

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

MARCH 17, 2026

PRESENT:

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

Janis Galassini, County Clerk
Kate Thomas, County Manager
Michael Large, Chief Deputy District Attorney

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:

26-0171 **AGENDA ITEM 3** Invocation to be provided by Matthew Fisher, Priest and Nevada Interfaith Association President from the Reno Buddhist Center.

Matthew Fisher from the Nevada Interfaith Association and the Reno Buddhist Center provided the invocation.

26-0172 **AGENDA ITEM 4** Update and presentation from Truckee Meadows Fire & Rescue, Chief Isernhagen to provide the Board of County Commissioners a verbal report on fuel management and emergency planning, and any other updates as requested monthly to the board, to update to the community related to fire activities. TMFD. (All Commission Districts.) FOR DISCUSSION ONLY.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Division Chief August Isernhagen and National Weather Service Warning Coordination Meteorologist Dawn Johnson conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Wildland Fire Division Update Year in Review & 2026 Fire Season Outlook; Volunteer Program 2025-Current (2 slides); Wildland Fire/Fuels Management Numbers 2025 (2 slides); Fire Season – 2025; Fire Season – 2025 – Nevada; Fire Season – 2025 Geographic Area and Nationally; National Weather Service Update; Water Year SWE (Snow Water Equivalent); WY SWE vs Precipitation; Unprecedented Heatwave (For March); Soil

Moisture & Current Steamflows; Streamline Forecast; April-July Streamflow Forecast; Drought Monitor & Summer Outlook; 2026 – Take Aways.

Division Chief Isernhagen reviewed the first slide titled *Volunteer Program 2025-Current* and said it was a subordinate program within the Wildland Division that focused primarily on wildland fire. He reviewed the second slide titled *Volunteer Program 2025-Current* and explained that the slide showed the number of operational volunteers at Gerlach, Silver Lake, Palomino Valley, Red Rock, and the South Valleys. He shared that the TMFPD was at the peak of its onboarding season for new volunteers. He mentioned that information could be found on the TMFPD website for those interested in volunteering.

Division Chief Isernhagen reviewed the first slide titled *Wildland Fire/Fuels Management Numbers 2025* and said that the Wildland Fire and Fuels Management Division consisted of approximately 40 personnel who were wildland firefighters by trade. He added that when they were not actively fighting fires, they worked on fuel management projects. He noted that the statistics reflected field accomplishments for 2025. He reviewed the second slide titled *Wildland Fire/Fuels Management Numbers 2025* and said the statistics focused on communities and civilians. He indicated that the Wildland Division treated 91 private parcels and improved defensible space. He reported that more than 1,300 loads of vegetation were collected through the Green Waste Program. He said that the spring Green Waste collection was scheduled for May 2 and 3 and that additional information was available on the TMFPD website. He stated that 106 citizens were served through the curbside chipping service, which focused on the elderly, disabled, and low-income citizens who were unable to participate in the Green Waste Program. He noted that over 1,200 burn permits were issued, allowing the public to burn under specific conditions and to reduce hazardous fuels around homes. He shared that over 5,000 piles were burned through the winter months. He mentioned that the Wildland Division personnel completed 340 defensible space inspections and participated in 49 community events. He said that three new communities in Washoe County had earned Firewise USA credentialing. He pointed out that through partnerships with Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful (KTMB), nearly 800 Christmas trees were recycled.

Division Chief Isernhagen reviewed the slide titled *Fire Season – 2025* and said that Wildland Division personnel spent over 1,200 personal days on fire assignments, and the District spent over 1,700 days. He shared that there was a national dispatch framework that facilitated response across jurisdictional boundaries for Washoe County, and across the State and Country. He explained that the map highlighted several of the larger wildland fires within the County and stated that the fire sizes, especially in the northern region, varied but remained within the normal range. He indicated that in 2025, just under 5,000 acres burned across Washoe County, extending to the Oregon border. He reviewed the slide titled *Fire Season – 2025 - Nevada* and said that throughout the State, just under 400,000 acres were burned, which was considered typical. He believed the map indicated that much of the fire activity occurred in Elko County and southern Nevada. He shared that the TMFPD responded across jurisdictional boundaries and that the photographs shown were taken while the TMFPD assisted with fires in Elko County.

Division Chief Isernhagen reviewed the slide titled *Fire Season – 2025 – Geographic Area and Nationally* and said that within the Great Basin, which the TMFPD was part of for geographic dispatching, there were just under 2,800 fires and nearly 590,000 acres burned. He explained that averages could be misleading because a single fire could burn up to 800,000 acres. He shared that the ten-year national rolling average was just under 60,000 fires, which accounted for nearly 7.5 million acres burned. He mentioned that nationally, in 2025, there were 72,000 fires and 5 million acres burned, which was a 22 percent increase in fire starts but a 32 percent decrease in acreage burned. He said the photograph showed the TMFPD personnel who assisted with fires in Washington, Colorado, and Utah.

Ms. Johnson reviewed the slide titled *Water Year SWE (Snow Water Equivalent)* and said that while there had been significant rainfall to date, snowfall had been mild. She indicated that the slide displayed the Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) across the eastern Sierra. She mentioned that it was best when snowfall peaked around the first week of April, but noted the slide showed a peak in late February, then rapidly decreased thereafter. She reviewed the slide titled *WY SWE vs Precipitation* and explained that SWE in the basins ranged from 45 to 60 percent, and that across the north, it was approximately 30 percent. She said that, given the amount of rainfall, the area was at or above normal for total precipitation and indicated a warm snow drought. She reviewed the slide titled *Unprecedented Heatwave (For March)* and noted that the area experienced an unprecedented heat wave in March. She mentioned that March temperatures had never surpassed 83 degrees, but March 2026 was expected to exceed 83 degrees for 6 days in a row. She stated that since 1893, Reno had reached 80 degrees or higher only 11 times out of almost 4,100 days. She described the current weather as more like June than March, which caused the snow to melt rapidly.

Ms. Johnson reviewed the slide titled *Soil Moisture & Current Streamflows* and said that the early melting in the Sierra was unprecedented in the 45 years of the Snowpack Telemetry Network (SNOTEL), which was the automated snow recording sites in the mountains. She explained that soil moisture levels were well above normal and ranged from 100 to 150 percent. She noted that the percent of median streamflow indicated the amount of water flowing through rivers, creeks, and streams, and added that due to early melting, streamflow was nearly 300 percent of normal. She reviewed the slide titled *Streamflow Forecast* and said that the amount of water received, compared to a normal water year, was currently near or slightly above normal.

Ms. Johnson reviewed the slide titled *April-July Streamflow Forecast* and said the typical melting period was April through July. She noted that, due to the early melt-off, the area was between 35 and 70 percent of normal. She explained that because of the early melt-off, there would be a large gap between when the snow melted off and water demands. She mentioned that the lack of snow impacted tourism and the ski season, and it increased the potential for a more severe fire season. She stated that there had been a lot of rain, which helped with the fine fuel growth in the lower elevations. She said that prolonged snowfall shortages in the mountains could lead to more fires in the summer at higher elevations. She shared that the flood risk was almost nonexistent, even though the soil was

moist and much of the low-elevation snow had already melted. She indicated it would take a major storm to warrant flooding concerns. She reviewed the slide titled *Drought Monitor & Summer Outlook* and said that the western part of the State was not in a drought, while the eastern part was dry. She indicated that Washoe County's summer outlook was above normal, with near-normal monsoon activity. She explained that summer rainfall was not considered a monsoon but rather thunderstorms driven by monsoonal flow or a change in wind direction.

Division Chief Isernhagen reviewed the slide titled *2026 – Take Aways* and said he was frequently asked what to expect for the next fire season. He explained that in wet years, there was more annual grass growth, which created more fuel, and in dry years, forests were more vulnerable because trees were water-stressed. He shared that, for the first time in his 25 years in the field, both scenarios were possible. He noted that there was more moisture than normal to support grass growth, but it was not in the form of snow in the mountains to keep the trees healthy. He mentioned that as summer approached, it was important to remember that 90 percent of wildfires were human-caused, which would determine the severity of the fire season. He urged the community to begin home hardening and create defensible space. He shared that if the public needed any information on those topics, they could go to the Living With Fire website through the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Cooperative Extension.

Commissioner Herman thanked the presenters for the information. She stated that she hoped for a mild fire season and wished there were more cattle available for grazing.

26-0173 **AGENDA ITEM 5** Public Comment.

Terry Brooks read an original poem regarding discrimination, economics, and age.

Katherine Snedigar stated that she believed several issues had not been considered regarding Sierra Reflections. She said that 940 homes were approved in a rural area, with some built on one-tenth of an acre, which she did not believe matched the area's rural characteristics. She expressed concern regarding traffic and the proposed roundabout. She speculated that fire trucks would have difficulty navigating the roundabouts. She said she did not see any details about widening Highway (Hwy) 395 to accommodate more traffic. She noted that there would be another 1,800 cars on the road with the new development, which she opined would not fit on Hwy 395. She said she did not witness the County discuss concerns with the Nevada Equal Protection Division regarding any chemicals or mercury. She believed the developers, not the County, had to obtain the land permit from the State. She asserted that she was disgusted with the County and recalled that the County widened the roads in Spanish Springs for businesses and people to be serviced properly; however, the road then bottlenecked to a 55 miles per hour (mph) speed limit, creating bumper-to-bumper traffic. She said that she drove at 65 to 70 mph when there were no cars on Pyramid Hwy.

Janet Butcher provided a document, copies of which were placed on file with the Clerk. She wished the Board a happy Saint (St.) Patty's Day. She noted that Agenda Item 9 contained the reappointment for the Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission (WCOSRPC) opening. She recalled that the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) reappointment on January 20, 2026, was tabled after a discussion. She believed that the reappointment policy should be reviewed during a future strategic planning meeting. She wondered when the future strategic planning meeting would occur and whether the policy automatically reappointing members would be changed to open appointments to the community. She reiterated that the TRPA appointment was tabled, reopened to the community, and later placed on a subsequent meeting agenda, with the incumbent member not being selected. She felt that Agenda Item 9 should be treated the same as the TRPA reappointment. She said that the Board was picking and choosing which positions they wished to handle based on the outcome of the appointee. She relayed that she hoped Agenda Item 9 would be tabled and reopened to the public. She opined that there was a list of interested volunteers during the selection on January 20, 2026, for the same position, which she pointed out were listed in her document. She said that there were individuals who always applied but were never selected. She reiterated that reappointments should be discussed and made public; otherwise, there would be an imbalance.

Todd Bailey, self-identified as a paid lobbyist, provided a document, copies of which were placed on file with the Clerk. He indicated that there was an opinion in the newspaper regarding fake news journalists who were complaining about transparency and fees in government. He said that his previous solution was that any public official, elected or otherwise, who did not comply with Nevada law regarding transparency was guilty of a felony and would be fined \$1 million. He said everyone at the Legislature, to whom he recommended the policy, had laughed at him. He speculated that without his recommended level of enforcement, there was no transparency in government. He opined that the journalists knew there would not be transparency in the government, as well, because he felt they slanted their agenda and were part of COVID-19 (C19) censorship, defunding the police, and opening borders for a sanctuary state. He said that the journalists should be called the *coalition for propaganda transparency* because he believed the articles were fake news. He theorized that the journalists' advertisers were the Commissioner's contributors. He requested public information from the document he submitted related to the 2008 election results and Washoe County policies. He wondered where the information was stored because he could not find it.

