

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

APRIL 14, 2026

PRESENT:

Clara Andriola, Chair
Alexis Hill, Commissioner
Michael Clark, Commissioner
Jeanne Herman, Commissioner

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

ABSENT:

Mariluz Garcia, Vice Chair

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 10:00 a.m. in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, County Clerk Jan Galassini called roll and the Board conducted the following business:

26-0192 AGENDA ITEM 3 Public Comment.

Kevin Grant said that he was a partner in an investor group that purchased land for the Spectrum Boulevard project. He indicated that he approved the project, then brought in the large investor who held majority ownership and control. He mentioned that the project was in its sixth year and shared that the previous developer had been terminated and that a new construction manager would be hired to oversee the general contractor. He noted that the project site was generally zoned suburban and that there were five other residential areas within a few miles' radius. He said he had requested the construction of a secondary emergency access road to provide emergency access to the neighborhood, the County's land, and surrounding and future neighbors. He explained that in August 2023, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) directed staff to negotiate an agreement to allow the residential project to proceed, which he believed had been finalized. He suggested that the County was getting a good deal, because the project would pay for the road, infrastructure, and access gates. He indicated that the County would benefit from the easement, which would provide relief for the County's property and could offer future flexibility if the County chose to repurpose the land. He emphasized the importance of attending the meeting so the Board would be familiar with who had taken over the project. He indicated that the investors had begun preparing documents for construction, utility commitments, civil designs for the road and water, city permits, and landscaping designs. He explained that the investor group was committed to assisting seniors. He pointed out

that construction costs had risen faster than the consumer price index (CPI) for many years. He shared that, while Social Security recipients would receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), it would not be received until January.

Tammy Holt-Still, candidate for Washoe County Commissioner District 5, expressed concern that Agenda Item 11 contained incomplete Code. She noted that she became aware of the issue during a visit to Gerlach, where she was told that projects receiving affordable housing grants might not be required to go through public hearings. She argued that hearings should be required whenever there was a zoning change or amendment. She warned that, without revisions to the Code, future developers receiving housing grants could bypass the public process, limiting opportunities for community input and discussion. She recommended that any necessary Code changes be made before approving the item to ensure developers would remain accountable.

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

Pat Davison, resident of District 5, acknowledged that Agenda Items 11 and 18 involved development Code changes related to housing, residential, and commercial zoning in response to recent State legislation. She stated that she did not provide any substantive comments to the Planning Commission (PC) because she was more familiar with residential standards than commercial ones. She indicated that the PC's indecisiveness was enlightening. She believed that the PC thoroughly examined the proposal, asked questions comparing current and proposed standards, and engaged in continued discussion and debate on the subject, which resulted in the revised items being presented to the Board. She felt those were examples of the PC doing their part before the Board heard the item. She noted that Agenda Item 18 would establish an expedited process and would introduce a new definition of attainable housing as required by State legislation. She urged the Board to support the items.

Ondra Berry, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Liberty Dogs, spoke in support of the County policy that would allow employees to bring service and training dogs to work. He shared that Liberty Dogs was a national service dog training and placement program that served United States (US) veterans. He explained that the organization relied on communities and policies. He pointed out that the policy would enable the organization and its employees to raise future service dogs for veterans with workplace support, as a powerful extension of public service. He surmised that the policy would support employee wellness, strengthen workplace culture, and create pathways to serve the veteran community. He indicated that the policy was intentionally structured with clear safeguards, insurance requirements, and full departmental discretion to ensure no disruption to operations. He shared that participation would be voluntary for both employees who chose to bring a qualified dog and those who preferred not to participate, that it would not affect the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) service animal protections, and that the County would have full discretion over the program. He revealed that he had witnessed firsthand how the program improved morale, reduced stress, and fostered communication within teams across the community. He believed the policy would position Washoe County as a

leader in innovative, employee-centered policies that supported veterans. He said that Liberty Dogs was exploring other organizations, but none had adopted a policy. He asked the Board to support advancing the policy to strengthen the workplace and community and to improve the lives of veterans who had sacrificed so much for the Country. He shared that Liberty Dogs planned to have over 200 service dogs on its campus by the end of the year, which involved organizations, the community, puppy raisers, volunteers, and others who supported the program. He noted that the organization was working toward becoming a model of best practices and a center of excellence for the community. He remarked that Liberty Dogs, veterans, and the canines would be deeply grateful for the Board's support.

Alanna Fitzgerald, a constituent in District 1, expressed gratitude for everything her Commissioner had done. She recommended that, for upcoming openings on the Library Board of Trustees (LBT), the Board carefully consider and question applicants about their reasons for seeking appointment to the LBT, including any personal or philosophical motivations that may influence their service. She cited Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 379.002, which stated that the purpose of publicly supported libraries and information centers was to provide resources and trained staff to meet the informational needs of all citizens. She expressed concern that, over the past several years, one trustee appeared to be influenced by an agenda she believed could diminish the needs of some community members and could create challenges for the library system, the LBT, and the broader community. She shared that the County's Strategic Plan emphasized ensuring equitable access to services, and having a trustee who tried to inject a personal agenda into board decisions operated in opposition to the strategic plan. She believed that the Board understood the importance of a healthy, vibrant public library system, which, in turn, helped keep the community and the County healthy and vibrant. She urged the Board to carefully select future members of the LBT. She stated that she was unable to locate updated information for the County's Strategic Plan on the website other than the one issued for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025. She hoped that a plan and document similar to the long-term goals and annual initiatives was being developed. She thanked the Board for their time and emphasized her appreciation for the Commissioners and the County staff.

Maureen McElroy, a longtime Washoe County resident and native Nevadan, acknowledged that National Library Week was April 19 through April 25, 2026. She thanked the Board for maintaining the library system's budget as noted in the County Manager's (CM) recommended FY 2027 budget. She stated that while a library budget increase would be appreciated, she recognized that money was tight and the County was being fiscally cautious. She urged the Board to carefully select the two LBTs, emphasizing the importance of choosing individuals who understood and valued a free and diverse public library system that served the entire community. She stated that libraries were a uniquely American institution that provided equitable access to information, resources, and entertainment. She added that libraries offered a safe and welcoming environment and expressed hope that they would continue to do so.

Penny Brock displayed documents on election integrity, no copies were submitted for the public record. She stated that at the November 18, 2025, meeting, the Board voted to approve contracts for Dominion Voting Systems' ballot marking devices

(BMDs). She mentioned that, based on her background in contract work, she asked whether a bid solicitation had been issued. She said she reviewed NRS 332 and stated that if a contract expired, as she suggested it did in December 2025, and a company bought the existing company, a new Request for Proposal (RFP) would be required. She shared that Liberty Vote had purchased Dominion Voting Systems, and that if a new contract were generated, it would require an RFP. She believed that the Board had not consulted the District Attorney's (DA) Office prior to approval. She shared that she had submitted a public records request (PRR) to determine whether an RFP had been issued and found no indication that one had been. She alleged that it was required by law and that anyone who worked with contracts would understand the issue. She said that since an RFP was not conducted, it called into question whether Dominion Voting Systems' contract and the BMD were legal, given that elections were approaching. She opined that if the voting machines were illegal, elections that used them would also be illegal. She advised the Board to investigate her claim. She pointed out that she had previously shared with the Board information from what she described as a well-respected Berkeley group, claiming that BMDs were not secure election technology. She said she had provided a separate document alleging a design flaw in Dominion Voting Systems that made them unsafe. She indicated that she had found a document claiming that, after a reported 68 percent error rate with mail ballots in Michigan, election experts conducted a forensic audit of Dominion voting machines. According to that document, she suggested that experts concluded that Dominion systems were intentionally designed with inherent errors to enable systematic fraud and influence election results. She speculated that election devices were not secure.

Dale Davis, a Washoe County resident, said that in November 2025, Registrar of Voters (ROV) Andrew McDonald spent \$176 million on BMD's from Liberty Vote, previously known as Dominion Voting Systems. She questioned whether Mr. McDonald obtained competitive bids for the purchase, as required by law. She acknowledged that the BCC approved the purchase, but was concerned whether additional bids had been reviewed prior to approval.

Jill O'Leary displayed documents, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She submitted requests to suspend reconstruction of the historic Lincoln Highway and to suspend funding for the Washoe County Competency Court. She expressed dismay at a recent response from Commissioner Hill regarding rising gas prices, stating that when given the opportunity to call for a suspension of the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) fuel tax, the Commissioner instead commented on the Governor's efforts regarding electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout the State. She described the response as inadequate and disappointing. She emphasized that taxpayers expected transparency and accountability from those entrusted with public funds and stated she would continue to seek complete, verifiable information until Washoe County met those standards.

Bradley Carlson, President of the Astronomical Society of Nevada, stated that the organization had been active since 1934. He shared that the organization participated in International Dark Sky Week and added that a proposed proclamation was on the agenda, and encouraged the Board to adopt it. He mentioned that following

International Dark Sky Week, the organization would observe International Astronomy Day at the Fleischmann Planetarium on Saturday, April 25, 2026. He explained the event as a co-sponsored, all-day event, with a telescope viewing in the evening, weather permitting, and many family-oriented activities. He advised that the Astronomical Society of Nevada would receive a large donation, a mobile observatory dedicated to public outreach, which would be premiered at the April 25 event.

Virginia Larmore, resident of District 2, stated that she watched the March BCC meeting regarding the Sierra Reflections development. She described the meeting as lengthy, with heightened emotions and community members who expressed understandable frustration. She felt grateful for what she viewed as a small win for one Commissioner, for the hard questions asked by another Commissioner, and for the passionate discussion that ensued, which highlighted the fact that everyone lost. She suggested that a lot of unfair press and angry finger-pointing emerged from that meeting. She believed that, in a State that heavily relied on property tax (p-tax) revenue, achieving a positive outcome would be difficult. She asserted that the public would start out at a disadvantage, that once a developer had a project in mind, the County was incentivized to approve it, and that housing demand further incentivized approval. She stated that, while there were no nefarious motives whatsoever in approving the project, the situation highlighted a real problem that the community must face together, regardless of party affiliation. She thought that everyone was forced to work together for the greater good, or the entire community would lose. She indicated that the largest data center complex in the Country was expanding. She said that billions of dollars in tax incentives and subsidies went to multi-billion dollar companies just so they could consume the most precious and already dwindling water resource that affected the entire community. She believed that water and lost p-tax revenue belonged to all residents. She wondered how many fire stations could have been built with the lost p-tax revenue and stated that there had been a promise of thousands of permanent, good-paying jobs, but in reality, it was more like tens, not tens of thousands. She opined that without conversations, respect, and collaboration, the outcome would be detrimental.

Alan Munson thanked the Commissioners for their service and stated that he was a Sparks resident. He urged the Board not to approve ballot boxes being placed outside of legitimate voting locations and cited concerns about voter fraud and election integrity. He acknowledged that the Cares Campus was an important facility, but he thought it was an inappropriate location for ballot boxes. He emphasized the importance of researching candidates prior to voting and noted that there was ample time to vote, but suggested that some might need assistance. He recognized that the Board was taking his concerns seriously and asked them to consider his request before approving ballot boxes at non-legitimate registered voting locations. He thanked the Board for their time and service to the community.

26-0193 AGENDA ITEM 4 Announcements/Reports.

County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas announced two upcoming vacancies on the Library Board of Trustees (LBT). She explained that the LBT appointed the library

director, helped establish library goals and objectives, approved policies, monitored library finances, and evaluated the library's overall effectiveness. She shared that the LBT terms would run from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2030, with an application deadline of 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 1, 2026. She mentioned that the Board of Equalization (BOE) was the board that heard appeals filed by property owners who disagreed with the assessed property values for tax purposes. She indicated that there were openings for two regular members and one alternate, with terms for all positions running from January 2027 through December 31, 2030. She noted that the application deadline for those seats was 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 5, 2026.

