and update by Dwayne Smith, Director of Engineering and Capital Projects, regarding Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain risk map projects within Washoe County. (All Commission Districts.)

Director of Engineering and Capital Projects Dwayne Smith conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: *Focus of Today's Discussion; What are floodplain maps and what is their purpose?; What does 1% annual reoccurrence interval or 100-year event mean?; Risk Assessment; Washoe County's Role; Current Remapping Projects – Boneyard Flat; Current Remapping Projects – Swan Lake; Current Remapping Projects – South Tributaries; Our Commitment.* He indicated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was active in flood programs. He noted the County reviewed and conditioned new developments using FEMA's requirements along with the County's enhancements of those. He mentioned that the County shared information with residents and business owners. He said the County worked with agencies, including the Regional Emergency Manager. He introduced Community Services Department (CSD) Engineering & Capital Projects Licensed Engineer Rob Wimer, who was responsible for the community rating system program and Community Assistants Visits (CAV), and CSD Senior Licensed Engineer Janelle Thomas, who was responsible for new development, conditioning, and approaches to keep the community safe. He commented that floodplain maps, risk maps, and flood insurance rate maps were similar. He reported that floodplain maps and risk maps were tools that graphically showed the risk

of flooding. He explained that the maps showed high-hazard zones along with zone types. He indicated that about 60 percent of the Country had floodplain maps, with many of them being out of date. He said about 30 percent of the annual flood claims FEMA received were outside of high-risk designated areas. He referred to the image on slide: *What are floodplain maps and what is their purpose?* and explained that the image showed one of the four residences that had water in the living space during the 2017 Lemmon Valley flooding. The picture showed one of those homes that the County purchased from the owners. He noted the home was not located in a FEMA flood-risk area. He felt that showed how maps could be old, outdated, and inaccurate.

Mr. Smith explained that floodplain managers used floodplain maps to set building requirements. He noted that lenders and insurers used floodplain insurance ratings and floodplain risk maps to assign the appropriate insurance rates. He said community officials used floodplain risk maps to identify eligible areas for grants and programs to reduce risk in the community. He mentioned that when maps were updated, a variety of tools and local knowledge were used. He reported that a 100-year flood was a risk every year and not just once every 100 years. He believed that FEMA likely did not have the best topography available during the Lemmon Valley flood. He commented that the County used light detection and ranging (LiDAR) to understand the topography of the area. He felt that rain, precipitation, snow melt, and water were just as important as terrain. He communicated that as new developments occurred, FEMA floodplains changed and that some developments dug channels or built elevated properties because of FEMA and local requirements. He recalled that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the 30 percent more volume metric mitigation required in FEMA floodplains for new development. He remarked that the Nation would be affected as winters got warmer and more rain occurred.

Mr. Smith mentioned that in the 1980's the County adopted FEMA's flood management programs. He felt that if the community had not been made aware of what was happening, the County would not have done its job. He indicated the County had been working on the Boneyard Flat project for a couple of years and that there was a community meeting involving property owners, master developers, and anyone else interested. He reported that the community needed to be informed about the technical work updated regarding the Swan Lake project map. He noted letters were sent to the property owners of Swan Lake and Lemmon Valley. He looked forward to discussion with the community and sharing updates. He commented that the South Tributaries project included White's Creek, Thomas Creek, Galena Creek, and Steamboat Creek. He voiced that there were challenges in the area but looked forward to receiving more technical data. He wanted to have public meetings, contact the community, and share updates in the area. He communicated that FEMA required the County to update the maps and that the County worked closely with FEMA as the maps were updated. He wanted to ensure the BCC knew what his team was doing and that there were more projects planned once funding became available. He said Hidden Valley had flash flooding the previous year, and Sun Valley needed care and diligence regarding their flood maps. He asked if the BCC was comfortable with community outreach meetings.

Commissioner Clark indicated that the County needed to worry about fires and floods. He noted that due to the terrain, flooding was a high risk and could happen anywhere in the community. He thought it was beneficial to have updates and understanding. He wanted to make sure the public was aware of flood risks as much as fire risks. He said there could be a lot of property damage and potential harm to human life. He appreciated the information being brought to the BCC.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Mr. Smith and the staff for the time and detail of the presentation. She appreciated the notification being extended to the whole of Lemmon Valley. She felt communication would quell any uncertainty that could arise. She asked about continued remapping and funding information.

Mr. Smith noted that FEMA expected and obligated communities to update maps but could also provide funding. He felt that FEMA came into a community without local knowledge and understanding and with the lowest cost consultant. He mentioned that the County had done a better job when local experts were involved. He said FEMA gave broad information so that properties were listed on the map but not in the floodplain. He indicated that there were processes a property could go through to pull itself out of the floodplain; however, once the floodplain was approved and confirmed, the removal process was costly and time-consuming. He had found that more detailed local information was costly but provided better outcomes. He recalled an agreement from the previous year between the County and the City of Reno regarding the South Tributary project, which was an example of combining two agencies' funding to ensure changes were careful, diligent, and accurate.

Commissioner Andriola thought it was important that other jurisdictions helped because changes impacted the whole community. She felt FEMA's broad information caused costs to homeowners and their insurance that may not be applicable. She believed the staff's detailed work was important and protected the area.

Vice Chair Herman thanked Mr. Smith and said she would attend the Lemmon Valley meeting.

PROCLAMATIONS

25-0037 **6A1** Proclamation to acknowledge and honor the essential work of homeless services front-line workers. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Garcia noted advocacy and care for the community took many shapes and forms. She welcomed representatives from the Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equality (RISE), Volunteers of America (VOA), and the Karma Box.