Ryan Vortisch indicated that he was the Silver State Voices Northern Nevada Democracy Coordinator, a non-partisan, non-profit organization whose mission was to build a more robust democracy by expanding voter access and ensuring fair and free elections. He noted that he supported the recent developments within the Registrar of Voters (ROV) Office regarding Agenda Item 7A1. He applauded the work that ROV Andrew McDonald and his team were doing to ensure and expand accessibility measures in Washoe County elections. He said that not only was the ROV revamping polling locations to ensure the utmost compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but they were also preparing to launch Nevada's first curbside voting program to further

expand access to the ballot box. He mentioned that the ROV team had worked diligently to ensure that every eligible voter could make their voice heard in the upcoming election cycle, and he looked forward to witnessing the benefits of the new initiatives during the primary election in June.

Jill O'Leary indicated that she was following up regarding her February 10, 2026, request for action to reconcile the Washoe County Checkbook from budgeted dollars to actual dollars paid. She said that, in addition to payroll, a few other budget areas were also reconciled by the Comptroller using transaction summaries, including investment income of over \$800 million accumulated since 2010 from the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)'s five-year gas tax (RTC-5). She believed that \$1.2 million was summarized in the budget for the whole year as investment income on over \$800 million, with no reconciliation of dollars spent on any of the RTC-5's road improvement projects. She opined that the proposed electric vehicle (EV) tax lacked a basis under Agenda Items 8E1 and 8E2 due to a lack of transparency regarding income, expenditures, and revenue from numerous federal, State, and local grants, such as the \$436,000 Homeland Security Grant (HSG) awarded in late 2025. She reported that the County was the only agency in Nevada to seek the specific federal grant for immigration enforcement, which she said made the County eligible to receive federal marshal service reimbursement of \$167 per day for each United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainee. She recalled that the jail-based mental health programs related to Assembly Bill (AB) 467, passed in the 2025 Special Legislative Session. She noted that it was previously known as Competency Restoration and was conducted at Lakes Crossing Center. She said that the County chose to participate in \$5.8 million in State funding in April 2024, then supplemented in December 2025 with an additional \$9.9 million. She mentioned that the \$6.2 million contract with NaphCare was approved to provide the medical and psychiatric staffing required by the grant for a 30-bed facility, specifically for inmates found incompetent to stand trial. She believed that the State was effectively paying the County to handle mental health care inmates who had reached an average stay of 74 to 122 days. She said that the current waitlist for the 30 beds was reported at zero. She opined that the grant provided no expedited cases for the 1,100 people housed in the general population, of whom more than half received medication. She asserted that the County auctioned 40 properties, generating reported revenue of \$1.2 million. She reiterated that the County Manager (CM) oversaw the Comptroller's actual expenditures and revenues.

Maureen McElroy noted that she was a native Nevadan and a long-time County resident. She expressed appreciation toward ROV McDonald and his dedicated staff. She said that as the election season approached, it was important for the voting public to feel secure in local voting procedures and the staff who administered them. She mentioned that the voting public had an obligation to understand the local voting process and encouraged everyone with a stake in the upcoming election to visit the ROV website. She thought it was important for voters to witness the work involved in the County holding secure elections and to educate themselves on the ROV's process, from streamlining and clarifying voter registration, cleaning up voter rolls, offering convenient and effective voting options, and including accessible voting centers and new Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA) curbside voting. She believed the ROV worked to deliver a safe, transparent, secure, and effective voting experience for the entire County.

26-0174 **AGENDA ITEM 6** Announcements/Reports.

Commissioner Clark referenced prior comments about transparency and ethics, including an allegation that someone had offered a bribe. He stated that he had taken those concerns seriously and emphasized his commitment to transparency. He proposed conducting an investigation into the individual accused of involvement in the alleged bribe. He added that he had additional names to include and would share that information with Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Michael Large to ensure compliance with the Open Meeting Law (OML).

CDDA Large asked Commissioner Clark to submit those names to his office.

Commissioner Hill mentioned that she had previously requested information regarding the process by which Washoe County was reimbursed for the United States (US) Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainees, and had not yet received it.

Vice Chair Garcia reminded the Board of Senate Bill (SB) 319, which passed in 2025 and mandated a regional fire study. She mentioned that the Cities of Reno and Sparks and Washoe County invited the public to an informational meeting on March 19, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., in the Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH) conference room. She noted the meeting would be a 90-minute, in-person-only session that was recorded and made available on YouTube afterward. She added that representatives from Emergency Global Solutions (EGS), along with the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Fire Chief Richard Edwards, the Reno Fire Department (RFD) Fire Chief David Cochran, and the Sparks Fire Department (SFD) Fire Chief Walt White, would be in attendance. She encouraged the public to attend.

Chair Andriola thanked all in attendance and hoped everyone would enjoy a lot of Irish celebration.

PRESENTATIONS

26-0175 **AGENDA ITEM 7A1** Presentation by Andrew McDonald, Washoe County Registrar of Voters, to provide an update on various initiatives and developments within the Registrar of Voters' Office. Voters. (All Commission Districts.)

Washoe County Registrar of Voters (ROV) Andrew McDonald conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Road to the 2026 Primary Election; Maintaining the Rolls; Bulk List Maintenance; Active Registrations 2024 – 2026; Precinct Adjustments; Vote Registration Transparency Project; Building

Vote Centers; Primary Election Vote Centers; Heat Map Success; Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs); Warehouse Update; WCSD Vote Center Demonstrations; ADA Curbside Voting (2 slides); Accessibility Challenges; Operational Improvements; The Elections Group Audit; Automatic Signature Verification; Mail Ballot Packet Changes; Election 2026; Important Dates; Thank You.

Mr. McDonald stated that when he was appointed by the Board, he made a commitment to maintain the voter rolls, which he recognized as the Board's number one priority. He reviewed the slide titled *Bulk List Maintenance* and reported that since his appointment as the ROV, he had inactivated 55,501 voters and canceled 25,012 due to inactivity and nonparticipation in the voting process. He shared that bulk voter list maintenance would occur through March 11, 2026, in accordance with the 90-day deadline under the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), which prohibited bulk list maintenance during the timeframe leading up to the primary election. He noted that, to comply with the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 293.530, the ROV sent address verification cards to voters, who had 33 days to respond before being designated as inactive. He added that inactive status could occur when mail ballots were returned as *undeliverable*, when the United States Postal Service (USPS) data indicated that a voter no longer lived at their registered address, or when a voter did not participate in two consecutive general elections. He explained that there was no disenfranchisement, as the ROV's Office followed NRS when voters failed to update their registration or participate in voting.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *Active Registrations 2024 - 2026* and said there would likely be a significant drop in active registered voters between October and November 2025 due to inactivations. He reviewed the slide titled *Precinct Adjustments* and shared that the ROV's Office was in the process of creating 24 new precincts, as NRS required that no single precinct have more than 5,000 voters. He stated that the new precincts were created due to an increase in active voter registrations in certain areas, while the ballots and contests remained the same. He added that there were no changes to districts, only to the precincts.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *Vote Registration Transparency Project* and said the Board would be familiar with the voter transparency project. He thanked Chair Andriola for providing the project's vision and identifying the Center for Internet Security (CIS) as a framework to guide development. He shared that the ROV's Office worked closely with the Technical Services (TS) team and the Business Technologists (BTs). He indicated that voter registration was managed centrally through the Statewide system, and that Washoe County was developing a transparency tool that captured periodic snapshots of that data. He explained that each snapshot would be processed through a cryptographic hash to create a unique digital fingerprint, which would be made available to the public. He said that would allow anyone to independently calculate the hash and verify that the file had not been altered since originally captured and published. He indicated that the project's purpose was to provide a transparent, tamper-evident record of voter registration data over time. He thought that by preserving those snapshots and their hashes, the County could maintain a historical record of changes, ensuring that any unexpected modifications could be detected and investigated if

necessary. He mentioned that a website would be developed to provide instructions, definitions, and information on voter list maintenance timelines, including processes for voter inactivations and cancellations. He said he would attend a future Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting with a representative from the CIS to further explain and demonstrate the project.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *Primary Election Vote Centers* and said that for the upcoming election, there would be 22 vote centers and 50 Election Day vote centers. He mentioned that voting center locations would include the Reno-Sparks Convention Center, the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC), Reno Public Market, and more than 22 schools. He reviewed the slide titled *Heat Map Success* and shared that he had previously presented the map to the Board and had since worked with the County's Geographic Information System (GIS) division to further analyze the data. He explained that the data reflected community needs and was used to appropriately locate vote centers in underserved areas, reinforcing that the ROV's Office was aligned with areas of need. He announced that the Reno-Sparks Convention Center would have at least 30 BMDs and that a ballot drop box would be located at the Cares Campus. He stated that he would return before the Board on April 14, 2026, to request approval of the 2026 June Primary Election vote centers.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs)* and said the Board had approved the purchase of new BMDs in November 2025. He explained that the devices allowed in-person voters to print and cast a full-length, tangible ballot. He indicated that, since it was the first election in which the BMDs would be used, there would be an opportunity at the new warehouse located at 655 Longley Lane in Reno on March 24, 2026, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., for the media, public, elected officials, and other prominent members to test the equipment and ask questions.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *Warehouse Update* and shared that the Board had recently approved a new building lease to relocate the existing ROV warehouse, with the eventual goal of moving the ROV headquarters there. He mentioned that equipment would be fully moved by the end of March 2026, and that additional racking, technical installations, and a forklift would be procured to support the continued relocation of the ROV Office. He explained that Phase Two was a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) project, with the request for proposals (RFPs) due on March 19, 2026, and a notice of award scheduled for April 19, 2026. He clarified that the ROV headquarters would remain at its current location until 2027, due to the operational build-out of office space and the operations of the new warehouse.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *WCSD Vote Center Demonstrations* and said that Commissioner Hill had previously asked the ROV to become more involved in youth voter engagement. He explained that the ROV's Office developed a high school program and held its first engagement with Sparks High School, where students were excited and participation was high. He mentioned that students learned about the importance of voting and participated in a mock election using the new voting equipment. He indicated that additional high school outreach events were planned to follow the current

election cycle. He reviewed the first slide titled *ADA Curbside Voting* and announced that Washoe County would launch Nevada's first Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curbside voting program. He indicated that while Clark County offered mobile voting services, it had not previously implemented ADA curbside voting.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the second slide titled *ADA Curbside Voting* and explained that voters who need ADA curbside assistance would park in a designated accessible space and call a site manager. He said that an election official would take a curbside voting cart to the vehicle, while an elections manager would validate the voter and check them in. That would allow the person to vote from their vehicle. He mentioned that the voter would print their ballot, place it in a secrecy sleeve, and an election official would cast the ballot on the voter's behalf inside the vote center.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *Accessibility Challenges* and said that there had been several accessibility challenges since the prior election. He mentioned that the Department of Justice (DOJ) visited 10 of the 55 Election Day sites during the 2024 Primary Election and that, unfortunately, all 10 locations failed to comply with the ADA. He explained that it resulted in a settlement agreement between Washoe County and the DOJ, under which Washoe County had to reevaluate all its vote centers. He noted that the most common issue identified was passive travel. He stated that, unfortunately, even in the current election, fewer than 20 percent of the vote centers would be fully ADA-compliant. He said that, due to that non-compliance, the ADA curbside voting program was established. He indicated that Title II of the ADA required public entities to provide reasonable modifications and ensure accessible voting opportunities.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *The Elections Group Audit* and outlined operational improvements to resolve the 2023 Elections Group Audit, stating that all findings and recommendations had been addressed. He highlighted notable recommendations for filling staffing positions, enhancing training, completing over 40 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and securing adequate facility space. He thanked the Board for approving the new warehouse and headquarters to support dual processing and improve the efficiency of mail ballot processing.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *Automatic Signature Verification* and said that Automatic Signature Verification (ASV) software had been added to the new mail ballot sorter for the 2026 election. He shared that the software compared the signature on the vote-by-mail envelope with the voter's reference signature in the voter registration database. He explained that if the signature score met or exceeded the verification threshold, the ballot was automatically accepted without manual review. Alternatively, if the signature score fell below the threshold, the ballot was flagged and sent to trained bipartisan staff for manual signature verification, which he indicated was consistent with current procedures. He mentioned that, for the sample set, 13,416 signatures from the 2024 Presidential General Election were reviewed in coordination with the Cities of Reno and Sparks Clerk's Offices and members of the ROV Office. He indicated that the higher the threshold score, the more conservative the software was. He shared that a county in California used a threshold setting of 45, which was considered loose, whereas Washoe

County's threshold was 72. He said that was a conservative threshold agreed upon by the City Clerks and the County, with confidence that it would minimize the likelihood of incorrectly rejecting valid signatures.