Commissioner Clark read from the agenda and stated that supporting documentation for items on the agenda provided to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) was available to the public through the Office of the County Manager (OCM) or on the County's website. He indicated that he asked presenters follow-up questions in case the public was unable to access the documentation prior to the BCC meeting, and to ensure relevant information was included in the public record. He added that his constituents often appreciated his follow-up questions.

Chair Andriola requested that staff review small-business licensing in response to a constituent inquiry. She asked that Washoe County Code (WCC) Chapter 25 be amended to modify or remove provisions that currently prohibited home-based businesses. She indicated that other jurisdictions allowed such businesses and expressed support for expanding opportunities for small business owners. She also reported on her recent presentation to the Washoe County Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, where she shared that Washoe County was the first county in Nevada to have Veteran Service Officers (VSOs). She explained that, as of January 12, 2026, in partnership with the Nevada Department of Veterans Services, there was an office at the Senior Center on Ninth Street. She mentioned that a VSO was available on the first and third Monday of each month from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and that additional services were provided at the Cares Campus on the second and fourth Mondays on a rotating basis. She shared that from January 12 through February, 72 veterans were served, with retroactive payments, compensation, and annualized benefits identified and collected. She said that the goal of the partnership between Washoe County and the Nevada Department of Veterans Services was to position Washoe County as a model program. She noted that data were being collected to present to legislators and to establish VSOs in all 17 counties. She thought there were thousands of eligible veterans who may not be aware of their eligibility. She mentioned that the County had been generous in finding ways to share information and emphasized the importance of connecting veterans with the benefits they deserved. She noted that 429 seniors were served at the Cares Campus, which included 51 veterans, and that 71 percent of those veterans were seniors. She expressed appreciation for the ongoing partnerships and efforts.

PROCLAMATIONS

26-0194 **5A1** Proclamation for the week of April 19 - 25, 2026 as National Crime Victims' Rights Week. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Herman read the proclamation and mentioned that she was among the victims of crime that probably nobody knew about.

District Attorney (DA) Hicks thanked the Board for hosting the proclamation. He explained that the DA's Office and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) wanted to bring the proclamation forward. He stated that they observed this week every year. He clarified the dates of the proclamation week and noted that it was an important measure because it provided an opportunity for all involved to reset, reinvigorate, and ensure they were caring for crime victims in whatever ways they could. He noted that this could include removing barriers victims faced, supporting victims, and ensuring cases were prosecuted and arrests were made. He stated it was his twelfth year as DA and that he saw every day how seriously Washoe County took its duty to protect crime victims. He explained that it started with the WCSO, and noted that their victims' rights advocate was in attendance. He added that from the moment the WCSO received a case, they took their victims very seriously. He explained that when the case was handed off to the DA's Office, that office took the victims of crime equally seriously. He pointed out that the DA's Office had several victim advocates, all of whom were currently in trial, taking care of victims. He added that he had two investigators in attendance and that he would speak about the DA's dog, Kace, in a moment. He noted that there was a culture in both the WCSO and the DA's Office to take care of crime victims and to seek accountability on their behalf. He mentioned to the Board that he was not sure if they had all met his facility dog, Kace. He stated the name came about by happenstance, and that even though his office did not name her Kace, they enjoyed saying, *Kace is on the case*. He noted that Kace was a specifically trained facility dog that came from Canine Companions, and that her handler, DA Investigator II Teri Salter, had to go through very specific and difficult training for Kace to be allowed in the office. But despite that, he stated that Kace made a big difference. In addition to being the new office mascot, he declared she was incredible with victims. He noted that it was what she was specifically trained for and that she had particular compassion towards child victims, which DA Hicks stated that he shared. DA Hicks added that Victims of Crime Week occurred in April, which was also Child Abuse Prevention Week, and that the Commissioners might have noticed the pinwheels, which reminded everyone to take care of children. Returning to the topic of Kace, DA Hicks stated they had used her in many different ways, such as when prosecutors met with crime victims, and Kace helped calm them, or when she sat with victims as they testified on the witness stand during trial. He affirmed he had seen firsthand the calming presence Kace had when people were facing extreme anxiety, which he noted was a common and significant factor for victims of crime who later had to attend court and give testimony. DA Hicks noted he had wanted the Board to see Kace and mentioned that she would love to receive some pets from the Commissioners if they wanted to come down from the dais to meet her. He ended by thanking the Board on behalf of the DA's and Sheriff's Offices for issuing the proclamation, and affirmed that everyone who heard it would commit to supporting crime victims. He stated this was already true of Washoe County, but that the fight never ended, and they could always do better.

Chair Andriola thanked DA Hicks for his presentation and joked about Kace. She also thanked DA Hicks for the decrease in crime rates.

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 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5A1 be adopted.

26-0195 **5A2** Proclamation for the week of April 12 - 18, 2026 as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Herman read the proclamation.

Captain Francisco Gamboa with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) Patrol Division stated that the WCSO wanted to show its unwavering support and admiration for its telecommunicators. He explained that they were often the unsung heroes of everyday public safety. He clarified that while the WCSO saw huge critical incidents that might make social media or the news, what people reading the stories were not seeing was the person running the call from the beginning, who received the call and was speaking with the victims, with the first responders, and with assets responding to the call. He added that once the call was finished, the public saw the contributions from law enforcement, medical, and fire departments, but did not see what the telecommunicators contributed. He explained that there was a debriefing for the other teams as well, but that telecommunicators had sometimes been the forgotten ones because, while they lived through the same event as other first responders, they had to move right on to the next call without wavering. For this reason, he stated, the WCSO wanted to make it known how much they supported the telecommunicators and expressed their continued admiration for them.

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 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5A2 be adopted.

26-0196 **5A3** Proclamation for the week of April 19 - 25, 2026 as National Library Week. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Andriola wondered if Jamie Hemingway, Public Information and Development Officer for the Washoe County Library System, was present for the proclamation, and she was. Chair Andriola mentioned that she was a member of the Spanish Springs Library.

Commissioner Clark read the proclamation.

Ms. Hemingway thanked the Board for acknowledging the commemoration with a proclamation. She stated that libraries were for everyone. She explained that the library system offered a wide range of services for all ages and would help anyone who

walked through their doors. She added that they were excited to celebrate that fact and bring the joy of libraries to the community. She noted it was a good way to remember that their staffers worked very hard every day to show up for the community and provide library services to everyone. She added that she wore her Library Joy shirt in light of the proclamation, which she described as trying to kick it off in style. She mentioned that also present was the Spanish Springs Library Branch Manager, Jana MacMillan, and they would love to take a photo with the Board.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Clark, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5A3 be adopted.

26-0197 **5A4** Proclamation for the week of April 13 - 20, 2026 as Nevada Dark Skies Week. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Andriola stated that this proclamation was an item the Commissioners would be considering as an Ordinance. She felt that because she had been working on it, it was appropriate for her to read the proclamation.

Chair Andriola read the proclamation.

Pam duPre of Friends of Nevada Wilderness (FNW) thanked the Board. She identified the other speakers with her as Brad Carlson, President of the Astronomical Society of Nevada (ASN), Jordan Stone, Vice President of the ASN, and Chelsea Kincheloe from the Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation (NVDOR), who, as Ms. duPre explained, ran the program at the State level that certified dark sky locations in the State of Nevada. She announced that they were very pleased that the State of Nevada strongly supported efforts to promote dark skies. She explained that they were all registered advocates for the nonprofit Dark Sky International (DSI), which launched International Dark Sky Week in 2003. She stated that they wanted to thank the Board in advance for adopting the proclamation. She added that they had helped raise awareness of the important issue of dark skies in Nevada. She stated that Nevadans were fortunate to enjoy some of the darkest skies in the Country, thanks to their wide-open spaces, sparse rural population, and dry, high-desert air. She noted that Nevadans could see more stars on a clear night than about 90 percent of the Country's population. She mentioned that the especially dark skies were available only if people ventured away from urban areas. Otherwise, she added, all people could see was a very small fraction of the sky that was actually out there, due to the volume of artificial light in residential and commercial areas, which she felt was not dark-sky friendly. She clarified that the light from those areas was too bright and shone upwards instead of downwards. She also noted that the light fell on the cool blue end of the color spectrum, rather than the warm amber end, and was typically on all night long. She explained that they were thrilled the Board recognized that, for many reasons, light pollution was a problem and could be fixed by implementing DSI's Five Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting. She added that together they could make a big difference,

like night and day. She mentioned the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)'s official Save Starry Skies specialty license plate and noted that more than 5,000 had been registered in the two years since it became available to the public, and that proceeds help promote the preservation of dark skies throughout the State. She thanked the Board again for the opportunity and added that her group of advocates would be happy to return and speak in further detail about dark skies and how to preserve them.

Bradley Carlson, President of the ASN, thanked the Board for accepting the proclamation. He stated that Dark Sky Week was a nice week of the year to raise public awareness, but that Nevada was blessed with dark skies 365 days a year. He noted that this had a direct impact on all the positive aspects mentioned in the proclamation, specifically tourism and business visitor counts, as people from around the world travel to the western United States for this reason. He announced that one of the ASN's main missions was outreach and public education. He added they were available as a resource, and encouraged the Board to reach out to them for any needs, in addition to the Nevada Wilderness and the Nevada Department of Outdoor Recreation. He noted they could find their website at *astronomy.org*.

Chair Andriola commented on their offer to return and speak to the Board, adding that, because dark skies were a priority for Washoe County, the Commissioners would ensure they returned when the Ordinance came before the Board.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Chair Andriola, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5A4 be adopted.

26-0198 **AGENDA ITEM 6A1** Abbey Pike, Extension County Coordinator, to present the FY25 Annual Impact Report for the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension in Washoe County. Extension programs include 4-H Youth Development, Living With Fire, Master Gardeners, and other educational resources that address critical community needs in Washoe County. (All Commission Districts.)

Washoe County Extension Educator at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Extension Abbey Pike conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: University of Nevada, Reno Extension; Extension; 4-H Youth Development; Living With Fire; Master Gardeners; Strengthening Civic Engagement; Healthy Eating and Living; Workforce Development; 2024-2025 Fiscal Report; Abbey Pike, Washoe County Extension Coordinator. Ms. Pike referred to the slide titled *Extension* and explained that it was a major unit within UNR dedicated to providing practical, research-based community education. She said that the UNR Extension identified critical community needs and developed educational programs to address them based on research, with ongoing program evaluation and needs assessments to ensure that the educational offerings impact and improve the lives of Washoe County residents. She noted that the

UNR Extension was the result of a partnership between the County, State, and federal governments. She reported that the UNR Extension received funding from ad valorem property tax (p-tax), which was appropriated to implement educational programs in community and economic development, youth, personal and family development, health and nutrition, horticulture, agriculture, and natural resources.

She read from the *4-H Youth Development* slide and relayed that the flagship program was Head, Heart, Hands, and Health (4-H) Youth Development, a learning-by-doing program for youth ages 5 to 19 that allowed them to participate in hands-on projects across a variety of delivery modes to support curiosity, skill development, and lifelong learning. She asserted that the program was youth-driven and that projects they wanted were provided with the help of adult volunteers and their peers. She recalled that a highlight from the year was the in-school Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) enrichment programs. She said that staff visited elementary school classrooms across the County to implement one-hour STEM lessons that supplemented the curriculum that the students were already learning and provided an exciting activity that helped them learn more about the STEM topic. She indicated that the previous year was the first year in which the 4-H Youth Development program was offered throughout the entire school year. She mentioned that the UNR Extension reached more than 6,000 youth who were normally not seen in the programs.