Commissioner Garcia and Mr. Terry Brooks read the proclamation.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Chair Hill absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 6 be adopted.

11:39 a.m. **The Board recessed.**

11:42 a.m. **The Board reconvened with all members present.**

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 10A1 THROUGH 10C1

25-0038 **10A1** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' regular meeting of December 10, 2024. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

25-0039 **10A2** 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 Annual Statements/Reports. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

25-0040 **10B1** Recommendation to approve the budget amendments totaling an increase of [\$30,000.00; no county match] in both revenue and expenditures to the EPA Air Quality Sensors Grant retroactive to January 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028, and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. The purpose of this grant agreement is to provide funding for the Air Quality Management Division to purchase and deploy air pollution sensors along the I-80/I-580 interchange to better understand air pollutant trends in disadvantaged communities. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)

25-0041 **10C1** Recommendation to accept the grant award for the Nevada State Opioid Response (SOR) III Project [amount not to exceed \$54,871.00, no County match required] administered through the State of Nevada, Division of Public & Behavioral Health to be used for the continued support of the Opioid Treatment Program within the Washoe County Detention Facility, for the retroactive grant period of September 30, 2024 - September 29, 2025, and if approved, authorize Sheriff Balaam to execute grant award documentation and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

Mr. Bissett was not present when called to speak.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Chair Hill absent, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 10A1 through 10C1 be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 10A1 through 10C1 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

25-0042 **AGENDA ITEM 11** Recommendation to: (1) award a bid and approve the Agreement to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder for the Riverbend Trailhead Project, PWP-WA-2025-024 [staff recommends Frank Lepori Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$403,287.85 (base bid in the amount of \$380,932.85 plus bid alternate 1 in the amount of \$20,000.00 and bid alternate 2 in the amount of \$2,355.00)] and (2) approve a separate project contingency fund in the amount of \$56,000.00, for a total Project cost not to exceed \$459,287.85. The Project is located at 2555 Highway 40 West 13, Verdi, Nevada, and the scope of work includes construction of a new public trailhead and access path. Community Services. (Commission District 1.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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

25-0043 **AGENDA ITEM 12** Public Comment.

Mr. Roger Edwards felt that the lack of updated floodplain maps made it hard for contractors like himself to build. He said the Community Services Department (CSD) was responsible for updating the floodplain maps and that the Division Director of Engineering and Capital Projects, Dwayne Smith, did not address the water recharge issues. He indicated Mr. Smith was responsible for three years of unsolicited payments to the County fund, which was taken from the community for services not rendered. He mentioned that after two years of complaints, Mr. Smith brought in an assistant to help, which did nothing. He was frustrated that Mr. Smith received praise and that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) let Mr. Smith give a presentation without asking about Mr. Edwards' water recharge bill. He asked why his Community Advisory Board (CAB) did not meet. He said he did not receive the letter Mr. Smith sent out to the community neighbors of Lemmon Valley.

Ms. Susan Vanness agreed with Mr. Edwards' comments regarding Mr. Smith and the North Valleys CAB. She said the community could not have a discussion with their neighbors because the CAB was canceled. She reported there were many Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) violations from the 2024 election, and she wanted to know who the next Registrar of Voters (ROV) would be. She noted that there were community scholars who had compiled paperwork regarding the election. She questioned Interim ROV Andrew McDonald and indicated there was research done on his past employment. She cited United States Code (USC) Title 52, which required all election data to be held for 22

months. She understood the BCC did not know all the details of the election requirements, but she felt the citizens should be involved. She mentioned there were possible fines and imprisonment for anyone running an election without data held for 22 months. She requested the BCC inform the public regarding election information. She concluded that there were only two genders.

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

25-0044 **AGENDA ITEM 13** Announcements/Reports.

Commissioner Clark agreed with Ms. Susan Vanness's comments regarding the Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) and thought citizens should be involved in selecting a Registrar of Voters (ROV). He felt that someone chosen by the community might have fewer issues with stress. He recalled Mr. Roger Edwards' comments regarding the water recharge concerns. He did not understand why the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) could not address Mr. Edwards' issues and noted that the Office of the County Manager (OCM) should help. He thanked the BCC for the previous two meetings and felt the meetings were civil and pleasant. He noticed the Sheriff's office was not present. He requested a Community Homelessness Advisory Board (CHAB) meeting be agendized for discussion. He wanted to revisit the Chair's two-year term. He felt having someone else as Chair would be beneficial. He asked for a tour of the Cares Campus. He asked for a report from the District Attorney (DA) regarding recent executive orders and how they might affect the County.

Vice Chair Herman agreed with Commissioner Clark's comments. She asked County Manager Eric Brown if they could remove Mr. Edwards from the mailing list.

Manager Brown did not wish to discuss a non-agendized item. He noted the issue was related to a decision the BCC made on how to handle the water recharge payments. He mentioned the decision did not include forgiving payments for those who did not stay current before the decision was made. He was happy to discuss the concerns at a later date. Vice Chair Herman asked for a meeting between herself, Mr. Edwards, and Manager Brown. Manager Brown noted a meeting could be arranged.

Commissioner Clark indicated the water recharge issue should be an agenda item. He felt the issue was an unintended consequence of a decision made in the past. He believed it would be an easy item to fix and discuss.

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11:59 a.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

ALEXIS HILL, Chair
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared by:
Lizzie Tietjen, Deputy County Clerk*

Pending Board Approval