Mr. McDonald reviewed the slide titled *Mail Ballot Packet Changes* and said that the Board approved joining the State mail ballot printer. He shared that the State would cover the County's costs for the mail ballot packet. He stated that the ROV's Office updated the design to be more patriotic, modern, easier to understand, and informative. He explained that voters who did not wish to receive a mail ballot must submit a signed mail ballot preference form by April 10, 2026, prior to the Primary Election. He added that voters would have another opportunity to update their preferences prior to the General Election. He indicated that he had received feedback from individuals who expressed concerns that mail ballots were not counted. He thought updating the mail ballot preference would give voters who preferred not to receive a mail ballot an option. He reviewed the slide titled *Important Dates* and highlighted several key dates. He indicated that the Canvass of the Vote typically occurred on June 19, but because June 19 was a federal holiday, it would take place on June 18 instead.

Chair Andriola thanked Mr. McDonald and his team for their hard work and for consistently pursuing continuous process improvement. She thought his efforts indicated he would be successful in obtaining Six Sigma certification.

Vice Chair Garcia acknowledged Mr. McDonald's leadership and creative thinking. She recalled that during a January 2023 workshop, the Board established elections as a priority and committed to improving infrastructure and technology, as well as increasing ROV staffing. She expressed her appreciation for his innovative approach to introducing ADA curbside voting in Washoe County. She thought that his role at the forefront of designing the voting cart demonstrated his commitment and dedication to the process.

Commissioner Clark thanked Mr. McDonald for his presentation. He stated that 55,501 voters' voting status had been inactivated, and 25,012 had been canceled. He asked what percentage of the voter rolls were inaccurate and what the accuracy rate was after voter roll maintenance. Mr. McDonald responded that the voter rolls were extremely accurate. He added that March 11, 2026, was the last day the ROV's Office could perform bulk list maintenance to inactivate and cancel voter status. He explained that as voters moved to Washoe County or changed their political party, there was a limit to what could be done. He noted that while bulk list maintenance was restricted for a period, individual records could be updated if someone moved out of the County or passed away. He suggested that the number of undeliverable mail ballots would likely be much lower than in the previous election.

Commissioner Clark acknowledged that many factors could contribute to inaccuracies. He stated that during the previous election cycle, nearly 50,000 ballots were returned, which represented a high cost for the County, both in staff time and financial resources. He believed that maintaining accurate voter rolls would help reduce those costs

and prevent voters from being disenfranchised due to ballots being sent to incorrect addresses or difficulties voting in person. He requested the breakdown by district for the 312,000 registered voters. Mr. McDonald said he would provide that information. Commissioner Clark said that, with the creation of new precincts, he wanted to understand which districts were affected. Mr. McDonald replied that he would share that information once it was available.

Commissioner Hill expressed her appreciation for the ROV's Office. She acknowledged Mr. McDonald's efforts on the Elections Group Audit that the Board requested, and noted that the appropriate operational recommendations were implemented in the County based on the audit findings. She noted that she wished the new warehouse was ready for the current election and recognized the limitations of the existing ROV facility. She stated that while there would be pressure from the State to report election results quickly, she hoped the community would understand the space constraints and that results would be processed as efficiently as possible. She shared that the voting process would be transparent, with ballots submitted by mail, drop boxes, and in-person voting sites. She stressed the importance of clear public communication, noting that patience was essential, democracy took time, and accuracy in reporting was critical. She expressed her concern about the implementation of voter identification (ID) requirements, particularly their potential impact on mail-in ballots and seniors, and the possibility of disenfranchisement. She suggested that there had been communications from the executive branch of the federal government about requiring birth certificates and passports, as well as about nationalizing elections. She expressed appreciation for improvements to the ROV website that made information more accessible, and she raised concerns about election security, emphasizing the importance of ensuring public safety.

Mr. McDonald stated that the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) had been a great partner to the ROV's Office. He indicated that the WCSO escorted ROV staff when they picked up mail ballots from the USPS. He said that a plan was in place for the upcoming election and that the ROV staff would meet with Washoe County security staff to review procedures in the event of an incident at a vote center. He explained that, while staff did not anticipate any issues, they had completed conflict de-escalation processes, and added that additional safety training would be conducted.

Commissioner Hill emphasized the importance of keeping the ROV's website up to date to prevent misconceptions. She expressed appreciation for efforts to involve students in mock elections at Sparks High School and recalled participating in Girls State and voting on ballot machines. She hoped there would be future opportunities to collaborate with the Washoe County School District (WCSD) to educate young adults on the fundamentals of voting, ensuring that students were prepared to vote when they turned 18.

Chair Andriola said that 43 SOPs had been approved and recalled that SOPs were a significant component of the audit findings. She wondered whether additional SOPs were being developed. Mr. McDonald explained that the SOPs he referenced were created to address the audit findings and that the completed SOPs exceeded the required number.

He mentioned that processes were continuously refined and updated annually, including ongoing improvements to the voter registration system. He indicated that additional SOPs were planned to further benefit the County and provide guidance for future elections.

Chair Andriola acknowledged Mr. McDonald's efforts to explore options to improve the voting process and noted that SOPs were an important part of the audit. She agreed that ongoing maintenance was more effective than trying to catch up and acknowledged that the ROV's Office was in a constant state of change. She thanked Mr. McDonald for his work to ensure election security. She said she looked forward to continuing transparency and dedication as a County that was committed to building trust in elections. She expressed her appreciation for the hard work of the entire ROV team and for their accelerated, yet planned efficiency. She shared her excitement about upcoming mock election opportunities, which she felt promoted transparency by allowing the public to test new voting equipment and observe ballots and the scanning process.

26-0176 **AGENDA ITEM 7B1** Presentation by BLM Nevada State Director Jon Raby and Carson City District Manager, Kimberly Dow to discuss recent Federal changes specific to federal lands and impacts to ranchers and public land access.(All Commission Districts.)

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Nevada State Director Jon Raby and BLM Carson City District Manager Kimberly Dow conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: BLM Nevada Overview; BLM Nevada; Priorities; BLM Partners in Nevada; Energy and Minerals – Emergency Permitting Process; BLM Nevada Minerals Programs; BLM Nevada Recreation Programs; Grazing; BLM Nevada Resource Programs; BLM Nevada Wild Horse and Burro Programs; BLM Nevada Wildland Fire Programs; BLM Nevada Law Enforcement; BLM Carson City District – Projects and Efforts in Washoe County; Lands and Realty; Range and Wild Horse & Burro; Fuels and Fire Restoration; Recreation and Public Access; BLM Nevada Dumping & Abandoned Vehicle Mitigation; Thank you!.

Mr. Raby greeted the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to provide updates on BLM efforts in Nevada, Washoe County, and throughout the United States (US). He introduced Ms. Dow and those who attended the meeting with him, including BLM Carson City District Public Affairs Specialist Lisa Ross and BLM Carson City District Sierra Front Field Manager Matthew Malgaletti.

Mr. Raby displayed the *BLM Nevada* slide, noting that Nevada was a unique agency within the BLM. He reported that BLM Nevada oversaw 48 million acres of public land in the 71 million total acres in Nevada, about 68 percent of the total land area. He noted that BLM Nevada also managed 59 million acres of federal mineral estate. He explained that BLM Nevada operated through 6 District Offices and 11 Field Offices, demonstrating the organization's focus on maintaining local management. He noted that there were 20 federally recognized tribes in Nevada and 28 tribal communities throughout the State with which BLM Nevada worked. He reported that BLM generated approximately

\$9.2 billion in economic output for the State. He stated that there were approximately 38,000 wild horses and burros throughout BLM Nevada's 83 herd management areas (HMAs), which represented approximately half of the BLM's total. He noted that BLM Nevada had several of the largest special recreation permits across the BLM, including those for the Burning Man and the Vegas to Reno events. He reported that BLM Nevada oversaw approximately 280,000 mining claims across the State, accounting for over half of all BLM mining claims.

Mr. Raby showed the *Priorities* slide, noting that his priorities for Nevada were primarily to support local communities and economies, public and employee safety, and workforce development. He explained that another priority was energy and mineral development and infrastructure, which would include traditional energy sources as well as solar and geothermal. He noted that Nevada generated some wind energy as well, though he explained that the majority of the State's permitted energy production, approximately 92 percent, came from solar and geothermal sources. He stated that maintaining public access to public lands was another priority because if the public could not access their public lands, the concept of the land being public would be rendered redundant. He reported that BLM Nevada had an overall focus on sound, effective resource management, which included the agency's rangeland management undertaking to ensure that there was a focused effort in the field that would benefit rangeland resources. He stated that fiscal responsibility was another priority, as every dollar given to BLM Nevada came from taxpayers or from contributed funds from companies or proponents doing business with the agency. He noted that support for the tribal nations' partners in Nevada was another of BLM Nevada's priorities.

Mr. Raby displayed the slide titled *BLM Partners in Nevada*. He explained that the 17 counties in Nevada were partnered with BLM, with a strong partnership in Washoe County. He stated that BLM Nevada also worked with the federal government, noted that the agency did not pay taxes to the State of Nevada, and explained that BLM Nevada made payments in lieu of taxes (PILT). He reported that BLM Nevada paid \$28.1 million in PILT payments in 2024, with \$4.2 million being received by Washoe County in 2024 PILT. He stated that BLM Nevada did not yet have the data for 2025 PILT payments. He acknowledged that the PILT payments were generally considered as not being enough as they likely should be, though he explained that it was how the agency covered its share. He reported that BLM Nevada operated a program called the Nevada Native Seed Partnership, which included county and state agencies to help develop a seed bank that was used for post-fire recovery. He referred to comments made previously in the meeting regarding the work conducted by the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) for fire suppression. He explained that BLM Nevada had to work on post-fire recovery to ensure the lands were stabilized, and he emphasized that the partnership had been invaluable to BLM Nevada. He reported that BLM Nevada had military partners with Naval Air Station Fallon and Nellis Air Force Base. He stated that BLM Nevada was implementing efforts under provisions of the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act to expand Naval Air Station Fallon and was working to finalize the transfer of 600,000 acres of BLM land in support of the air station's training mission for military readiness.