Ms. Pike read from the *Living With Fire* slide and said that the Living With Fire (LWF) program provided practical, research-based recommendations regarding preparing for wildfire and reducing wildfire threats to homes and communities in Northern Nevada. She recalled that the LWF program hosted the 2025 Fire Adapted Nevada Summit, which brought over 200 attendees. She said the attendees represented a broad coalition of government agencies, nonprofits, community leaders, and homeowners who came together to share knowledge and discuss the latest research regarding adapting to wildfire. She explained that the LWF program hosted a variety of trainings for contractors who performed wildfire defense work, such as creating defensible spaces and home hardening. She said that the LWF program worked directly with Homeowners' Associations (HOAs) and community leaders to figure out how their individual communities could best adapt to wildfire in the region.

Ms. Pike referred to the slide titled *Master Gardeners* and explained that the Master Gardeners program trained volunteers in the community to provide research-based information to anyone interested in gardening in Nevada. She opined that gardening in Nevada was challenging; therefore, providing public support was important. She said that the Junior Master Gardener program began providing weekly horticulture STEM education in the Lemelson STEM Academy, for grades pre-kindergarten (pre-k) through five. She recalled that the students attended the Master Gardener greenhouse for a field trip, which she believed was fun for them.

Ms. Pike read from the *Strengthening Civic Engagement* slide and noted that civic engagement was important because it empowered communities to work with their neighbors to create positive change. She said that the UNR Extension partnered with the

County to support the Washoe County Leadership Academy (WCLA), a nine-month journey hosted by Washoe County staff for community leaders to gain a perspective of government and develop leadership, civility, and conflict management skills. She mentioned that UNR Extension Professor Marlene Rebori provided leadership development training and recalled that, for the class project that year, the UNR Extension partnered with the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) for the LWF program to understand how the underserved community could improve home hardening and wildfire resilience. She highlighted that during the 32nd Legislative Session, 32 4-H youth from across the State visited the Legislature to learn about government, meet with representatives, discuss issues that mattered to them, and meet UNR President Brian Sandoval, who she said was a former 4-H youth. She speculated that the experience helped them build leadership skills and learn more about engaging with their local and State governments.

Ms. Pike read from the *Healthy Eating and Living* slide and reported that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)-Ed program provided nutrition education year-round to low-income residents and families in the Washoe County School District (WCSD), early childcare centers, and community sites. She said that the UNR Extension reached over 2,000 unique individuals with information on healthy eating and active lifestyles. She recalled that the UNR Extension hosted the first Washoe Healthy Kids Festival, which drew over 250 families with children ages 3 to 8. She said that the festival taught youth how vegetables grow, how to dig in a garden bed to harvest sweet potatoes, and allowed them to taste a healthy smoothie. She explained that the children went home with vegetables they picked out from the farmers' market.

Ms. Pike pointed out the information on the *Workforce Development* slide and said that a variety of UNR Extension programs provided workforce development. She explained that the UNR Extension worked with industries to ensure their workers had the most current information, enabling them to perform well in their communities and strengthen the workforce. She said that the Radon Education for Realtors program existed because radioactive gas was prevalent in Nevada and could cause lung cancer. She reported that, in addition to providing free tests to homeowners, the UNR Extension also educated 181 realtors on the importance of radon testing during the home-buying process, with the hope that the education would reach more people, as the realtors worked with the community every day. She said that the UNR Extension also worked with pesticide applicators and management professionals to help them obtain their certificates, ensuring they applied pesticides appropriately to protect the watershed and wildlife. She believed that childcare was difficult for many families in Northern Nevada; therefore, the UNR Extension worked to educate over 100 early childhood educators on best practices in child development to help them earn their Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, strengthening the workforce and increasing access to childcare in the community.

Ms. Pike concluded with the 2024-2025 Fiscal Report slide and highlighted the UNR Extension's expenses by revenue source. She said that the expenses by revenue source reflected a partnership among the County, State, and federal governments. She reported that the UNR Extension relied on the income from the various partners to provide

education at all levels within the State. She noted that most of the grants received were federally funded, which was why the federal category on the slide was lower than the others. She said the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Washoe County Extension Funds Summary was on the slide and that she would expand on it when she presents the budget in a few months. She mentioned that the UNR Extension's expenses were lower than its revenue, indicating the budget was balanced. She said the money held in reserves was for mandatory contingencies related to grant losses or contractual obligations. She explained that the UNR Extension allocated bridge funding to cover expected grant losses. She stated that she was available to answer questions or discuss possible collaboration opportunities.

Commissioner Hill indicated that the UNR Extension performed great work and was amazed that the program was able to fill the gap in healthy eating education. She asked Ms. Pike to explain the SNAP-Ed program more thoroughly. Ms. Pike reported that the UNR Extension worked with the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHS), which received federal permission to use carryover funding for SNAP-Ed to continue implementing its SNAP-Ed curriculum through June of 2026. She noted that after June, the program would completely lose federal funding, but space had been located in the Washoe County budget for two positions to continue, one of which was the program officer, who could identify community needs. She explained that the program officer had worked with the UNR Extension program for over ten years and mentioned that she felt the program officer was an asset to the team. She divulged that the SNAP-Ed federal curriculum would not necessarily continue; therefore, the program would work with UNR and the UNR Extension to locate the most current nutrition and healthy living curriculum to continue implementing in the community. She said that the program might be different, but she felt that the UNR Extension would attempt to provide the best curriculum without federal funding.

Commissioner Hill noted that the CDA was amazing and asked whether the UNR Extension had been providing the service for a long time. Ms. Pike believed that the certificate program had been in place for at least three years. Commissioner Hill asked if the provider paid for the CDA through the UNR Extension. Ms. Pike indicated that the program was free. Commissioner Hill asked whether in-home childcare providers could participate in the program. Ms. Pike said that she was not sure and would have to research the requirements. Commissioner Hill asked Ms. Pike to keep the Board informed. She said there were many philanthropic individuals interested in supporting early childhood development, and she wondered whether the UNR Extension had reached out to them. If not, she explained that she would be happy to put the UNR Extension in contact with her. She believed that Nevada was a childcare desert and appreciated the UNR Extension's work. She urged her fellow Commissioners to visit the UNR Extension's greenhouse, calling it an incredible experience. She said that it was interesting to witness how the program could provide local food. She opined that the closure of Interstate 80 (I-80) was detrimental to the community. She recalled that Chair Andriola was interested in promoting agritourism to ensure that the community had access to it at the State and local levels through the Washoe County Code (WCC).

Chair Andriola thanked Ms. Pike for the presentation and recognized that the UNR Extension was not limited to Washoe County but also extended to other areas of the State. She believed it provided a unique opportunity for various counties to understand what was beneficial to their communities. She indicated that there were 20 UNR Extension offices across 15 counties in Nevada. She said she focused on Washoe County for the presentation because of local funding and what was happening within the County. She asserted that it was important to have Statewide resources, especially in smaller communities with fewer nonprofits or government funding. She recalled that she grew up in Churchill County and was a result of their 4-H program. She relayed that there were other programs based in other counties that worked with the County; however, she could not fit the information into a ten-minute presentation.

Chair Andriola noted that she and Commissioner Herman were members of the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) and had witnessed Ms. Pike present many times. She expressed appreciation for the UNR Extension's hard work. She believed that it was important that everyone knew how essential the program was. She reported that there was an opportunity for agritourism feedback later that day in Chambers for those interested. She thanked Ms. Pike for being part of the WCLA and speculated that she may have influenced the LWF project that occurred. Ms. Pike indicated that she would be back for another presentation in June.

26-0199 **AGENDA ITEM 6A2** Presentation by Brenda Scolari, Director of the Nevada Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, on America250 Nevada and statewide efforts to educate, engage, and celebrate Nevada's contributions to the nation's semiquincentennial. (All Commission Districts.)

Nevada Department of Tourism Cultural Affairs Director Brenda Scolari conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: America250 Nevada; Mission; Our Tentpoles; Our Nevada Stories Project; Civic Seal Scholarship; Nevada Gives (2 slides); Travel Nevada; Nevada Arts Council; Want to participate?. She indicated that Governor Joe Lombardo created the America250 Commission by executive order in the summer of 2024. She explained that the governing body was chaired by Congressman Mark Amodei and that the commission had worked in conjunction with a group of nonprofit and business leaders in support of the mission. She read from the *Mission* slide and noted that the anniversary of the Nation's founding was recognized by the diverse contributions of Nevadans while promoting civic education and engagement. She referred to the slide titled *Our Tentpoles* and said that the mission reflected major themes, which she called *tentpoles*, developed by the National America250 Commission, including *learn, engage, and celebrate*. She mentioned that the Nation was experiencing politically charged times and said that it was important to understand how the three tentpoles could be applied in Nevada. She said that while parades and fireworks were amazing, there was a preference to do something that would have a lasting impact even after July 4.

Ms. Scolari read from the *Our Nevada Stories Project* slide and said that the America250 Commission and the State's staff had been fundraising for the Nevada Stories Project, led by Nevada Arts Council (NAC) Folklife Specialist Brad McMullen, who had worked with nominated interviewees and conducted interviews with famous and well-known Nevadans and historians, along with others who were vital contributors in the community. She said that the podcast interview series would be available in the spring, was scheduled to begin on Memorial Day, and would be broadcast on K University of Nevada, Reno (KUNR) and K National Public Radio (KNPR). She reported that the America250 Commission had invested in an online platform called *Their Story*, through which anyone, on their phone or desktop, could contribute a story for staff to archive and curate to develop an interactive exhibit in State museums.

Ms. Scolari referred to the slide titled *Civic Seal Scholarship* and noted that the Civic Seal Scholarship was in partnership with the Nevada Center for Civic Engagement (NVCCE) and the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) to support volunteerism. She reported that volunteerism had decreased Countrywide over time. She said that the generous sponsorship from NV Energy was awarded to educators and students who were committed to the civics' curriculum. She explained that the scholarship was a stipend for educators who committed to the program to buy any materials or education they may need, whereas students who completed the curriculum and had the civic seal on their high school diploma would receive a \$2,500 scholarship for higher education in Nevada. She recalled that the America250 Commission awarded the first round for students and teachers in March, with the second-round application deadline on May 9, 2026. She urged anyone who may know a student or someone interested in education to visit America250nevada.org to apply.

Ms. Scolari read from the first slide titled *Nevada Gives* and indicated that the America250 Commission had been working with Nevada Volunteers on 62 community volunteer projects throughout the State, including cleanups, food drives, and youth service organizations. She said that the award was through MGM Resorts International and was a stipend for any materials needed to make volunteer projects successful. She noted that a full list of awardees was available on the America250 Commission website. She pointed out the second slide titled *Nevada Gives* contained photos of volunteer events that had taken place, including some at State parks. She recalled that the Legislature approved lodging taxes dedicated to special grant rounds administered by Travel Nevada and the NAC. She said that Travel Nevada had awarded 14 organizations throughout the State for programming and events that could capture the American spirit. She reported that a specific program was awarded for its programming regarding the California Trail in northeastern Nevada, with another program focusing on the Pony Express Trail. She introduced NAC Executive Director Tony Manfredi to discuss the NAC grant.