Mr. Raby showed the *Energy and Minerals – Emergency Permitting Process* slide. He noted that he would only briefly discuss the content on the slide about energy and minerals and acknowledged that it included a substantial amount of text. He explained that every project BLM Nevada engaged in that involved permitting required a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review. He noted that emergency permitting processes required streamlined efforts to review environmental assessments within approximately 14 days and an environmental impact statement within about 28 days. He explained that the emergency permitting process still required completion of work necessary for a final application or a fully completed plan of operations. He emphasized that the expedited emergency permitting process did not mean BLM Nevada was shortcutting the review process, but rather streamlining it. He noted that the expedited process included provisions under the Endangered Species Act and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) to ensure that BLM Nevada was compliant with Section 106 of the NHPA. He noted that BLM Nevada had a strong relationship with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office in conducting those efforts.

Mr. Raby displayed the slide titled *BLM Nevada Minerals Programs* slide. He reiterated that BLM Nevada had 264,000 active mining claims, representing 48.5 percent of all mining claims Nationwide. He stated that BLM Nevada permitted the Cortez Gold Mine, which was a tremendous producer and the largest gold mine in North America. He reported that permitted mines produced over 3.4 million ounces of gold with a net value of \$8.3 billion in 2024. He explained that BLM Nevada held \$4.6 billion in reclamation bonds that ensured that when mines completed their life cycle, they were fully taken care of through reclamation. He noted that BLM Nevada had a model permitting process in the State, which the agency completed in half the time required by the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA). He reported that BLM Nevada prepared environmental assessments within 6 months despite having 12 months to complete them based on FRA requirements, and the agency conducted environmental impact statements within 12 months rather than the allowed 24-month period. He noted that the expedited timeline was due to BLM Nevada's relationships with other agencies and pre-permitting requirements.

Mr. Raby showed the *BLM Nevada Recreation Programs* slide. He noted that recreation was a notable part of Nevada and was a significant element in Washoe County. He reported that \$552 million in recreation funding was generated from BLM economic contributions to the \$6 billion recreation economy in Nevada, which he suspected his friend, Denise Beronio, Administrator for the Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation (NDOR), might argue was a low estimate. He stated that BLM Nevada took great pride in the agency's role in assisting the hosting of events such as Burning Man, the Reno Cattle Drive, and off-highway vehicle races like Vegas to Reno and the Stead Motocross track.

Mr. Raby introduced the slide titled *Grazing* and noted that he would transfer the remainder of the presentation to Ms. Dow after a brief discussion on a few more topics. He reported that BLM Nevada was currently working on regulations to update its ability to streamline grazing permit renewals and to allow for turnout earlier or later in the season, depending on weather conditions in any given year. He referred to his previous

comments regarding fire suppression and explained that livestock grazing could help mitigate fire risk with a reduction in fine fuels and grass load. He noted that under the new regulations he mentioned previously, grazing turnout could be conducted earlier in years with conditions like those being experienced in 2026, with the necessary flexibility while still adhering to the same environmental protections. He reported that BLM Nevada was currently investigating the application of new technologies, such as virtual fencing. He noted that BLM Nevada had a great relationship with the Nevada Cattlemen's Association (NCA), which assisted the agency in implementing projects BLM otherwise would not be able to achieve.

Mr. Raby displayed the *BLM Nevada Resource Program* slide. He reported that BLM Nevada had finalized a new Greater Sage-grouse plan in December of 2025, which the agency was currently implementing. He noted that BLM Nevada planned to hold training sessions for its staff and cooperating agencies, such as Washoe County, in the first and third weeks of April. He explained that BLM Nevada worked hard on Lahontan Cutthroat Trout recovery with its federal and state partners, as well as the local tribes. He acknowledged that he had previously briefly discussed outcome and target-based grazing, which involved very innovative work with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). He showed the *BLM Nevada Wild Horse and Burro Program* slide and referred to the agency's 2026 gather outlook initiative, which he noted was aligning with goals. He reported that the population of wild horses and burros had decreased from 49,000 to 38,000, with BLM Nevada expecting to gather 7,000 animals in 2026. He reported that BLM Nevada operated three holding facilities between Palomino Valley, Fallon, and Paradise Valley outside of Winnemucca. He commended the Northern Nevada Correctional Center, as staff there helped BLM Nevada adopt out 60 to 90 wild horses each year and had generated \$851,000 in adoption revenue since 2021.

Mr. Raby introduced the *BLM Nevada Wildland Fire Programs* slide, explaining that all Department of the Interior fire services had been recently consolidated into the new US Wildland Fire Service. He explained that BLM Nevada would be assessing the implications of that consolidation for the agency, as the consolidated fire service would no longer report to his chain of command. He stated that BLM Nevada would work to ensure the new consolidated service continued to provide the same level of service and was prepared for the 2026 fire season. He displayed the *BLM Nevada Law Enforcement* slide and commended the partnership between BLM Nevada, Sheriff Darin Balaam, and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) on their collaborative efforts to provide public safety and resource protection. He reported that BLM Nevada had a total of 30 uniformed law enforcement officers and 5 agents, translating to fewer than 1 officer per 1 million acres of BLM land. He emphasized that the territory those officers were responsible for was substantial and that the agency needed help from local sheriff's offices to cover it. He thanked the WCSO for the support and noted that Ms. Dow would conduct the remainder of the presentation.

Ms. Dow displayed the *BLM Carson City District* slide. She explained that she would quickly review some of the projects specific to the BLM Carson City District's work in the Washoe County area. She showed the slide titled *Lands and Realty* and reported

that the BLM Carson City District had a very robust lands and realty program that received 200 to 300 transaction applications per year. She noted that she would describe two of the more interesting applications. She explained that the Lemmon Drive Road Realignment project was of high interest to residents of that area and involved work between the BLM Carson City District and Washoe County to move 2.5 miles of roadway outside of the floodplain. She emphasized that the project was highly important to local residents, as the average daily traffic was anticipated to reach 16,000 vehicles by 2050, and those drivers would be heavily impacted when the road flooded. She explained that the BLM Carson City District was currently working with NEPA for review, and the district anticipated those efforts would be completed within the coming two months, with construction expected to be completed by the fall of 2027. She noted that the other major project listed on the slide, currently underway in Washoe County, was the Dodge Flat II Solar project. She noted that the project site was located near Wadsworth and was very close to the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe Reservation. She reported that the project spanned 1,571 acres, of which 500 were on public land. She noted that the plan for the project was for a 200-megawatt (MW) solar and 200-MW battery storage center, which would be adjacent to the existing Dodge Flat I project, located entirely on private land. She explained that the final stages of the project were underway, with the final environmental assessment and the Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment sent for comment and the Governor's Consistency Review being processed. She reported that a decision on the project would be made by late May of 2026.

Ms. Dow showed the slide titled *Range and Wild Horse & Burro*. She explained that she would describe the BLM Carson City District's efforts related to rangelands, wild horses, and burros that were specific to Washoe County. She explained that the BLM Carson City District was working on the Flanigan Allotment Grazing Permit Renewal project, which she noted was shown on the slide's map, located directly west of Pyramid Lake. She reported that the project's Land Health Assessment was finalized in July of 2025, and the Draft Standards Determination Document was published in December of 2025. She recalled that the district had identified that several changes needed to be implemented in the allotment to improve the grazing in the project area, and she explained that fencing repairs were subsequently completed in the fall of 2025. She reported that within the same period, the district had worked with the permittee to install pipeline and trough to protect Sheep Springs against wild horse damage. She explained that the BLM Carson City District anticipated having a final environmental assessment and proposed decision by June of 2026. She noted that the North Complex Wild Horse Gather Plan would be conducted in the same general area as the Flanigan Allotment Grazing Permit Renewal project. She elaborated that the wild horse gather plan involved a complex of three HMAs, including Flanigan, Dogskin Mountains, and Granite Peak. She explained that the wild horses in the area frequently moved back and forth between the three HMAs, so the district was treating the area comprehensively as a complex and trying to implement a gather plan. She noted that the gather plan would also help the permittee for the Flanigan and Winnemucca Ranch allotments. She reported that the North Complex Wild Horse Gather Plan's preliminary environmental assessment was anticipated to be published in June of 2026.

Ms. Dow displayed the *Fuels and Fire Restoration* slide, acknowledging that she had included substantial information on the slide about the BLM Carson City District's current and completed fuels and fire restoration efforts. She noted that the district had many seeding and fuel reduction projects and fuel breaks in the Winnemucca Ranch, Antelope Mountain, and Paiute Canyon allotments. She explained that they had completed 5,000 acres of inventory, 500 acres of mechanical and chemical treatment, and 500 acres of monitoring in those areas. She praised the BLM Carson City District's Fuels team for their incredible work. She referred to the listed future efforts on the slide, including the Gold Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation project in the Golden Eagle area, where she noted that the Fuels team would be working on fuels and herbicide treatment. She also emphasized the significance of the Northern Virginia Mountains fine-fuel reduction and restoration project, which she described as part of the district's shared stewardship program, aimed at reducing fine fuels and restoring native brush species for big game. Additionally, she discussed the North Reno Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fuel reduction project, another shared stewardship effort focused on constructing new and maintaining existing fuel breaks to protect homes in the WUI areas.

Ms. Dow showed the *Recreation and Public Access* slide. She emphasized that the efforts on the slide listed for the program were very important to the BLM Carson City District. She noted that the district had recently received a \$305,000 grant from Nevada State Parks to enhance Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) areas. She reported that a substantial portion of those funds would be allocated to areas located within Washoe County, specifically at Jumbo Grade and the North Reno Recreation Area, commonly known as Moon Rocks. She explained that the enhancement effort was currently in the planning phase. She indicated that the BLM Carson City District had recently learned it had received the grant and was now working to identify projects and detail plans. She described a target-shooting project the district was undertaking in collaboration with Assistant County Manager (ACM) David Solaro, whom she noted had been a great partner. She described it as a fantastic project, noting that target shooting was an important part of the recreation program. She emphasized the importance of responsible target shooting and the need to find a safe place to practice it, especially in the WUI. She noted their close collaborative work with Washoe County to locate a suitable site for responsible target shooting, expressing appreciation for ACM Solaro's support and for his championing the effort.

Ms. Dow displayed the *BLM Nevada Dumping & Abandoned Vehicle Mitigation* slide. She highlighted that the Nevada Dumping and Abandoned Vehicle Mitigation program was another successful partnership with Washoe County. She mentioned that Assembly Bill (AB) 415 had recently passed, and that the BLM Carson City District had already begun to see improvements. She explained that those improvements had occurred quickly because the law provided greater flexibility in removing abandoned vehicles, enabling a much faster process. She noted that tow truck companies were now allowed to be part of the solution. She emphasized that while protections remained to prevent the rapid removal of vehicles before owners could claim them, vehicles no longer had to remain on the landscape for years. She observed that many vehicles were being removed from the landscape quickly, which was important because

abandoned vehicles contributed to the creation of dumping areas and worsened the problem rapidly. She expressed appreciation for the State of Nevada passing the law. She mentioned that the scrap metal market was currently very high, leading to more abandoned vehicles being removed. She explained that the BLM Carson City District was identifying additional opportunities to use large dumpsters for major cleanup efforts. She acknowledged that she had spoken to Vice Chair Garcia about the matter in the past and cited partnerships with organizations like Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful (KTMB), which conducted extensive cleanup efforts but often found that available dumpsters filled quickly. She explained that the BLM Carson City District had identified funding to place additional dumpsters in problem areas to support cleanup efforts. She reported that vouchers could be provided for smaller groups willing to volunteer for landscape cleanups to dispose of that trash at the landfill for free, which she considered another valuable program. She concluded the presentation.

Chair Andriola thanked Mr. Raby and Ms. Dow for the presentation and Commissioner Herman for suggesting the item. She stated that she was pleased to see Mr. Raby, noting that the last time she had seen him, he was working in a presidentially designated role. She welcomed him home to Nevada and invited Commissioner Herman to continue the discussion, since she had suggested the item.

Commissioner Herman stated that she was excited for Mr. Raby and Ms. Dow to be presenting at the BCC meeting after she had asked them to. She noted that everyone at the BLM organization was amazing, and said she did not know how they managed to carry out all the actions they described in the presentation. She described their work as amazing and expressed gratitude for having such fine people working at BLM. She noted that the Board was very fortunate and thanked Mr. Raby and Ms. Dow. Mr. Raby thanked Commissioner Herman and the BCC for their support, noting that their collaboration represented a true partnership. He opined that BLM could not be luckier to have a group like the Board helping them achieve the goals and work they set out to accomplish.

Vice Chair Garcia thanked Mr. Raby and Ms. Dow for their wonderful partnership with the County, and she encouraged them to continue the good work. She thanked them for presenting at the meeting.

Commissioner Clark thanked the presenters for their report, describing it as very interesting. He noted that Nevada had BLM land throughout the State, adding that an individual could not go far in any direction without crossing BLM-managed land. He thanked them for their efforts to manage that territory. He noted his interest in hearing more about what the BLM Carson City district planned to do near Jumbo Grade, as it was in his district. He suggested setting up a meeting to discuss the matter in more detail so he could share the information with his constituents. He reiterated that he would like to set up that meeting if possible, and thanked them again for their report.

Chair Andriola thanked Mr. Raby, Ms. Dow, and the administration for investigating methods to streamline and update the NEPA review process. She recalled

hearing about those efforts at a conference she attended in the District of Columbia (DC), noting that it had been wonderful to celebrate what had been a 2-year process for NEPA, now achieved within 28 days. She referred to Commissioner Herman's earlier comments, agreeing that Mr. Raby and Ms. Dow were very busy people, especially given the need to review and investigate regulations that would streamline that process. She thanked them for their work on the Dodge Flat II Solar project, noting her understanding that 7 to 9 total projects had been processed. She thanked ACM Solaro for his work on the target shooting initiative and acknowledged that he was in the audience. She expressed her gladness that he was continuing his work on that project, as she had been visiting ACM Solaro's office often to ask about the initiative, given its location within her district and her interest in understanding what could be done. She stated that she would greatly appreciate it if the same NEPA review process that once took 2 years could instead be completed in 28 days for the project. She thanked Mr. Raby and Ms. Dow for all the work they do. She expressed hope that more public lands would be made available, noting that, as a member of the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO), the committee also hoped to see those efforts expanded. She recalled Mr. Raby's earlier comments describing Nevada as the US state with the most territory designated as public lands, noting that she was expecting a state like Alaska to be named instead when she had heard that fact. She acknowledged that Mr. Raby was working to make some public land in Nevada available, though she expressed uncertainty about whether he could achieve that within the previously mentioned 28-day period. She thanked Mr. Raby and Ms. Dow for attending the BCC meeting and hoped they would be able to attend the upcoming National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference to provide additional updates.

Mr. Raby noted that he planned to attend the NACo Annual Conference and asked whether it would be taking place in Las Vegas, which Chair Andriola confirmed. He noted that he would likely see her there, and Chair Andriola thanked him.

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Chair Andriola requested that Agenda Item 11 be heard following Agenda Item 7B1, as Sheriff Balaam and City of Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve were both currently in attendance at the BCC meeting. She asked if any members of the Board objected, and it was determined that they did not.

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26-0177 **AGENDA ITEM 11** Recommendation to approve an Interlocal Agreement between the City of Reno and Washoe County for the Washoe County Sheriff to designate an acting Chief of Police for the City of Reno and authorize the Washoe County Sheriff to designate members of WCSO staff to serve in other capacities. District Attorney. (All Commission Districts.)

Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Michael Large indicated that on the weekend of March 7, 2026, the District Attorney's (DAs) Office was contacted by the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) regarding a request from the City of Reno to for

an interlocal agreement regarding the appointment of a Chief of Police by the Washoe County Sheriff due to ongoing issues involving senior staff at the Reno Police Department (RPD). He said that while working in conjunction with the Reno City Attorney's Office, the DA's Office worked to draft an interlocal agreement pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 277.180. He reported that on March 9, 2026, the interlocal agreement was entered into by the Reno City Manager and the WCSO. He pointed out that, as noted in the interlocal agreement, because the potential cost could exceed \$25,000, the interlocal agreement was to be submitted for ratification by both the Board and the Reno City Council. He said that the DA expedited the matter at the WCSO's request. He noted that WCSO Sheriff Darin Balaam was in attendance for further questions. Chair Andriola thanked Sheriff Balaam for his leadership.

Sheriff Balaam reiterated that the WCSO contacted the DA and requested services. He noted he has jurisdiction throughout the entire County, not just unincorporated Washoe County, pursuant to NRS 248.090 to preserve peace and keep the order, and to quell all riots and insurrections in Washoe County. He noted that one of the oaths he took was to represent all 500,000 citizens within Washoe County to keep them safe and protect them, including the men and women of the WCSO and the RPD. He said that it was unprecedented for senior management to be placed on leave; therefore, he asked Undersheriff Corey Solferino to step in as acting RPD Chief. He reported that Undersheriff Solferino was the only WCSO member assisting the RPD to ensure the community's safety. He said he wanted to ensure the men and women of the RPD had what they needed to handle the incident so there would be no interruption in service. He indicated that he was working with Reno City Manager Jackie Bryant and Mayor Hillary Schieve in providing law enforcement services. He recalled that NRS 277 allowed him to enter into an interlocal agreement and that, as an elected official, he had authority to incur costs up to \$25,000. He explained that he did not know how long Undersheriff Solferino would serve as the acting RPD Chief; therefore, the City of Reno had allocated up to \$2 million in funds for the services. He said that the WCSO would go to the Reno City Council the following week to ensure the interlocal was ratified. He asserted that the WCSO, RPD, and the Sparks Police Department (SPD) cover each other for service calls and work side by side to ensure citizen safety.

Chair Andriola noted that she appreciated Sheriff Balaam's efforts in representing all of Washoe County. She said she knew she could count on jurisdictional partners to collaborate when needed, since they were one community. She thanked Mayor Schieve. Mayor Schieve indicated that she was fortunate to have the support of all the regional partners and believed that it was refreshing to work together and understand that the agencies represented one region. She felt that the circumstances were unfortunate and wanted everyone to know that, under the charter provision, there were two areas in which an interlocal was triggered during an emergency, enabling the Mayor to work with the Governor and the Sheriff. She explained that she had long felt the Board's support through regional cooperation and that working with the WCSO would be a natural fit. She reiterated her thanks to the Board and the WCSO for helping the RPD through a difficult time. She said that she was unsure how long the interlocal would last, but she would continue to provide updates. She asserted that the Board had citizens in the City of Reno who wanted

great services, and she opined that working collaboratively would be more successful. She urged the Board to inform her if there was anything the City of Reno could do to assist in the process. She recognized Ms. Bryant and City of Reno Attorney Jonathan Shipman for their work and relayed their appreciation to the County.

Chair Andriola thanked the RPD and the WCSO for their collaborative efforts to ensure public safety. She expressed appreciation toward Ms. Bryant, Mr. Shipman, County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas, and CDDA Large for their work. She said the region had grown but remained one community.

Commissioner Clark reported that neither he nor the public knew what had occurred. He asked who had oversight of the circumstances that led to an employee being placed on a leave of absence. He clarified that he did not want details but noted that someone had oversight at the time of the occurrence. He felt that the RPD lacked planning and supervision, creating an emergency for the County to address. He speculated that no one seemed to know what took place. He recalled that the County was one of the few organizations that had a federal agency close one of its departments. He opined that it was peculiar to conduct business via an emergency call on a Saturday. He said someone had to be transferred from the County to RPD and wondered why there was no one else in RPD who could serve as acting chief. He asserted that no one denied that the Sheriff had jurisdiction over the whole County or that the Sheriff could enter into contracts with other agencies, but he wished to know what happened to warrant the interlocal agreement.

Mayor Schieve asserted that she understood how Commissioner Clark felt; however, she had worked diligently with Chair Andriola and Sheriff Balaam through the whole process. She said that Commissioner Clark could always call her if he felt disconnected in the process. She noted that she was not part of the investigation and did not have answers. She expressed hope that Commissioner Clark understood that there were aspects of an active investigation that could not be shared, but that once answers were available, she would share them and be transparent. She reiterated that if there were any concerns, Commissioner Clark could call her. She pointed out that the incident occurred quickly, and the City of Reno felt it was important to move forward within the department while also separating the RPD. She believed it was important to be transparent and maintain trust in the RPD, which she said meant bringing in another agency to partner with the RPD. She indicated that the City of Reno had limited resources, but a longstanding relationship with the County, and she did not see a problem with seeking collaboration. She apologized if Commissioner Clark had issues with the City of Reno partnering with the WCSO. She said that she believed in partnership and hoped that Commissioner Clark knew he could reach out to her in any capacity. She relayed that she typically worked directly with the Chair so that the information came from a single source. She speculated that it was easy to converse with the Chair, who could then distribute the information to the rest of the Board, because she did not want to complicate things by calling multiple people.

Commissioner Clark felt that the interlocal was a ratification of a contract that was already decided, but the Board had not voted. He appreciated that Mayor Schieve indicated he could call her with questions; however, the public wanted to know what was

happening. Mayor Schieve asserted that she did not have answers. Commissioner Clark recalled receiving a phone call on the previous Saturday that relayed no information. He said that it would have been better to receive a call later with further information. He mentioned that Mayor Schieve had indicated the City of Reno had limited resources, but he believed the County had limited resources as well. He said that a city the size of Reno should not have limited resources. Mayor Schieve noted that Reno was also Commissioner Clark's city, and she wanted to ensure he represented Reno's citizens as well.

Commissioner Clark said that he did not want to raise trivial objections with Mayor Schieve and asserted that he was a County Commissioner and represented the County. He noted that, as a Commissioner, he did not have a vote at Reno City Council meetings and did not represent the City of Reno. He clarified that he represented the citizens, but there were different representatives for different jurisdictions. He said that the County had to incorporate an additional 108 square miles, with a population of about 280,000, into the WCSO's scope of work due to the interlocal agreement. He asserted that the community needed to understand what had taken place. He speculated that Undersheriff Solferino and Sheriff Balaam were the best and brightest, but they could not clone themselves to perform multiple jobs. He said that the County now had extra work that might detract from other County work.