Mr. Manfredi referred to the *Nevada Arts Council* slide and stated that the NAC was the State arts agency serving Nevada to ensure that all Nevadans received the civic, economic, health, and educational benefits of the arts. He reported that the NAC received an additional \$250,000 in lodging tax in the NAC budget during the last biennium. He reported that the NAC also received an additional \$25,000 from the National

Endowment for the Arts (NEA) under the State partnership agreement. He said that State partnership agreements like the NAC's are in place in 56 states and jurisdictional regions across the Country. He believed that the partnership was a tribute that displayed both the state and federal governments' investment of public dollars in the arts. He expressed excitement regarding the commemorative America250 initiative and reiterated that the goal was to witness public art. He said the NAC wanted to implement public art components in at least every county within the State. He explained that communities had been identified, and the NAC was in the process of collaborating. He opined that it was important not to frame the collaboration as the State requiring a mural, but instead to engage in robust public meetings to understand where and what kind of art the community would like to see. He said that art was not necessarily political but commemorative. He mentioned that Nevada was not considered a state when the Declaration of Independence was signed; however, he felt that Nevada had significance in the Country's history. He said that cultural tourism was remarkable and that when individuals could hear others' stories, they could have their own authentic experience and spend money while visiting. He asserted that cultural tourism had an economic impact; however, he also opined that communities felt a sense of pride in telling their story. He said that stories brought the United States (US) closer to a perfect union.

Mr. Manfredi explained that Washoe County had opportunities and that the NAC was exploring partnerships within the County for those interested. He noted that his contact information could be found on the NAC website. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share the NAC's initiatives and thanked the County for its work. He said he was a resident of Washoe County, born and raised in the area, and a third-generation Nevadan; therefore, he deeply appreciated the community.

Ms. Scolari referred to the *Want to participate?* slide and encouraged anyone interested to visit the America250 Commission's website. She believed that the website contained a great community calendar. She pointed out that the America250 Commission could be followed on social media, or individuals could receive the newsletter highlighting community events. She reiterated that Nevada stories could be entered through the Their Story application. She thanked the Board for allowing her to present.

Commissioner Hill believed that the presentation was great. She asked where the mural project was situated in Washoe County. Mr. Manfredi indicated that the Reno-Sparks Livestock Event Center (RSLEC) was an area of interest for a mural in Washoe County. He said that Washoe County was home to many amazing public murals. He noted that the NAC website held information for mural opportunities. He said there would be murals all over the State, and that only one location in Washoe County had been identified thus far. He recalled that the NAC had tried to work with the Tribal Nations to see if there was any interest. Commissioner Hill expressed her excitement to see the mural when it was complete.

Chair Andriola felt that a mural at the RSLEC would be a great opportunity with the State Fair occurring in 2026. She recalled that the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director, Doctor (Dr.) J.J. Goicoechea, had brought back the State Fair

after many years of it not being held. She believed that the State Fair, held June 11 through June 13, was a great way to mark America250. Mr. Manfredi explained that the intent was to unveil the mural at the State Fair with an art show. Chair Andriola thanked Mr. Manfredi and Ms. Scolari for the presentation. She urged Ms. Scolari and Mr. Manfredi to present at the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO). Ms. Scolari indicated that presenting to NACO was a wonderful idea and said that Travel Nevada would be at the State Fair with the Dark Skies Activation, along with the America250 Commission.

DONATIONS

26-0200 **7A1** Accept a donation of 47 Narcan Kits to treat and prevent possible opioid overdoses by community members served by the Washoe County Department of Juvenile Services [estimated value \$2,115] donated by Quest Counseling and Consulting Inc. Juvenile Services. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0201 **7B1** Recommendation to: (1) accept various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$12,983]; and (2) accept monetary donations to Washoe County Human Services Agency Child Protective Services Fund to support welfare activities in the amount of [\$15,127.36], from multiple donors as described in this staff report, retroactive for the period of October 1, 2025 through December 30, 2025; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. The item donors are: (1) Love InDeed (Walmart gift cards), (2) Model Dairy (boxes of milk), (3) Dougboy Donuts (donuts), (4) Tim and Karen R. (toys), (5) Five Hearts Preschool (clothes, shoes and books), (6) Renee S. (Visa gift card, gingerbread kits), (7) Stacy A. (Christmas gifts), (8) Sierra Italia Inc. (time for photo shoots), (9) Miranda K. (books and toys), (10) Jennifer A. (clothing), (11) V. Defazio (children's clothing and shoes), (12) Ellen L. (clothes and toys), (13) Melissa R. (clothes, shoes and books), (14) Rayetta B. (clothes and shoes), (15) Chris W. (TV), (16) Alma L. (clothes and toys), (17) Peggy K. (candy), (18) Paul and Denise A. {toys}, {19} Lucia L. {clothes}, {20} Linda G. {luggage, games, pillows, tote bags}, {21} Frances D. {books and toys}, {22} Caughlin Ranch HOA {backpacks with school supplies}, {23} Terry M. {quilt}, and {24} Elizabeth B. {shoes, shirts and clothing}. The monetary donors are: {1} Sierra Pacific Power Company {\$6,000}, (2) Sparks Fire Department {\$3,056.25 and \$250}, (3) Kellie Valentine Insurance Agency {\$1,000}, {4} Karma Box Project {\$996.44}, {5} Unknown donors {\$600}, {6} Penske Logistics {\$200}, (7) Washoe Masonic Lodge No 35 {\$200}, (8) Valerie Cooke {\$200}, (9) A and H Insurance {\$100}, {10} Sierra Swirl {\$100}, {11} Torres Living Trust {\$100}, {12} United Way of Northern Nevada {\$50}, and {13} juror donations {\$2,275}. Human Services Agency. {All Commission Districts.)

26-0202 **7B2** Recommendation to: (1) accept various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$ 2,336.99] from multiple donors as described

in this staff report, and (2) accept monetary donations in the amount of [\$500.00] from Second Baptist Church, to support Cares Campus, Our Place, CrossRoads and other homeless services retroactive for the period of October 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. The item donors are: (1) Jennifer P. (men's clothing and shoes), (2) Eileen R. (adult men's clothes and shoes), (3) Amanda R. (clothing), (4) unknown donor (RTC bus passes), (5) Craig C. (clothes, books and household items), (6) Chelsea - Sigma Kappa (toothbrushes and toothpaste), (7) Sigma Kappa (toothbrushes), (8) Ally - Sigma Kappa (toothbrushes and toothpaste), (9) Maddie - Sigma Kappa (disposable razors), (10) Unknown donor (women's jogger pants), (11) Bella - Sigma Kappa (men's sweatpants), (12) Madison - Sigma Kappa (disposable razors), (13) Michael V. (toothbrushes and tampons), (14) Regan C. (tampons), (15) Unknown donor (men's deodorant), (16) Project Marilyn (period kits), (17) Nate and Tanisha (composition notebooks and feminine hygiene products), (18) Unknown donor (children's jackets, toy car), (19) The Snelgrove Family (toothbrushes and tampons), (20) Jennifer N. (clothing and kitchen items), and (21) Joshua L. (toothpaste). Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

- 26-0203** **7B3** Recommendation to: (1) accept various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$2,380.00]; and (2) accept monetary donations in the amount of [\$1,140.00] to the Human Services Agency Senior Services Fund used to support seniors in our community from multiple donors as described in this staff report, retroactive for the period October 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. The item donors are: (1) City of Reno (gift cards), and (2) Patagonia (winter hats, gloves and scarves). The monetary donors are: (1) Meals on Wheels (\$1,115), and Ann Kent (\$25). Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Items 7A1 through 7B3 be accepted.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 8A1 THROUGH 8G6

- 26-0204** **8A1** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' regular meetings of February 10, 2026, and February 17, 2026. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0205** **8B1** Recommendation to approve, on the recommendation of the Chair, the reappointments of Kelly Mullin and Chadwick L. Giesinger to serve as hearing examiners pursuant to Washoe County Code Section 110.912.15:

Kelly Mullin to fill a term beginning on August 23, 2026, and ending on August 22, 2030; and Chadwick L. Giesinger to fill a term retroactively beginning on April 12, 2026, and ending on April 11, 2030. Hearing examiners are empowered by State Law and County Code to conduct public hearings and make decisions on certain variance, special use permit, and administrative permit applications. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0206 **8B2** Recommendation to approve Resolution R26-20 calling a public hearing (to be set for May 12, 2026) on the amendment of the Service Area and Contaminant Boundaries (Program Boundaries) of District No. 24 (Remediation Program/Central Truckee Meadows Remediation District) in Washoe County, Nevada; providing for notice of hearing and for other matters properly related thereto. The Remediation Program monitor and remediate existing tetrachloroethene (PCE) contamination in groundwater in the central Truckee Meadows area, which requires updating the Program Boundaries annually. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0207 **8B3** Recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to provide a non-binding recommendation to the Nevada State Engineer as identified in Nevada Revised Statute 533.363, for the State of Nevada's possible approval of Application numbers 92313, 92314, 93730, 93731, 94213, 94270, and 94300 for Permission to Change Points of Diversion and Places of Use of the Public Waters of the State of Nevada. Applications 92313 and 92314, submitted by Truckee Meadows Water Authority, Application 94270, submitted by Washoe County, and Application 94300, submitted by Robert and Elizabeth Coombs, propose to change the points of diversion and places of use of 159.14 acre-feet of water rights in the Truckee Canyon Hydrographic Basin (via the Truckee River) to a point of diversion and places of use within Washoe County and Storey County for municipal use. The water right was previously diverted from the Truckee Canyon Hydrographic Basin and placed to use within Washoe County. Community Services. Applications 93730 and 93731, submitted by Truckee Meadows Water Authority, propose to change the points of diversion of 366.16 acre-feet of water rights in Spanish Springs Hydrographic Basin (via underground sources) while the place of use remains within Washoe County and Storey County for municipal use. The water right was previously diverted from Spanish Springs Hydrographic Basin. Application 94213, submitted by Truckee Meadows Water Authority, proposes to change the point of diversion and place of use of 321.49 acre-feet of water rights in the Truckee Canyon Hydrographic Basin (via an underground source) to a point of diversion within Washoe County and a place of use within Washoe County and Storey County for municipal use. The water right was previously diverted from the Truckee Canyon Hydrographic Basin and placed to use within Washoe County. Community Services. (Commission District 4.)

- 26-0208** **8B4** Recommendation to: 1) accept the State of Nevada, Division of State Parks, Recreational Trails Program RTP 2026-07 “Sierra Front Trail Bridge Design” grant [in the amount of \$68,000.00 with a Washoe County cash/in-kind match in the amount of \$17,000.00, equaling 20% of the \$85,000.00 project total]; and 2) approve the Project Agreement with a grant period from execution through September 30, 2029; and 3) authorize the Director of the Community Services Department [Eric Crump] to sign the Project Agreement and any subsequent documents related to the grant on behalf of the County; and 4) direct the Department of Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. This planning grant supports the design of four trail bridges that will be included in the final section of the Sierra Front Trail connecting from Hunter Lake Road to the Ballardini Ranch Trailhead. Community Services. (Commission District 1.)
- 26-0209** **8B5** Recommendation to approve the Cooperative Local Public Agency Agreement PR074-26-063 between Washoe County and the State of Nevada, acting through the Nevada Department of Transportation, for the purchase of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon systems using Federal Transportation Alternatives Program funds [for an estimated total project cost of \$35,790.00 with a Washoe County cash match of \$1,790.00 (5%)]. Community Services. (Commission District 1, 2, 3 & 5.)
- 26-0210** **8C1** Request by the Washoe County Chief Human Resources Officer, through the Washoe County Clerk, and pursuant to Washoe County Code (“WCC”) 2.030, to initiate an amendment to WCC Chapter 5 (Administration and Personnel), to update the dollar amounts that county departments may spend for service rewards and retirement awards for county employees. County departments may currently spend up to \$25 for a service award and \$50 for a retirement award. The proposed amendment would increase the allowance to \$50 for a service award and \$75 for a retirement award. If approved, it is recommended that the Board direct the County Clerk to submit the request to the District Attorney’s Office for preparation of a proposed ordinance in accordance with WCC 2.040. Human Resources. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0211** **8C2** Recommendation to approve providing the Public Defender and Alternate Public Defender the same benefits afforded to confidential attorneys who follow the Washoe County Public Attorneys’ Association (WCPAA) agreements, specifically including longevity pay, cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), health insurance, retiree health insurance, and perquisite pay. [Total estimated fiscal impact for Fiscal Years 2026, 2027, and 2028 is \$114,230]. Human Resources. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0212** **8C3** Recommendation to approve revisions to the Washoe County Tuition Reimbursement Policy. The policy establishes the requirements and procedures for full-time County employees and officers seeking

reimbursement for job or degree-related courses. The proposed revisions include shifting reimbursement approval authority from the Human Resources Department to individual Department Head's or their designee, adding clarifying language regarding possible budgetary constraints that may inhibit department approval, and additional edits for form and clarity. Human Resources. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0213 **8C4** Recommendation to approve an amendment to the Washoe County PPO and HDHP group health plans to remove mandatory mail order for maintenance medications, effective April 14, 2026. Human Resources. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0214 **8D1** Recommendation to accept the third amendment to the subaward of the Child Welfare Collaborative Agreement with Casey Family Programs in the amount of [\$30,000.00; no county match] retroactive from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026, to facilitate family reunification and permanency for children and reduce foster care reentries; retroactively authorize the Director of Human Services Agency to execute agreement documents; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0215 **8E1** Recommendation to approve a FFY 2023 Department of Homeland Security grant passed through the State Homeland Security Program from the State of Nevada, Office of Emergency Management (NVOEM) awarding [\$14,090.59, no County match required], for installation of cabling from the REOC's IT room to the coordination room. Grant term is retroactive to March 2, 2026, through August 31, 2026. If approved, authorize the County Manager or her designee, to sign the grant award documents and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0216 **8E2** Recommendation to approve the Washoe County Dogs in the Workplace Policy which establishes comprehensive guidelines and standards for allowing qualifying dogs in County workplaces where practicable, extending the known benefits of dogs to employees while maintaining high service levels, safety standards, and professional work environments. The policy applies to employees who own certified therapy dogs or qualified public service dogs from recognized organizations, emphasizing responsible pet ownership, safety protocols, and the privilege-based nature of participation in this program. Human Resources/Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0217 **8F1** Recommendation to approve budget amendments totaling an increase of [\$227,826.09; no county match] in both revenue and expense to the FY26 PFAS Sampling Grant, retroactive to February 1, 2026 through October 31, 2028, for the Environmental Health Services Division (EHS) Safe Drinking

Water Act (SDWA) and Residential Wells programs, and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)

- 26-0218** **8G1** Recommendation to accept additional Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department funding [increase of \$79,277.00, no County match required, for a total of \$237,333.00] as administered from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, for reimbursement of expenses associated with Internet Crimes Against Children investigations and law enforcement related county and non-county personnel training and travel for the retroactive grant period of October 1, 2023 through August 31, 2026; authorize the Sheriff to retroactively execute the award document; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0219** **8G2** Recommendation to accept a fiscal year 2024 State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) grant award [amount not to exceed \$164,070.00, no County match required] as administered from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Federal FY 2024 project number 15PBJA-24-RR-05826-SCAA, for Detention Bureau activities and projects for the grant period of July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2025; authorize the Sheriff to retroactively execute the award document; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0220** **8G3** Recommendation to retroactively approve a Security Agreement between the Peppermill Resort Hotel and Casino and the County of Washoe on behalf of Washoe County Sheriff's Office to provide uniformed Deputy Sheriffs for security [No fiscal impact to County. Security costs, salaries, benefits and overtime will be reimbursed per event] during special events occurring for the period of December 1, 2025, through the last day of December 2026. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0221** **8G4** Recommendation to accept a calendar year 2026 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Services Training Officers Prosecutors (STOP) grant award [amount not to exceed \$24,491.00, \$8,188.37 County match required] as administered from the State of Nevada Office of the Attorney General, federal project number 15JOVW-25-GG-00048-STOP, to develop and strengthen effective victim services, law enforcement, and prosecution strategies to combat the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking for the retroactive grant period of January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026; authorize the Sheriff and the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners to execute the award document; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 26-0222** **8G5** Recommendation to accept a fiscal year 2026 U.S. Forest Service grant award [amount not to exceed \$10,000.00, no County match required]

as administered from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, federal project number 26-LE-11041700-017, for patrol of U.S. Forest Service designated roads, campgrounds, developed sites, or dispersed areas for the retroactive grant period of February 13, 2026 through January 31, 2031; authorize the Sheriff to retroactively execute the award document; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

- 26-0223** **8G6** Recommendation to accept transfer from the Washoe County Department of Alternative Sentencing to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office of a fiscal year 2026 Office of Traffic Safety grant award [initial award amount not to exceed \$31,500.00, \$10,500.00 County match required; transfer to Sheriff's Office remaining award amount not to exceed \$23,625.00, \$7,875.00 County match required] as administered from the State of Nevada Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety, Federal FY 2026 project number 69A37523300001640NVA, to support the lease of two (2) Preliminary Breath Test (PBT) kiosks, for the initial grant period of October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026; transfer to the Sheriff's Office effective January 1, 2026; authorize the Sheriff to retroactively execute the award document; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 8A1 through 8G6 be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 8A1 through 8G6 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

BLOCK VOTE – 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17

- 26-0224** **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to approve Amendment #2 to the Lease Agreement between Rater Investments of Nevada Limited Partnership and Washoe County for a 60-month term, from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2031 [0.0% increase for FY27, \$974,327.40 for the five year term], for the continued occupancy of the Sierra View Library Branch located at the Reno Town Mall, 4001 S. Virginia Street, Reno, Nevada. Community Services. (Commission District 2.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Commissioner Clark stated that he had received some good news: the lease for Item 10 had been negotiated, and he thought it represented a significant savings. He suggested the Board should salute their staffer for negotiating that lease, as it was an opportunity to save the taxpayers a large amount of money. He stated that the County had

a massive budget of over \$1 billion and felt that the County should use that buying power to negotiate any and all leases and contracts. He stated they had a tremendous financial impact on the County, and that he believed over 80 percent of that amount was salary and wages for employees. He added that those employees, in turn, spent their money locally on their dentists, doctors, goods, and services. He stated they had a significant financial impact on the County and that they should use that to benefit the people who actually pay the bills, which he clarified were their constituents. He commended the staffer for negotiating that lease and saving the County a large amount of money in that case, which was a library at a center. He stated the County was the anchor tenant of the library and center. He explained that the center's owner received rent from the County and could pay property taxes and so on.

On motion by Commissioner Herman, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be approved.

26-0225 **AGENDA ITEM 12** Recommendation to approve Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement for Professional Consulting Services between Collaborative Design Studio and Washoe County to provide final architectural design, permitting, and construction administration services in support of the Washoe County Registrar of Voters Leased Space Tenant Improvements Phase 2 Project [in the amount of \$193,682.00 for a total contract amount of \$339,882.00]. This request for amendment allows for the required additional design, permitting and engineering support during construction. The Washoe County Registrar of Voters is located at 6550 Longley Lane, Reno, Nevada. Community Services. (Commission District 2.)

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 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be approved.

26-0226 **AGENDA ITEM 13** Information and acknowledgement of receipt by the Board of County Commissioners of contracts and purchases that have exceeded or are expected to exceed [\$300,000] that may include services and supplies for all County departments. Pursuant to Washoe County Code 15.490, the purchasing and contracts manager is authorized, subject to the provisions of Washoe County Code and the applicable provision of state law, to approve purchases and contracts up to [\$300,000]. As a matter of best practices, the purchasing and contracts manager will keep the Board of County Commissioners informed of all contracts and purchases for all county departments that have been previously approved that have exceeded or are expected to exceed the threshold amount. For this report, there are no vendor purchases in the aggregate amount of known expenditures that will

exceed the \$300,000 reporting threshold that have not previously been acknowledged by the Board. Comptroller. (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 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 13 be acknowledged.

26-0227 **AGENDA ITEM 14** Recommendation to approve Intrastate Interlocal Contract between Public Agencies, the County of Washoe, Second Judicial District Court and the State of Nevada, Department of Human Services and Division of Social Services, in the total amount of [\$1,654,818 estimated at \$401,978 for FY27, \$409,490 for FY28, \$417,559 for FY29 and \$425,791 for FY30], reimbursed through federal Title IV-D funds (no match required), for the purpose of enforcing child support obligations, locating non-custodial parents, establishing paternity, obtaining child support and adjusting support orders, effective July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2030. District Court. (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 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 14 be approved. The Interlocal Agreement pertinent to this item is attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

26-0228 **AGENDA ITEM 15** Recommendation to approve the use of General Fund Contingency in the total amount of [\$1,117,605] for Fiscal Year 2026 in accordance with Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 354.598005 to increase expenditure authority due to unbudgeted impacts of the 2025 Nevada Legislature (83rd Legislature) to support 1.) All Elected Officials' department budgets in the amount of [\$1,017,605] due to Elected Officials' salary adjustments per Senate Bill 116 (58116) and; 2.) Manager's Office - Government Affairs budget in the amount of [\$100,000] for one-time non-personnel expenditures associated with Assembly Bill 333 (AB333) which transferred the control of the Reno Livestock Event Center to the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA); and direct Finance to make the appropriate cross-functional budget appropriation transfers. [Total fiscal year 2026 impact \$1,117,605; net fiscal impact \$-0-]. Finance. (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 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 15 be approved and directed.

26-0229 **AGENDA ITEM 17** Recommendation to approve the reimbursement of costs incurred by the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, and Washoe County for expenses related to and in support of the Enhanced 911 Emergency Response System and portable event recording devices as recommended by the 911 Emergency Response Advisory Committee on January 15, 2026, and March 19, 2026, in an amount not to exceed [\$1,965,143.73] as specified within the adopted Enhanced 911 Fund's operating budget. Technology 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 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 17 be approved.

26-0230 **AGENDA ITEM 9** Recommendation that the Board of County Commissioners acknowledge receipt of the Registrar of Voters' selection of Early Voting and Election Day polling locations and schedule for the 2026 Primary Election, pursuant to NRS 293.3561(2)(b). Voters. (All Commission Districts.)

County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas noted that, even though there were staff members from the Registrar of Voters (ROV) Office in attendance, she wanted to clarify that the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) stated that, at a meeting of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), the Board was to be informed of the site selected for a polling location. She expressed that if members of the public were thinking this was the opportunity to debate those locations, that opportunity had passed. She stated that the Commissioners had been very involved in those locations, and clarified that, even though the motion was up for action, the day's proceedings were simply an acknowledgment of the sites already selected. She stated they had staff to answer any questions and run through the locations. She introduced ROV Andrew McDonald and Deputy ROV Reginald Greer.

Chair Andriola thanked them for their hard work.

Mr. McDonald announced he would provide handouts. He introduced himself and stated that he was before the Board to answer any questions they had or to present notes he had prepared.

Chair Andriola asked the Board if they had any questions. She stated that it would be helpful for Mr. McDonald to explain some of the challenges his office had faced and how they had overcome them. She noted that Mr. Greer was shaking his head and acknowledged that he may also have been part of those challenges. Chair Andriola thought

it would be helpful for everyone to understand the process they went through and asked Mr. McDonald to speak about it.