Sheriff Balaam indicated that the United States (US) Bill of Rights and NRS 289 limited what someone could say during an active open investigation, which included what the investigation was about. He recalled that when issues occurred at the WCSO, the other law enforcement agencies in the State were limited in what they could provide the public during the investigation. He asserted that the officers in question had rights. He noted that the County worked closely with regional teams every day. He said there was upper management overseeing regional teams, like the City of Reno and the City of Sparks, which was why he reported that the WCSO could loan staff during emergencies. He relayed that Ms. Bryant had been working closely with Undersheriff Solferino, who had kept him apprised. He said there were plans to elevate some RPD supervisors, but a process needed to be followed. He explained that no matter what, he would never jeopardize the safety of the WCSO or the RPD and that the agreement had been thoroughly discussed. He said he would not overextend the WCSO and would not allow men and women from any law enforcement agency to enter the community without proper oversight. He reported that when the WCSO responded to active shooters or any major incident, there was the same type of upper management executive coverage. He reiterated that he wanted to reassure the Board that active communication and work had occurred and that he would provide the same information at the Reno City Council meeting the following week. He asserted that he would not jeopardize the community's safety.

Chair Andriola clarified that she appreciated Mayor Schieve calling her because she felt it was her immediate obligation and professional courtesy to reach out to each Commissioner to inform them that there would be a press conference and the reason for it, to the best of her knowledge. She believed that the correct course of action in any emergency was to contact not only the Mayor but also the Sheriff, because he had authority over the WCSO as an elected official. She asserted that she would support the WCSO and

the region because she knew the community could count on the WCSO. She thanked everyone involved for their dedication to the community and for not jeopardizing safety.

Commissioner Hill noted that she was ready to make a motion. Commissioner Clark indicated that he was not done with his comments. He said he would support the interlocal agreement; however, he did not agree with how it was presented. He believed that the community needed answers. He said that he would support the regionalization of law enforcement and would approve the Sheriff overseeing the entire County if it were brought before the Board. He asserted that the process and presentation could have been smoother for the public and other elected officials. He reported that before anyone accused him of being against the interlocal agreement, he wanted to say that he would like the change to be permanent; however, he did not know where the funding would come from.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Interlocal Agreement for Agenda Item 11 be approved. The Interlocal Agreement pertinent to Agenda Item 11 is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

PRESENTATION

26-0178 **AGENDA ITEM 7C1** Recommendation to acknowledge presentation and possible direction to staff of the Washoe County Financial Outlook for Fiscal Year 2027 and Budget. The overview includes a Mid-Year 2026 review, and economic, revenue and expenditure trends, Board of County Commissioner strategic goals, known cost increases, unquantified/outstanding cost impacts, and a general outlook for Fiscal Year 2027 and Budget. Finance. (All Commission Districts.)

Budget Division Director Lori Cooke conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Washoe County Financial Update; Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund Unaudited Revenues & Expenditures through February 28, 2026; Fiscal Year 2027 Outlook: What's changed?; Fiscal Year 2027 Outlook; The takeaways; Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Process; Questions?; Have you heard? (3 slides).

Ms. Cooke noted that she had intended to provide the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) with presentation materials sooner, but did not want to interrupt previous items. She displayed the materials, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She explained that her presentation would provide a financial update on topics that would not necessarily be new to the Board, as they had been reported during the Commissioner briefings the previous week, but had been updated as much as possible.

Ms. Cooke displayed the slide titled *Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund Unaudited Revenues & Expenditures through February 28, 2026*. She explained that, as in prior months, emerging issues and concerns through the end of February were not evident based on year-to-date (YTD) trends. She noted that the listed estimations reflected a situation without any sudden increases in expenditures or loss of anticipated revenue. She stated that if such events were to occur, staff would review them and make recommendations or provide reports on them as necessary. She explained that there were important factors to remember should anyone attempt to review the State of Nevada's year-by-year local government revenue statistics through the Nevada Department of Taxation (NDT) for comparing statistics from previous years to others. She explained that the year-by-year comparisons would be irregular, as the data for the November 2024 consolidated tax (c-tax) distribution were reflected in fiscal year (FY) 2025 YTD actuals, with the figures for the November 2025 c-tax distribution appearing in FY 2026 calculations, due to a change in the State of Nevada's reporting system. She noted that the change in systems resulted in the November 2024 figures being reported approximately half the expected distribution amount. She reiterated that comparing figures for YTD increases and taxable sales data across different years would not necessarily reflect a direct comparison of consistent periods. She stated that she would provide additional details on the matter later, when staff provided the upcoming recommended budget. She explained that an increase reflected immediately following the change in systems might appear significant, with figures such as 15 percent, but she emphasized that the outlier needed to be accounted for.

Ms. Cooke showed the *Fiscal Year 2027 Outlook: What's changed?* slide. She noted that the slide content related to the information presented to the Board during the BCC budget workshop on January 27, 2026. She explained that additional Consumer Price Index (CPI) information was conveyed to her that morning, indicating that the CPI expectations listed on the slide might have been slightly optimistic, as those figures had not been influenced by current events in the Middle East. She noted that there was a possibility for additional CPI increases throughout 2026. She noted that the Federal Reserve's federal funds rate was stable and anticipated no additional cuts. She reported that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in the fourth quarter of calendar year 2025 was 1.4 percent, with recently released information indicating that the reported growth rate for quarter four could be increased by as much as 0.7 percent. She acknowledged that the increase was not substantial, though she noted that many other factors contributed to GDP as well. She reported that there had been a slight decrease in the unemployment rates in Nevada and Washoe County, with Washoe County's rate remaining relatively flat and Nevada's rate reduced by approximately 0.1 percent. She noted that the national unemployment rate had gone from 4.3 percent to 4.4 percent, which she described as fairly stable. She noted that the listed unemployment figures did not account for specific occurrences across industries, current events, the types of jobs being impacted, or which jobs were being replaced by others. She reported that there might be some potential impacts on the FY 2027 outlook from administrative uncertainty regarding the recent Supreme Court Rulings on tariffs and conflict in the Middle East.

Ms. Cooke displayed the slide titled *Fiscal Year 2027 Outlook* and explained that the comprehensive fiscal situation appeared as though the growth of costs

would outpace the rate of revenue growth. She referred to a chart she had shown during her presentation from the BCC's January 27, 2026, budget workshop, which indicated that while there was still growth, the rates for revenue and costs were not moving in the same direction. She reported that staff received requests from various County departments for nearly \$46 million in additional General Fund support, including more full-time equivalent (FTE) employees or additional positions, as well as requests to shift funding sources for some positions from other restricted funds to the General Fund. She stated that it would not be sustainable to approve all of those requests based on previous conversations and the staff's knowledge of the FY 2027 fiscal forecast. She explained that collaboration with management to process those requests was ongoing. She noted that themes and feedback regarding Washoe County services were listed on the slide, including expectations, service levels, and service delivery. She explained that such feedback was related to the County's internal and external expectations compared to the available resources. She stated that personnel was another theme, which represented actions that could be taken to maximize recruiting and retaining the best employees possible if additional staff could not be added. She noted that investments for infrastructure and technology was the final theme on the slide, which demonstrated how more work could be done if the County could not or should not hire more employees. She acknowledged that there was more work to be done, and explained that the theme of infrastructure and technology asked how staff could move forward while leveraging and positively exploiting technology solutions generated both internally and externally. She mentioned that her next presentation to the BCC would include a broad overview and specific examples of the County's previous actions to implement efficiencies, as well as new ideas for delivering services differently than in the past. She noted that the primary topic areas were listed on the slide and would be discussed by the Board over the following months during meetings focused on strategic planning.

Ms. Cooke showed the slide titled *The takeaways* and referred to the listed topics on the slide. She explained that Washoe County had a focus on fiscal sustainability and budgeting best practices, and she reported that the County had recently been formally recognized twice by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), which she would discuss in further detail later in her presentation for members of the public who might not be familiar with the recognitions. She stated that the County had a goal to enhance and expand fiscal transparency and communication, which they had begun implementing, though she believed it was obvious that the County could always improve to better perform and provide transparent information. She stated that she believed that occasionally, when attempting to increase all transparency efforts and the amount of information being provided, clarity could be lost. She elaborated that transparent information could, for example, be presented in a long-form 20-page document, but a better composed 2-page document might be a more transparent way to convey that data. She stated that another of Washoe County's continued goals was to recognize the challenge with the traditional budget process and adjust when able. She reported that certain changes had already been implemented in that regard, but the continued effort was to identify what the County could do to improve the budget process. She explained that the next steps in the FY 2027 budget process would begin with the final property tax revenue projection with the pro forma data received from the NDT on March 25, 2026, which was the statutory deadline. She acknowledged that the County had received those projections, but noted that

they had not included the pro forma element, which included other information that was not included with the final numbers. She noted that the next step would be for staff to present the FY 2027 recommended budget to County departments prior to presenting it to the Board. She explained that the chosen order of such actions was the staff's commitment to the departments and elected officials, as they could present the information to them first, hold conversations, receive feedback, and make necessary adjustments before conveying the updated final budget information to the Board. She reported that the final budget presentation for the BCC was scheduled for May 19, 2026, which was a statutory deadline that required staff to act on the final budget no earlier than the third Monday of May. She explained that the FY 2027 final budget had to be approved by the BCC and submitted to the State of Nevada by June 1, 2026, leaving staff with a short time frame to finalize the details by the end of May. She emphasized the need for staff to do whatever they could to ensure everyone was informed about what would be recommended or done in the future.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Process* slide. She opined that the updates were anticlimactic, noting that it was both good and bad that there had not been much more information, as the data she had seen suggested stability. She noted that the slide listed more information about the formal budget process, including events that had already occurred. She explained that her current presentation was on the slide's schedule, and staff were formally expecting the tentative budget to be provided on April 14, 2026, with the final budget presented on May 19, 2026.

Ms. Cooke showed the *Questions?* slide, and noted that the Board was welcome to ask any questions about the presentation prior to her providing the additional supplemental information she prepared in the following two slides. With no questions asked, Ms. Cooke displayed the second slide titled *Have you heard?*. She referred to her earlier comments regarding recognition from the GFOA and reported that the County was featured nationally in the Government Finance Review (GFR), which focused on creative approaches to service provision. She explained that Washoe County was highlighted as an article in the GFR online publication. She showed the third slide titled *Have you heard?* and explained that Washoe County had received the GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for FY 2026. She noted that FY 2026 reflected the County having received the award for 24 years, which was important for several reasons. She explained that the award was important as it represented best practice being applied to a document that served multiple purposes. She acknowledged that the BCC had already received information about the award, as it was distributed through the Board brief, but she wanted to include details for the public to access if they were interested. She reiterated that she was willing to answer questions from the Board.

Commissioner Clark noted that he had no questions but stated that the presentation was nice. He explained that Ms. Cooke had answered all his questions a few days prior and thanked her for providing the presentation as a public report.

Commissioner Hill expressed appreciation for the presentation and thanked Ms. Cooke for a good briefing. She stated that she looked forward to continuing discussions about the budget and the County's structural deficit, which she opined was simply the

reality of local government in Nevada at the time. She noted that Washoe County was not alone in those struggles. She explained that there was one topic she did not think Ms. Cooke had mentioned in her presentation, related to the building permits that had not experienced the same level of growth. She asked Ms. Cooke to provide an outline of those matters. Ms. Cooke answered that the discrepancy in growth levels was related to new developments. She explained that new development added to the rolls was recorded at full value and did not have any abated value at that point. She noted that she was not speaking on behalf of the Assessor, though she reported that meetings were conducted between her staff, the Assessor, and the Treasurer. She noted that the discussions in the meetings focused on the rate of growth in new development added to the rolls and the subsequent increase in that percentage. She provided an example using randomized statistics and theoretical values, and explained that if there had been a 3 percent growth two years prior, it could appear to be approximately 1 percent in the current situation. She explained that the reasoning for such an occurrence was similar to matters she had discussed regarding c-tax and other revenues, where revenue was growing but the County did not ultimately see much of a result. She acknowledged that while there were many reasons why that had occurred, she was not a subject-matter expert in that area and intended only to report what was apparent when investigating how the value of new development would ultimately be reflected as a percentage in the County's increase in assessed valuation. Commissioner Hill opined that it was clear that growth was limited and said that the public needed to understand that the County was reaching the limits of what could be done in the Truckee Meadows region as a result, which would inevitably impact their long-term budgets. She emphasized that the community needed to understand that fact as reality, as it influenced budget decisions and discussions.