Mr. McDonald began by clarifying that the provided handouts were for early voting and Election Day vote centers with corresponding numbers on the map for easy reference. He stated it was the same map that would be included in the sample ballot booklet going out on April 23 for uniformed and overseas citizens and out-of-state voters, as well as in the in-state sample ballot booklet that would begin being mailed on May 20 or earlier. He stated the primary would have 22 early voting locations. Most, he noted, would be open from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. He explained that 15 of those early voting locations were the same as in the general election, and that seven new vote centers would be opened for the primary, along with one new ballot drop box at the Cares Campus. He stated that 19 of the 22 early voting locations would transition to Election Day vote centers, and two of the three mail ballot drop boxes would also transition to Election Day. He added that on Election Day, 50 Election Day vote centers would be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., or until the last voter in line at that time had voted. He noted that 44 of the vote centers were the same from the 2024 general election, and that six were new, with two new drop boxes for Election Day at the Cares Campus and in the Summerset Senior Living Facility. He explained that 26 of the 50 vote centers were provided by the Washoe County School District (WCSD). He thanked the school district for helping.

Mr. McDonald noted that six Washoe County libraries were also helping, which he said proved that the library served the community in multiple ways. He stated that Washoe County was providing 11 vote centers for the election season. He noted they would have one super center at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center, with 30 ballot-marking devices (BMDs). He offered a special thanks to Chair Andriola for negotiating down the \$4,300 cost to zero, making it absolutely free for his department. He thanked her for the cost avoidance, which enabled his office to use those funds for other purposes.

Mr. McDonald appreciated that all mail ballot drop box-only locations would be staffed with bipartisan teams of three individuals during open hours and locked when not in use. He stated that all mail ballots were received at the end of the day and would be returned to headquarters.

Mr. McDonald stated that all other mail drop boxes were located within the Washoe County vote centers, which were also staffed with bipartisan teams. He reiterated that all mail ballots were removed and brought back to headquarters at the end of the day.

Mr. McDonald noted that all contracts expired after the 2024 general election, so his office had been working hard to secure new contracts. He stated they also had a settlement agreement with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and that they needed to focus on getting those centers that were accessible. He noted they went through a heat map and provided many types of data to review and pull to ensure they were meeting community needs. He admitted there were a few places that, likely due to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, they did not get to even though they wanted to, and that they would try to add that for November. He stated that they had difficulty with the 170-point DOJ

ADA checklist, which made it difficult to identify locations that were 100 percent ADA-compliant.

Mr. McDonald stated that his office had done its best but that, eventually, they had to find locations that were not ADA-compliant. He stated that, under Title II of the ADA, as long as he could implement an ADA-compliant curbside voting program, he would be compliant. He noted that was exactly what his office was doing. He stated it was the first ADA curbside voting program in the State of Nevada, and his office was proud of that. He added that, amid all that, his office would also be transitioning to BMDs for the upcoming primary. He explained that the State and Washoe County would move forward in that direction, with a tangible full-length ballot printed at the vote centers.

Mr. McDonald explained that what all this meant was that Washoe County elections were more modernized, more secure, and more accessible than ever before. He stated he was proud to go above and beyond, offering almost twice as many voting locations for Early Voting and Election Day as authorized by NRS. He explained that to find a list of those vote centers, one could simply visit Washoe.gov/votecenters, which was currently active. He mentioned that their e-sample ballot would be available on that website from April 25, along with the physical sample ballots, which would be mailed on May 20. He stated there would also be reference copies at every single vote center, with a few in English and a few in Spanish. He acknowledged there had been challenges, specifically around ADA compliance, and that they had done a lot of hard work in that regard. He mentioned that Mr. Greer had done amazing work by working with libraries, cities, recreation centers, officials, and more to secure voting locations.

Chair Andriola thanked him and appreciated his addressing the public comments. She asked him to repeat the information he had just conveyed one more time, so everyone would be clear on what had been stated.

Mr. McDonald restated that all mail ballot drop box-only locations were staffed with a bipartisan team of three individuals the entire time they were open. He explained that three was the right number because, in the event someone needed to go to the bathroom or take a break, there would always be two people present to ensure nothing suspicious was happening at that drop box.

Chair Andriola stated that if Alan Munson were still in attendance, she would like Mr. McDonald to speak with him if any questions remained. She also asked him to speak with Penny Brock and share information about the State and the Request for Proposals (RFP), explain their compliance, and how they followed the law. Mr. McDonald agreed.

Commissioner Hill thanked the Chair for negotiating the fee with the Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority (RSCVA), noting that the room tax in Northern Nevada remained very healthy, and she appreciated their being patriots. She suggested doing an award for them. She stated she knew they had spoken about doing an award for businesses and librarians and people who hosted the voting sites to generate excitement

and incentive for businesses to want to help in the future, because it was so tough when the County did not have publicly owned spaces in a number of areas, in addition to publicly-owned spaces that they were unable to make ADA compliant due to funds or timing. She knew that for the presidential election, they would really have to figure out solutions to ensure more people had opportunities to vote in person throughout Washoe County. She thought that after the upcoming election, the County might try to coordinate that patriot celebration or certifications to bring those businesses before the Board and celebrate them and perhaps generate some press around them, with the Board thanking them for stepping up, or perhaps communicating to other businesses that they needed to help the Board, as this was a representative democracy, which needed support from the entire community to be successful. She stated she knew the ROV had worked hard to find all of the locations, and she thought they had done a great job. She added that the heat maps had really informed how they all did their work, such as knowing who was going to those spots and how to ensure there were no lines. She appreciated their work and wanted to continue exploring how the Board could support them and ensure those people could help the County and lead the way.

Chair Andriola added that the fee negotiation discussion with the RSCVA had been a very heartfelt discussion about their patriotic role. She noted that the location was so central and there was ample parking. She thought that as they saw other locations emerge, it would hopefully create a domino effect, and the Board could celebrate their generosity.

Mr. McDonald stated that they lost the Reno Town Mall as a vote center due to ADA issues, which he felt made little sense.

Chair Andriola added that having the Reno-Sparks Convention Center on Election Day and turning it into a super center was very important. She thanked Mr. McDonald for starting that.

Commissioner Clark stated he would like to get some answers on the record regarding the removal of individuals from the rolls. He asked how many people were removed from the rolls for lack of participation. He stated that approximately two years ago, they had over 40,000 ballots returned due to the inability to deliver to the addresses, and he wanted to find out more about that. He felt the ROV was on track for a clean roll, and he said they appreciated that at the Treasurer's and Assessor's Offices. He requested an update on how accurate the rolls would be for the upcoming election.

Mr. McDonald stated they had done and continued to do list maintenance. He stated it was the number one priority in his department. He admitted he did not have the exact numbers at that moment, but that approximately 72,000 to 75,000 people had been canceled or inactivated since he was appointed. He stated that it was roughly 15 percent or so of Washoe County's voter rolls, which was quite extensive. He clarified that those voters had not taken action to vote in the presidential primary or general election. So, he explained, if they were already inactivated, they could cancel them, and alternatively, if they did not vote, they were now able to inactivate them. He stated there were specific rules

around the Native American Voting Rights Act (NAVRA) 33-day process, and that if voters did not take action, the ROV would send out cards, which would come back, triggering the clock to inactivate those voters. So, he added, they were extremely confident, though he noted it would never be zero ballots coming back because Washoe County was a very transitional county. He stated they performed about 300 to 500 updates a day on the voter registration system, and that at the close of registration, they did their best to get the roll as clean as possible. But he noted that, from that point forward, people would be coming in and out of the County, so some mail-in ballots would come back undeliverable, but not 22,000-plus. He was hopeful the number would be between 2,000 and 5,000. He stated he knew he was on record saying that, but that he really did hope they were as clean as possible going into the election.

Commissioner Clark said that was a great improvement and that clean voter rolls were a foundational basis for the entire election. He asked if somebody was removed and still wanted to participate, what the cutoff time for that was, and how they got put back on the rolls.

Mr. McDonald stated that if they were inactivated after the close of the roll, the individual would have to go to a vote center to update their registration and vote, though they would not receive the mail ballot because they were inactivated. He stated that the last day to receive the mail ballot was approximately May 26, the last day to mail a sample ballot was May 21, and the last day to mail in-state ballots was May 11. He stated he did not know the out-of-state date but would get back to Commissioner Clark.

Commissioner Clark asked if the dates would be posted on the ROV website and if the information would be available for people to research. Mr. McDonald affirmed they would.

Penny Brock displayed the 2026 ROV list of Primary Early Voting Locations, noting that many Washoe County voters were concerned about the three drop box locations. No copy was submitted for the public record. She alleged that Governor Joe Lombardo vetoed a bill in the previous session introduced by Democrats that would have established standalone drop box locations. She suggested the reason was that in Nevada, a drop box location could only be at a polling place. She stated that the Cares Campus was not a polling place, nor were the other two locations the ROV had suggested. She stated the law was being ignored. She felt the ROV-suggested locations were very serious, and that one of the biggest issues voters had was with the Cares Campus location. She stated that the Cares Campus was being managed by former Washoe County Manager Eric Brown, who introduced mail-in ballot drop boxes, Dominion Voting Systems, and more to the County. She alleged voters were concerned about the Cares Campus for many reasons. She asked the Commissioners to follow the law and remove the drop box locations. She added that if the Save America Act passed in the Senate, there would be no more drop boxes or mail-in ballots. She stated that, as a backup, President Donald Trump had issued an Executive Order (EO) in the prior weeks, declaring the elections a national emergency. She stated that if the Senate did not pass the Save America Act, the EO would kick in. She felt that President Trump was saying that if a State or County did not follow the Save

America Act or the EO, they would lose their federal funding. She stated she was watching what was happening closely in Washington, D.C., and that 80 percent of Americans wanted the Save America Act passed. She felt that Nevada was no different, because they wanted fair, honest, transparent, and secure elections. She alleged that Washoe County currently did not have transparent, secure, fair, and honest elections, as she covered earlier in her remarks. She wondered why not. She asked the Board to vote against the drop boxes, or to remove them from their motion, and not have the standalone drop boxes on their list. She added that there were no security cameras at those drop boxes.

Maureen Cunha was not present when called to speak.

Cynthia Perine stated that she had concerns about the drop boxes, especially the one at the Cares Campus. She acknowledged that managing the Cares Campus was a tremendously difficult job, but that certain failures in internal controls at the location had been well documented. She suggested that failure of residents to consistently sign in and out was one issue, and the continued use of illegal drugs was another. She stated that voters' concern was that the drop boxes were not connected to a polling location, which meant they could not ensure their security. She wondered if it was unreasonable to question the placement of drop boxes at potentially risky locations. She alleged there was a crisis of confidence in the United States (US) over election integrity, and that the previous public comment speaker mentioned the Save America Act, which would require proof of citizenship and voter identification at the polls. She stated she was concerned that adding drop boxes would continue to undermine public confidence in the Washoe County election system, and that the Governor had vetoed Assembly Bill (AB) 306, which would have stopped extra drop boxes throughout the State. She alleged the ROV stated there were more than twice as many vote centers available for the upcoming election season, so she felt there might be no need for the additional unmanned drop boxes. She urged the Board to consider its constituents rationally. She felt it was not a big ask and that constituents often came before the Board, but their concerns were sometimes ignored. She stated that if the Board could consider dropping the drop boxes, then she was certain their voting constituents would appreciate it.

Maureen Cunha displayed a document, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She stated she lived in Commissioner Hill's district, and was before the Board regarding the drop box issues to promote trust in the elections. She stated she asked the County Commission to remove all three ballot drop box locations, which she alleged were not in compliance with Nevada State law. She stated her document, which was given to each of the Commissioners, showed she had researched Nevada State law. She asked the Board to remove the drop box from the Cares Campus, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Smoke Shop, and the Somerset Senior Living facility. She noted those locations were listed at the bottom of both the 2026 Primary Early Voting Locations list and the 2026 Primary Election Day Locations list. She alleged the locations were not secure and that they were not polling places.