Commissioner Herman thanked Ms. Cooke for the great presentation.

Vice Chair Garcia thanked Ms. Cooke for the Board briefing and the presentation. She recalled the BCC's budget workshop held earlier that year on January 27, 2026, during which the Board and presenters had discussed national trends that everyone was trying to estimate and understand, including issues of affordability, housing, and inflation. She mentioned that forecasting and projecting were some of the most difficult tasks Ms. Cooke was tasked with doing for the Board. Vice Chair Garcia expressed appreciation for how Ms. Cooke had integrated considerations of the impacts of geopolitical conditions and tariffs the County faced into her presentation. She acknowledged that while the content of the presentation remained largely focused on national issues, the presentation made it clear that international events would influence local circumstances. She thanked Ms. Cooke for including those factors in her presentation.

Chair Andriola commended Ms. Cooke on the two recognitions from the GFOA. She opined that it was very interesting that Ms. Cooke had mentioned her consideration of new approaches to the traditional budget process, identifying efficiencies, and exploring innovative ideas, especially given that one of the GFOA awards highlighted the County's creative strategies. She thought that such messaging would be very relevant as staff moved forward with those efforts. She noted that she had previously discussed priority-based budgeting with Ms. Cooke, and she believed Ms. Cooke would understand

her upcoming point. Chair Andriola noted that, as the County shifted toward that method, she suspected that it would help everyone appreciate that it was a model endorsed at the national level. She considered priority-based budgeting a best practice, and through her involvement with the National Association of Counties (NACo), she recognized that Washoe County faced the same issues as other counties Nationwide. She expressed anticipation for seeing how those matters would develop from there and appreciated the briefings Ms. Cooke had provided. She mentioned that providing briefings to all the Commissioners ensured the Board was well-informed, which emphasized Washoe County's commitment to keeping the BCC updated on relevant matters. She believed that the opportunity for Ms. Cooke to review the discussion, information, and feedback from the previous budget workshop meeting and to understand what was discussed would also be helpful in implementing that information. She expressed gratitude to Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Abbe Yacoben, Ms. Cooke and her team, and County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas for her leadership, especially given the difficult times the County faced. She highlighted the importance of everyone being willing to collectively consider different approaches and to utilize opportunities like the Budget Congress to ensure all departments recognized the need for innovative thinking. She noted that while providing essential services was the County's responsibility, such actions would have to be taken with the limited resources available. She opined that priority-based budgeting would help address that challenge. She indicated there would be more updates from Ms. Cooke in the future and thanked her for her hard work and presentation. She stated that the Board looked forward to the future and remarked that she would observe how everything would unfold.

There was no action on this item.

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Please see Agenda Item 12, Minute Item number 26-0187 for additional discussion on Agenda Item 7C1.

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CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 8A1 THROUGH 8E2

26-0179 **8A1** Acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Clerk on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, including the following categories: Communications, Monthly Statements/Reports, and Annual Statements/Reports. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0180 **8B1** 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, 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 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 \$60,940.15]. Assessor. (All Commission Districts.)

- 26-0181** **8C1** Recommendation to retroactively acknowledge a supplemental grant of \$10,587.07 which increases the original award to \$1,121,787.71 [no match required], awarded to the Second Judicial District Court from the Supreme Court of Nevada, Administrative Office of the Courts, to support the Specialty Court programs, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. District Court. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0182** **8D1** Recommendation to approve Amendment #2 to the CrossRoads Operator contract with The Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equality (RISE), which was awarded by the Board on May 20, 2025 resulting from Request For Proposal (RFP) 3266-24, to increase the contract amount by [\$119,180] retroactive for the period of March 1, 2026 through September 30, 2027, to support a CrossRoads STAR Mental Health Counselor and a CrossRoads STAR Peer Recovery Support Specialist; and authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the amendment. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0183** **8E1** Recommendation to approve the updated Washoe County Grants Management Policy of 2026. The Washoe County Grants Management Policy provides standardized policies and procedures to assist staff in complying with contractual, regulatory, and statutory provisions of grant awards. The updated manual includes a modernized approach reflecting the lifecycle of grant awards, removes historical federal references to accommodate plain-language formatting, incorporates the required use of Euna Grants (the countywide grants management software), and includes grant management procedures in Appendices. The Grants Management Policy was last updated in 2020. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0184** **8E2** Recommendation to approve a Letter of Intent for the FFY 2025 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grant passed through the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP). Letter of Intent is stating the State of Nevada, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) will be awarding [\$213,000.00, no County match required], for the Perimeter Platform, a situational awareness and communications platform. Grant term is retroactive from October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2027. If approved, authorize the County Manager or her designee to sign the grant award documents when received and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment on the Consent Agenda Items listed above.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 8A1 through 8E2 be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 8A1 through 8E2 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

BLOCK VOTE – 9 AND 10

26-0185 **AGENDA ITEM 9** Recommendation to approve the reappointment of Miles Kinsler (formerly known as Miles Gurtler), for a term beginning March 3, 2026, and ending on March 2, 2030, for the Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Herman, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Mr. Miles Kinsler be reappointed to the Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission for a term beginning March 3, 2026, and ending on March 2, 2030.

26-0186 **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to approve a Professional Services Agreement between Washoe County and DOWL, LLC for the Washoe County Rancho San Rafael Amphitheater project [in the amount of \$866,000.00], commencing March 18, 2026. The Agreement is for services to deliver a 60% set of plans including civil, mechanical, electrical, landscape, architectural, and structural design documents and coordinate with stakeholders, City of Reno and other agencies, in accordance with the 2024 Regional Parks and Open Space Master Plan. The professional services will include analysis for required additional parking, alternative drop-off bus route, lighting, and fire safety requirements per City of Reno Development Code for a lawn seating venue for approximately 2,500 attendees. The target date to accomplish these deliverables is October 31, 2026. The project is located at 1595 N. Sierra Street, Reno, Nevada. Funding for the design phase comes from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF). Community Services. (Commission District 3.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Herman, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be approved.

26-0187 **AGENDA ITEM 12** Discussion and initial direction to staff regarding potential Bill Draft Requests (BDRs) for the 84th (2027) Session of the Nevada Legislature. The subject(s) of potential BDRs to be considered include a measure requiring that a local government reimburse a county for

any costs incurred by that county as a result of errors in a local government billing file remitted to its county treasurer; amending NRS 244A.7645 to allow not more than three percent of the surcharge collected for enhancement of the telephone system used for reporting emergencies and purchase and maintenance of event recording devices to be used to pay the expenses associated with administration of the surcharge revenues; and to submit one or more recommendations to the Legislative Committee for the Review and Oversight of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Marlette Lake Water System to address equity in authority for and distribution of transient lodging tax and surcharge revenues collected in Incline Village and Crystal Bay for the purpose of establishing a dedicated funding source for public transit to, from, and with the portion of the Lake Tahoe Basin located in Washoe County. The Board may direct staff to pursue BDRs on these subjects and/or to bring back other possible BDR concepts on subjects the Board identifies as being in the best interests of the county for approval at a future meeting. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

Government Affairs Liaison Cadence Matijevich conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Washoe County Bill Draft Request (BDR) Process for 2027 Legislative Session; Discussion and Initial Direction: Bill Draft Requests for the 84th Session (2027) of the Nevada Legislature; BDR Authority; Washoe County Bill Draft Request (BDR) Process for 2027 Legislative Session; BDR Considerations; Proposal #1; Proposal #2; Proposal #3; Proposal #3 Continued (3 slides); Thank you.

Ms. Matijevich noted that the Staff Report detailed the proposed Bill Draft Requests (BDRs) for the upcoming 2027 Nevada Legislative Session. She read from the slide titled *BDR Authority* and said that Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 218D authorized Washoe County to submit up to two BDRs per legislative session. She mentioned that the County was not required to submit BDRs. She said that other entities, such as legislators, chairs of standing committees, joint interim standing committees, the Governor, and the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO), were also able to submit BDRs. She reported that Section 17 of Article 4 of the Constitution of the State of Nevada required that each law enacted by the Legislature embrace only one subject. She clarified that the BDR could pertain to multiple chapters but to only a single subject.

Ms. Matijevich referred to the slide titled *Washoe County Bill Draft Request (BDR) Process for 2027 Legislative Session* and recalled that the BDR process began in the fall of 2025, with all County departments, including elected department heads, receiving a solicitation to prepare and submit their topics for consideration. She noted that the internal due date for proposals was January 30, 2026, and that initial research had been conducted on the proposed topics. She pointed out that she would provide a BDR update in the summer and another two or three updates before the September 1, 2026, deadline, by which the Board would have the final BDR submitted to the Legislative Counsel Bureau

(LCB). She said that the pre-filed BDRs were published by the LCB in December and then heard at the 84th Legislative Session beginning February 1, 2027.

Ms. Matijevich read from the *BDR Consideration* slide and reiterated that she had received proposals from the department heads and elected officials for consideration. She noted that factors in the BDR consideration included whether the BDR aligned with the County's Strategic Plan's focus on economic impacts, fiscal sustainability, and support for vulnerable populations. She explained that political feasibility, legal soundness, resource implications, opportunities for collaboration, and the ability and capacity to implement were other considerations when researching and discussing BDR proposals.

Ms. Matijevich outlined the first BDR proposal on the slide titled *Proposal #1*, which she indicated was submitted by the Treasurer. She speculated that the circumstances leading to the proposal would not be surprising, since the last billing cycle revealed risk. She indicated that the risk was that if the County Treasurer received a billing file from another local government entity, the County would act as the ex officio treasurer and the tax collector for an error in the billing file, which created liability for the County when the liability should belong to the local government entity that created the billing file. She explained that the proposal would require any local government entity that submitted an erroneous filing to reimburse the County for any expenses incurred by the County because of the errors. She said that because the BDR affected all 17 Nevada counties, the recommendation would be to submit the BDR to NACO for consideration as an NACO BDR. She noted that NACO had a legislative committee that meets monthly, with Chair Andriola being the chair of the NACO Legislative Committee. She said that if the Board approved the first proposal, she would present it to the next NACO Legislative Committee and follow up with the Board in the summer regarding whether NACO selected the BDR or if the County wanted to continue with the BDR as a County proposal.