Trista Gomez stated that she attended a recent debate among Commission District 2 candidates, during which the candidates spoke about why they wanted to be a

Commissioner and what they considered the most important issues. She recounted that one of the candidates said they needed to restore trust between the public and elected officials. She noted that this person was the only candidate to mention that. She felt this was a very good goal. She stated she heard CM Thomas say that the voting locations had already been determined and that it was long past time to make the decision. But, she noted, the concerns citizens had about drop boxes in general, as well as the specific concerns about the drop box at the Cares Campus, were not invalid. She stated they were, in fact, incredibly valid concerns. She alleged the Cares Campus contained a large number of people not from Washoe County, and that many were not from Nevada. She stated she had picked up two individuals from other states on local freeways, put them in the back of her truck, including one time during a snowstorm, and brought them to the Cares Campus. She alleged that she knew people were coming to Washoe County from other places and that, in good faith and goodwill, it would be prudent to address this concern in advance. She could not imagine that the Board did not expect this to be a concern. She predicted there would be some reservations about having a drop box near a location with a large number of people not from the area. She felt this would not have been a surprise to the Board. Referring to the prior public commenters, she stated that for them, all of this was nonnegotiable. She reiterated that they were asking for it to be considered and that it was a valid concern. She felt that this would significantly bolster public trust and the relationship between public leaders and the public. She alleged there were very real reservations about well-documented problems.

Commissioner Clark stated that this was a major concern for citizens and asked Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Michael Large to weigh in, but CDDA Large needed to conduct some research first. He expressed that he wanted Mr. McDonald to return and address the concerns raised in public comment, specifically regarding the Governor's ruling on drop boxes and how they intended to ensure only legal residents could use them, particularly at the Cares Campus.

Mr. McDonald thanked Commissioner Clark for the question and clarified that what the Governor vetoed were requirements to establish additional drop boxes between Early Voting and Election Day. He noted that it did not cover whether the ROV could provide more drop boxes for the election itself. He added that the second part of his response to Commissioner Clark's questions was that the ROV staffed the drop boxes with bipartisan teams. He noted the boxes were inside the facilities, not outside, which meant they were not left unattended on a sidewalk, as an example. He added that the drop boxes were locked at the end of the shift. He pointed out that if observers wanted to observe the mail ballot drop boxes, the ROV was doing the right thing and that they welcomed observers. He mentioned the Cares Campus facility and stated that Mr. Greer would address the matter, as he had negotiated the contract with the facility and could better speak to the need to move the drop box to make the public feel more at ease.

Mr. Greer stated that a drop box must be in a publicly accessible place, and the current plan was to place it at the entrance to the Cares Campus facility. He stated that on the campus was a mailroom facility and the main facility itself, which featured sliding doors. He noted that the current plan was to lock one of the sliding doors to create a

dedicated drop box area so that any member of the public could drop off a ballot. He added that, as Mr. McDonald had explained, the drop box would be staffed and would not be behind security, where only Cares Campus attendees could vote; instead, it would be accessible to the public.

Commissioner Clark stated that he was not familiar with the security at the Cares Campus and asked Mr. Greer to inform the Board about the security cameras and whether the drop box would be filmed for public record. He asked whether citizens concerned about security could receive copies of videos of the drop boxes in use.

Mr. Greer stated that he did not know the specifics, but that there would be a significant security presence at the front next to where the drop box would be, including a metal detector, a check-in desk, and Washoe County security, which he thought was Allied Universal. He stated he was not certain about the security cameras. He noted that not every facility had a camera, and that most locations were not simply handing over video of every drop box throughout the County. He acknowledged that the Cares Campus drop box was a controversial topic, and that it was understandable, and he understood some of the concern. He reiterated what Mr. McDonald had said, that individuals had to be registered voters to receive a ballot in the first place. So, he noted, it was not as if random ballots would be appearing in the Cares Campus drop box.

Commissioner Clark stated that he was only trying to quell public distrust. He added that the Cares Campus was different from other facilities in that it was a County facility. He asked CM Thomas to explain the security measures in place there, as he was unaware of them.

CM Thomas confirmed she had pulled up the security camera footage and saw the cameras that were being referred to on the first floor of the Welcome Center. She noted there was additional security at the facility, and that the item to note was that the area would be staffed for the drop box. She added that, at last check, the percentage of Cares Campus residents from out of town averaged 16 percent. She stated that a number of local residents lived at the facility and in the neighboring areas, including the weekly motels, and might not have access to transportation. She expressed that they had wanted to find a central location for individuals living in the surrounding neighborhoods as well, and that she felt the Cares Campus location offered that. She stated they had heard the community's concerns but wanted to ensure that every community member living in the area could access the ballot boxes. She stated that if an individual was coming from out of town, they probably were not receiving a mail-in ballot. She felt there was more they could learn, but that some security provisions were in place, and that they would be watching it closely.

Commissioner Clark stated he wanted to get that information on the public record to ensure that everyone with concerns could better understand what was being done. He expressed that every citizen should have the opportunity to vote. He announced that he was on the side of the registered voters. He referred to citizens' concerns and felt that if the Board could quell public mistrust, everyone would be better off.

CDDA Large addressed Commissioner Clark's question about the drop box locations and clarified that his office worked in conjunction with the ROV on a daily basis to ensure voting sites were compliant with the law. He stated they were also tracking all potential legislation and litigation regarding voting. He stated that the DA's Office was communicating daily with the ROV to ensure compliance with federal and local requirements.

Commissioner Clark thanked him for the clarification.

Commissioner Herman stated that Mr. McDonald had heard the public commenters and that she shared their concerns. She felt that all the public commenters had concerns about the elections. She stated she knew Washoe County was working towards following the laws, rules, and regulations issued by Washington, D.C. She stated she could not accept what Mr. McDonald was telling her because there was a difference between what he was proposing and what she was hearing from the public. She stated that after hearing from the public, Mr. McDonald would return to his office and double-check that he was complying with the law in every respect.

Chair Andriola asked for clarification on a few things. She noted that AB 306 was vetoed by Governor Lombardo, which was a fact. She noted that Mr. McDonald raised a point about the specific provisions and why the bill was vetoed. She asked Mr. McDonald to speak on that matter and address the differences between AB 306 and what he was proposing.

Mr. McDonald stated that he tried to be as prepared as possible for any questions that might arise at the Board of County Commissioners' (BCC) meetings, but that he did not have that information in front of him. He stated that the veto was specifically regarding adding additional locations after the close of early voting through the weekend and Monday until Election Day. He noted that the locations under discussion were, in fact, not added additional locations.

Chair Andriola noted that there were three drop box locations, but that two of them were not being addressed. She asked how the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Smoke Shop and the Summerset Senior Living locations differed from the Cares Campus location.

Mr. McDonald stated that, regarding the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Smoke Shop location, if the Native American tribes asked for something regarding voting, the ROV must provide it. He noted it was very straightforward, and that was why they were providing a drop box at that location, which he said had been a long-standing drop-off location for many elections. He stated that during the previous election, the Summerset Senior Living location served some of that community because there were simply not many vote centers in that area. He stated that he had used that location for the first time in the prior general election. He stated that both locations were staffed the same and that the same rules applied to both, including locking the mail ballot drop boxes at the end of the day and the bipartisan teams of three.

Chair Andriola reiterated that those were not new locations and did not recall any requests in the last election to remove those two drop box locations. She asked if there were any identifiable concerns associated with those locations. Mr. McDonald replied that none had been brought to his attention. Chair Andriola expressed appreciation for Maureen Cunha's summary of Governor Lombardo's veto, noting that individuals may return a ballot on behalf of a voter under specific conditions and that, when a bill is vetoed, the entire bill is vetoed. So, she observed, if something was not right in one part, the entire thing might have to be vetoed. She felt that it was important to put on record how the legislative process worked. She noted that there could be one piece, even though the rest of the bill might be fine, that required a veto, and one could not simply pull out a single provision. She asked Mr. McDonald about the ROV deadlines, which she felt needed clarification because the Commissioners had a responsibility to follow the law, even if they did not agree with it. She asked whether they were confident in CDDA Large's statement that he was in constant communication with the ROV Office, the Secretary of State (SOS), and any other entity with legal authority over elections.

Mr. McDonald stated that that was absolutely correct.

Chair Andriola asked CDDA Large whether they could add a contingency to the motion that all locations, including the three ballot locations, comply with the law and provide the full security expected for any other requirement as dictated by State or Federal laws.

CDDA Large stated that the Board could make that motion and place contingencies on it. He referred back to what CM Thomas stated earlier: that the item being discussed was an informational item and that, by attending and providing the list of locations, the ROV had complied with Nevada State law. He noted that staff would continue to vet everything, but that if the Board felt more confident in making a motion that said they would continue to vet everything, then the Board had the power to make that motion.

Chair Andriola announced that this was what she would recommend, because she felt it was important to assure the public that they were following the law and that, if they did not, there were consequences in place. She alleged that the only thing that separated the Commissioners from judges was that the Commissioners did not wear robes. She stated the Commissioners had to follow the law. She felt that putting something in motion would reiterate their obligation. She announced she would ask to be considered in the motion, even though it was only statutory. She requested that Mr. McDonald return to provide the Board with clarifications on security and compliance with the law. She asked CM Thomas if she thought that would be helpful.

CM Thomas stated that the Board needed to move forward on the current item, if possible, but that they could have Mr. McDonald return. She noted that a statement was made that Nevada law did not allow polling locations or drop boxes outside polling locations. She clarified that Nevada law did not prohibit drop boxes outside of polling locations. She stated the law explicitly authorized, and in some cases required, ballot drop

boxes at polling locations and other approved locations, according to NRS Chapter 293. She referred to Mr. McDonald, who touched on the tribal requirements, and added that the County had to provide drop boxes at approved locations, including within Indian reservations, and that tribal requests were required per State law.

Mr. McDonald referred back to Commissioner Clark's initial question to him and clarified that the close of registration was on May 12. He explained that it was the final day a voter could register and receive a vote-by-mail ballot. After that, he noted, they would have to register to vote online or in person, and then come to a vote center to cast their ballot.

Chair Andriola specified that a statement needed clarification: that the former CM was running the Cares Campus. She asked CM Thomas to address the topic.

CM Thomas stated that the claim was absolutely false. She noted that the campus was under the purview of Washoe County and that, through contract approval, Volunteers of America (VOA) served as the operator of that location. She stated there was leadership at that location that did not involve the former CM. She noted she was unable to determine his specific role, other than that it had something to do with strategy. She stated it was not correct that he was running the campus.

Chair Andriola announced that if that did happen, it should be brought to the Board's attention immediately.

CM Thomas noted that Mr. McDonald would be before the Board again on May 12.

Mr. McDonald announced that the ROV had to provide the SOS with their voting locations the day before. He noted they would eventually put those on their public website for the voters to see. He added that he had been hoping to receive approval to tell them they could proceed, and that they might even move forward without waiting for his official approval.

Commissioner Clark stated that he was thankful for the discussion from all parties, but that the key issue for him was his trust in the three nonpartisan observers and the security cameras. He felt everyone had to trust their fellow citizens, the three nonpartisan observers. He stated they had to put their faith in their neighbors and allow them to observe what was taking place. He asked who the observers should report to if they noted anything improper. He noted that if the County had impartial observers, they needed to trust them. He felt that three people were not going to come up with a scheme or conspiracy; at least, he did not think that would happen, and he would trust his fellow citizen-observers.

Chair Andriola noted that all citizen observers received training. She mentioned there was a concern that an individual from out of state could receive a ballot

and cast it. She noted that a verification process was in place and asked whether, in the scenario she described, it would be caught.