Ms. Matijevich read from the slide titled *Proposal #2* regarding the second BDR proposal which sought to amend NRS 244A.7645 to allow up to 3 percent of the revenues from a surcharge imposed by a County for enhancement of the telephone system used for the reporting of emergencies and purchase and maintenance of event recording devices. She explained that it was commonly known as the 911 telephone surcharge and was used by the County to pay the costs associated with administering the surcharge revenues. She said that counties were the entities in NRS authorized to impose surcharges and administer them. She explained that the County administered the surcharge funds; however, the region's 911 system included multiple public safety agencies, including Washoe County, the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, the Washoe County School District (WCSD), and fire agencies, all of which were authorized recipients. She said that the County bore the burden of administering the funds, which required efforts across various departments, including the District Attorney's (DA) Office, Technology Services Department (TS), Budget, and Comptroller, totaling a full-time equivalent (FTE). She mentioned the budget was constrained, prompting the County to identify innovative and resilient ways to cover administrative costs. She said that it was recommended that the County seek sponsorship from an individual legislator or submit it as a Washoe County

BDR. She noted that other counties within the State had elected to implement the surcharge, but, due to circumstances in their counties, such as consolidated dispatch, the burden of administering was lower because there were far fewer agencies receiving the distribution.

Ms. Matijevich referred to the slide titled *Proposal #3* and indicated that the last of the BDR proposals was a continuation of a Board-approved item from the previous legislative session. She explained that the third BDR pertained to seeking equity in the authority for and distribution of transient lodging tax and surcharge revenues collected in the Washoe County portion of the Lake Tahoe Basin (the Basin). She explained that it was to establish a dedicated funding source for public transit to, from, and within the portion of the Basin located in Washoe County. She explained that the issue of equity needed to be addressed and that the provision was not intended to reflect the locations where the Legislature had granted authority.

Ms. Matijevich read from the first slide titled *Proposal #3 (Continued)* and said that the table on the slide showed six transient lodging districts in Washoe County, for which the Legislature had authorized a per-room-night surcharge to support tourism-serving facilities. She pointed out that the two areas the Legislature had not authorized a surcharge were in Washoe County. She reported that the recommendation would be to submit a BDR from the Board to request that the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Legislative Committee and Marlette Lake Water System consider addressing the issue of inequity with the revenue sources that were available to local governments to support infrastructure and the need for public transit in key areas of tourism. She said that the BDR was not intended to be a comment on other tax districts. She referred to the second slide titled "*Proposal #3 (Continued)*" and noted that *Washoe B* was the transient lodging tax district encompassing Incline Village and Crystal Bay. She pointed out that the *Breakdown of Washoe B 13% Room Tax Rate* on the graph showed how the 13 percent room tax authorized by the Legislature was distributed. She reported that of the 13 percent, 3.3125 percent was allocated to the Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority (RSCVA) and 3.3125 percent to Travel North Tahoe, Nevada, as required by NRS. She said that 2 percent was allocated to the RSCVA Convention Center debt, 1 percent to the City of Reno National Bowling Stadium debt, 1 percent to the Reno RSCVA City Civic Center, 1 percent to Washoe County, and the remaining to the State of Nevada for important purposes and facilities.

Ms. Matijevich noted that the County was not receiving revenue from funds collected directly in an unincorporated area of Washoe County that was highly tourism-driven. She referred to the third slide titled *Proposal #3 (Continued)* and reiterated that her recommendation was that the County submit the BDR proposal to the Legislative Oversight Committee to amend Chapter 432 to require the RSCVA to grant the County a percentage of certain taxes collected that would be used exclusively to pay the costs of public transit within the Washoe County portion of the Basin. She noted that the previous iteration of the BDR named a specific room-night surcharge with a specific percentage. She recommended that, from a strategic standpoint, the Board not provide specificity and

allow the committee and stakeholders to work together to arrive at a room night dollar amount and a change in that distribution of sales tax.

Ms. Matijevich thanked the Board for their time and noted that she was available for any questions. She explained that she was willing to research any other BDR items the Board might direct her to before her next update in the summer. Chair Andriola thanked Ms. Matijevich for her presentation and for being succinct. She believed that Ms. Matijevich did a great job conducting research, which she opined was of the utmost importance at the Legislature, along with relationships, trust, and integrity.

Commissioner Hill thanked Ms. Matijevich for her presentation and indicated that she was happy to support all three recommendations. She said she was glad the Treasurer was receiving clarity on legal requirements, as there had been pushback from the Incline Village General Improvement District (IVGID). She indicated that she wanted to ensure the County was following the law if they were to bill another entity. She said there was a problem in the Basin due to insufficient funding for public transportation. She recalled that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) had provided more public transit than ever in the Basin; however, there was still a gap due to the high cost. She noted that there was no way the County would receive an additional gas tax for public transit because there were very few gas pumps in Lake Tahoe. She reported that every potential revenue source was researched, with the proposed BDR being the best option. She asserted that when she was the County's liaison for the RSCVA, she had tried to convince the RSCVA to willingly provide the County with funds for transit, but they expressed no interest in supporting the County in public transit. She believed that Ms. Matijevich represented the County well at the Legislative Committee. She recalled that Assemblymember Heather Goulding was open to researching the revenue sources.

Commissioner Hill explained that the County had funded microtransit in Incline Village with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds; however, those funds had run out, and there was now no transit available in the Incline Village area other than Placer County, which she said did not fully connect individuals to the entire basin. She thanked Ms. Matijevich for considering the BDR. She believed that the State should provide additional support for the Cares Campus because less urban counties in the region were using the Cares Campus as a resource. She recalled that at a recent Community Homelessness Advisory Board (CHAB) meeting, no one wanted to acknowledge that a lack of support was an issue. She wondered whether there was a way to express the issue, whether through a BDR or at NACO. She explained that another topic of interest was permanent supportive housing. She said she knew the County was chosen as a grantee to receive support for 50 Cares Campus units, for which she expressed gratitude. She, however, felt there was still a housing gap. She said she understood that the Nevada Housing Coalition (NHC) would provide BDRs and that other legislators would have BDRs, but she wanted to note her interest in a potential County BDR. She asserted that about 1,100 units were needed for seniors and people with disabilities. She wanted to find a way to get those individuals out of the Cares Campus and into stable housing.

Commissioner Clark thanked Ms. Matijevich for her presentation and the discussion. Commissioner Herman echoed Commissioner Clark's sentiments. Vice Chair Garcia indicated that she supported all three BDRs and commended Commissioner Hill for her advocacy on behalf of the region. She asserted that she supported Commissioner Hill's recommendations and believed that the County should research permanent supportive housing. She noted the request was not a priority for her and asked whether there was an update from a 2024 BDR regarding automatic recounts. She recalled that AB 287 was sponsored by Assemblymembers Cecelia Gonzalez and Daniele Monroe-Moreno, with the Board taking an official position in support. She noted that it failed in the Legislature and asked whether it could be a potential BDR for the upcoming legislative session.

Ms. Matijevich reported that she did not have specific information regarding any legislator or committee wishing to propose a BDR for automatic recounts. She noted that from a policy standpoint, the bill was supported, but the costs were of concern. She speculated that if the bill passed, something in the State's general fund budget would need to be cut due to limited funding. She said she would inquire with the chair and vice chair of the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections to better understand whether the previous BDR was intended to be proposed again. She reported that the Board could also request the BDR if they desired.

Chair Andriola thanked County Treasurer Justin Taylor for proposing the first BDR. She said she did not know what other counties incurred but believed the BDR would better prepare the County. She recalled reporting to NACO that some counties were using services provided by the County and looked forward to future dialogue. She said the Tenancy Support program had a 93 percent success rate. She opined that individuals who benefit from the Tenancy Support program would no longer need to continue seeking taxpayer support. She thought that further supporting the Tenancy Support program was an important conversation to have, and she believed that every county should pay its share for the services provided. She opined that some individuals did not understand the impact of the Homeless Outreach Proactive Engagement (HOPE) team and the Sequential Intercept Model (SIM), which was why she had asked for presentations regarding both. She said that other regions should follow the SIM because it was a best practice, and she noted that millions of dollars had been saved through its implementation. She reiterated that it was important for other counties to pay their share for Washoe County-run services they benefited from. She said that she would support all three BDR recommendations.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Commissioner Hill proposed a motion to move forward with all three BDRs as outlined in the Staff Report and directed the investigation of the other items brought up by the Board. She asked if the Board would receive updates about the BDRs.

Ms. Matijevich reminded the Board that she would return in the summer for another presentation with updates on the directed BDRs, potential sponsors, submissions to the Legislative Committee, and discussions with NACO. She mentioned that there was no shortage of bills and BDRs during a session. She noted that if there was an opportunity

to collaborate with another entity that might propose a BDR related to the Board's items of interest, including permanent supportive housing and tenancy support, she would inform the Board to avoid duplicative BDRs. She said that as the legislative principles and platforms evolved in the fall, she could incorporate the Board's desires for support. She appreciated the Board's direction and the focus areas they mentioned.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be directed.

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Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Michael Large recommended reopening Agenda Item 7C1 to allow for public comment, as the item was labeled for possible action. He indicated that no action was taken on the item, but since there could have been possible Board guidance, public comment was required. For additional discussion, please see Agenda Item 7C1, Minute Item number 26-0178.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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26-0188 **AGENDA ITEM 13** Public Comment.

Jon Killoran stated that he was a resident of District 2 and Reno Ward 3. He referred to a statement made during a previous Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting and described it as a ten-minute prepared rant delivered during Commissioner comments. He stated that the statement referred to the Interlocal Agreement between the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) and the Reno Police Department (RPD). He stated that he believed the Interlocal Agreement was executed in a legal and responsible manner. He indicated that the comments were made by the District 2 Commissioner, who had described the effort as a *side hustle*. Mr. Killoran disagreed and stated that the agreement represented responsible management by the Sheriff and the City of Reno in response to an emergent situation that required immediate action. He felt that the Sheriff acted responsibly because he had been elected by the entire County, not just residents of unincorporated areas, and Mr. Killoran expressed full support for the Sheriff. He mentioned that, based on earlier remarks, he had concluded there was a division between residents of unincorporated Washoe County and those who lived in both the County and a city ward. He explained that he had previously been a sports broadcaster and once believed there was a mythical line near Tonopah that divided northern and southern Nevada. He believed that determined whether someone wore silver and blue in support of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) or red in support of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). He said he had been unaware of any similar division between residents of unincorporated Washoe County and those living within city wards. He expressed frustration with comments made because he lived in both Ward 3 and District 2. He questioned how many residents in Wards 3 and 5 voted for Commissioner Clark and felt disenfranchised.

Janet Butcher said she was unaware of how block votes worked and suggested they appeared predetermined. She expressed disappointment with the Commissioners for their inconsistencies in reappointments. She pointed out that the reappointment to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) had been handled differently from the reappointment of the Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission (WCOSRPC), which was approved in a block vote. She acknowledged that optics might not matter to the Board, but she emphasized that it mattered to the public. She referenced rumors circulating on social media about the WCSO and the RPD and stated that there had been no clear public explanation of the situation. She argued that if more information were shared, members of the public might be able to contribute useful information. She shared a story about a 19-year-old illegal male in Virginia who was enrolled in high school and allegedly had inappropriate interactions with young women. She claimed that school administrators initially kept the matter quiet, but after it became public, additional victims came forward. She reiterated that increased transparency could lead to more information being shared with investigators.

26-0189 **AGENDA ITEM 14** Announcements/Reports.

County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas reminded the public that the next Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting would be on April 14, 2026.

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12:43 p.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

CLARA ANDRIOLA, Chair
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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

Minutes Prepared by:
Andrew Garnand, Deputy County Clerk
Elizabeth Tietjen, Deputy County Clerk
Jessica Melka, Deputy County Clerk
Brooke Koerner, Deputy County Clerk