Mr. McDonald replied that it would absolutely be caught. He noted that even if a person were to obtain another person's ballot, sign it, and cast it, the ballot would be rejected by automatic signature verification (ASV) during sorting. He added that if it was not rejected at that step, it would subsequently be rejected by the bipartisan teams of two that would review the signature and every single reference signature. He mentioned that if someone had been a voter for the last 20 years, the teams would check every single signature on that person's file, and that if the signature did not match, they would send a cure letter to that voter. If the voter did not cure, he continued, it would be obvious that the wrong ballot was cast, and the ROV would never open that ballot or extract that vote.

Chair Andriola felt it was important that everyone understood there was a process for eligibility in various ways. She commended Mr. McDonald, CM Thomas, and the entire team for ensuring the elections were fair, equitable, and transparent. She felt the ROV team had done a good job of beginning to fix the broken trust in Washoe County. She noted there was more to do to further build that trust and transparency, including the Center for Internet Security and beyond. She hoped anyone with concerns would reach out to the ROV Office, because it would be helpful for them to hear what was really happening and get the facts from the real experts, and even the legal teams. She stated they were all in the customer service business. She felt that elections were the most important thing they all did. She expressed that the current ROV team was a refreshing change from prior teams.

Chair Andriola moved to acknowledge the Agenda Item, with the amendment she suggested regarding requirements to follow all local, federal, and state laws where applicable.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Clark, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 9 be acknowledged, with the requested amendments.

26-0231 **AGENDA ITEM 11** Introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code) within Article 302, Allowed Uses and Article 406, Building Placement Standards, and creating Article 403, Residential Uses in Commercial Regulatory Zones, to allow multi-family residential use types in commercial regulatory zones with the application of multi-family development standards, to establish standards for mixed-use including a minimum percentage for commercial use-type square footage, a maximum square foot percentage for civic use-types, site development standards for parking, landscaping and other similar standards, a height restriction, and a requirement for municipal water and waste-water services; and all matters necessarily connected therewith and pertaining thereto. And if supported, set a public hearing for the second reading and possible adoption of the ordinance for May 12, 2026. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for Bill No. 1946.

Senior Planner (Dr.) Eric Young conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: WDCA25-0005 (Residential in Commercial Zoning); Background (3 slides); Summary of Proposed Standards; Proposed Standards (2 slides); Motion; Thank you.

Dr. Young reviewed the first slide, titled *Background*, and said the Board would likely recognize the proposal as one of several housing-related amendments the Planning Department had been working on for some time. He mentioned that the proposal was in response to Washoe County's strategic effort to increase the availability and affordability of diverse housing types. He indicated that the Envision Washoe County 2040 Master Plan suggested the housing type. He noted that a series of housing Code amendments had already been presented to the Board and were available on the Master Plan implementation webpage. He reviewed the second slide titled *Background* and said the amendment to allow multifamily uses and commercial areas was consistent with the Master Plan. He added that the Master Plan included language suggesting that the zoning Code should be more flexible.

Dr. Young reviewed the third slide titled *Background* and said that although the Planning Department had been pursuing a zoning amendment, as directed by the Board during the legislative session, the project was paused pending legislative action. He noted that the Legislature subsequently passed Assembly Bill (AB) 241, which required all Nevada jurisdictions to allow by-right multifamily development in commercial zoning districts. He explained that the legislation provided specific direction and permitted mixed-use development for both residential and commercial purposes.

Dr. Young reviewed the slide titled *Summary of Proposed Standards* and said that densities needed to be established, adding that previously, only neighborhood commercial was available. He noted that the numbers proposed, based on a survey, were nine for neighborhood commercial and 14 for general and tourist commercial. He mentioned that it was determined that the high-density suburban areas were consistent with the neighborhood commercial intensity, and that the low-density urban areas were consistent with general commercial and tourist commercial. He shared that the maximum height for residential mixed-use projects would be 35 feet (ft), without a special use permit (SUP), but the general commercial and tourist commercial heights were quite high and inconsistent with residential zones that already existed.

Dr. Young reviewed the first slide titled *Proposed Standards* and said it reflected that the Code was established to allow by-right development. He noted that the Code, prior to the legislative action, allowed five units per acre in a neighborhood commercial with a SUP. He indicated that the Planning Department was exploring ways to expand that concept to the other zoning districts, but after the legislative session, it was required to make the uses allowed in those districts. He reviewed the second slide titled *Proposed Standards* and said it was an example of how density and Code were established. He explained that the intent was to match existing zoning districts, low-density urban, and

high-density suburban, as somewhat equal or compatible intensities of use. He noted that the Legislature subsequently passed AB 241, which required all Nevada jurisdictions to allow by-right multifamily development in commercial zoning districts. He explained that the legislation provided specific direction and allowed mixed-use development for both residential and commercial purposes.

Commissioner Hill said that Dr. Young had previously assisted with the Tahoe Area Plan (TAP) and asked whether the TAP already permitted mixed-use or would need to be amended. Dr. Young commented that the Lake Tahoe Basin (the Basin) was excluded from the legislation that he mentioned. He indicated that the commercial zoning that existed in Washoe County's part of the Basin was already mixed-use. He pointed out that there was no exclusively commercial zoning and added that where intensive commercial use was allowed, it also included multi-family use. Commissioner Hill thought there was an issue with developers and setbacks in the TAP, but said she would discuss that with Dr. Young at a later time. She shared her excitement that the TAP would not need to be amended. She expressed her support for the policy enacted by the legislature, which allowed additional housing. She cautioned that for tax purposes, residential housing paid 3 percent higher, and commercial was 9 percent higher. She mentioned that although her statement was not related to the item under discussion, she wanted to emphasize the potential impact on Washoe County revenues if the current tax system was not addressed.

Chair Andriola said it was interesting that AB 241 mandated that all counties comply not only with the mixed-use, but also with the residential, commercial, and civic uses. Dr. Young responded that civic uses were not part of the legislation. He indicated that after the staff reviewed the use tables and the allowed commercial uses, they discovered that many civic uses could be appropriate. He shared that staff chose to include civic uses as an opportunity for landowners in case someone requested them, and that the development Code would not need to be amended.

Chair Andriola thanked Dr. Young for the forward thinking.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Bill No. 1946 was introduced by Commissioner Hill, and a legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

12:47 p.m. **The Board recessed.**

1:00 p.m. **The Board reconvened with Vice Chair Garcia absent.**

26-0232 **AGENDA ITEM 16** Recommendation to acknowledge status report and possible direction to staff on the County Manager's recommended Fiscal Year 2027 Budget (July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027) with estimated appropriations of approximately [\$1,133,146,149] which incorporates Board priorities of funding for existing contractual obligations, supplies, utilities, personnel costs, capital improvements and operations, and

maintaining the County's assets and infrastructure needs, and direct the County Manager to return to the Board of County Commission with the certified Tentative and Final Budget for adoption at a public hearing to be scheduled on May 19, 2026. Manager's office. (All Commission Districts.)

Budget Division Director Lori Cooke conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Fiscal Year 2027 Budget; Agenda; FY 2027 Financial Outlook and Recommended Budget; Fiscal Year 2027 Outlook: What's Changed???: What Steps Have We Taken?; Fiscal Year 2027 Manager's Recommendations; General Considerations; Fiscal Year 2027 Outlook; Fiscal Year 2027 Total Budget Appropriations; FY 2027 Financial Outlook and Recommended Budget – General Fund; General Fund Highlights; Roads Fund; Untitled Pavement Images; General Considerations – Sustainability; Fiscal Year 2027 - General Fund Revenues/Sources - \$582.7 Million; Fiscal Year 2027 - General Fund Appropriations - \$588.4 Million; General Fund Appropriation Breakout Per Dollar; FY 2027 Recommended Budget – Other Funds; Fiscal Year 2027 Other Governmental Funds; Capital Improvement Highlights – Total \$47.6M; Capital Improvement Highlights – New Projects; Proprietary Funds – Totaling \$157 Million; Budget Summary - \$1.13B over 28 Funds; Next Steps; Thank you; Appendix/Additional Information; General Fund Forecast Assumptions; Fiscal Year 2027 Total Governmental Fund Appropriations - \$976 Million - By Function and Department (2 slides); Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund Sources & Uses – Tentative (2 slides); General Fund Expenditures, by Type; General Fund Appropriation Summary by Type and Function; Other Governmental Funds – Sources Totaling \$356 Million; Other Governmental Funds – Uses Totaling \$388 Million; Property Taxes – Overview.

Ms. Cooke explained that she would be reviewing the tentative and final budgets for fiscal year (FY) 2027. She reported that the tentative FY 2027 budget must be submitted to the State of Nevada by April 15 each year, which would provide another opportunity for discussion and direction on the matter. She explained that the final budget for FY 2027 needed to be reported to the State of Nevada on May 19, 2026. She displayed the slide titled *FY 2027 Financial Outlook and Recommended Budget* and explained that FY 2027 spanned from July 1, 2026, until June 30, 2027. She showed the *Fiscal Year 2027 Outlook: What's Changed???* slide and explained that it contained very similar information to that which had been presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) throughout the previous few months. She reported that the majority of the information on the slide had been provided during the BCC's January 27, 2026, budget workshop focusing on updates on financial matters from both a national and local economic perspective, which she noted had changed since then. She reported that staff had received information released the previous week on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), also known as inflation. She explained that the CPI had increased from 2.4 to 3.3 percent, with most of that increase attributed to energy prices. She referred to the second-to-last item listed on the slide, which was related to impacts from the escalating conflict in the Middle East, noting that such events had been the primary driver of the rise in energy costs. She reported that the food index remained unchanged and was the second core inflationary factor, indicating that those metrics had remained relatively contained. She acknowledged that when oil and gas prices rose, other costs would increase, affecting transportation, food, and other goods. She noted that such

costs had increased significantly due to rising energy prices, which had pushed overall inflation higher.

Ms. Cooke recalled describing the United States (US) Federal Reserve's federal funds overnight rate during the workshop meeting in January. She noted that the long-term rates did not always follow changes in the overnight rate, which appeared steady. She acknowledged that the likelihood of the federal funds rate changing or declining as it had in the past was unclear, with the next meeting of the Federal Reserve Board scheduled for the end of April. She explained that the federal funds rate was measured in *basis points*, with 25 basis points equaling 0.25 percent. She posed a hypothetical question by noting that, if there had been a 50-point reduction, it would represent a 0.5 percent decrease. She stated that it was unclear what would happen at the upcoming Federal Reserve Board meeting, given current inflation and unemployment data. She reported that the Federal Reserve had yet to make any additional rate decreases, which meant the Federal Reserve Board had not increased the US Gross Domestic Product (GDP). She acknowledged that such news had been provided during the presentation she gave before the BCC in March and reiterated that staff had not received any information indicating that those statistics had changed. She noted that real GDP increased by 0.7 percent, revised from the initial 1.4 percent, which she described as a significant decline attributed to various factors in the previous fourth quarter. She stated that many analysts had proposed that there were many impacts of the government shutdown. She noted that the national unemployment rate in March of 2026 was 4.3 percent, which was a statistic that had been released the previous week. She noted that the labor market had shown signs of a low-hiring, low-firing environment. She reported that the Nevada unemployment rate was higher than Washoe County's, a trend that had persisted for a long time. She acknowledged that the unemployment rate in Washoe County was slightly higher than the national rate. She explained that some of the key factors for such an occurrence had been provided by the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) report on seasonal and structural unemployment. She noted that she had discussed the persistent discrepancy between job seekers' skills and the available jobs the year prior. She explained that much of that occurrence was driven by technology-related positions or jobs available in different skill sets. She acknowledged that the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) system was trying to address that disparity, but the impacts were still being experienced.

Ms. Cooke noted that the Supreme Court's ruling on tariffs would continue to work its way through the court system, with the results and potential for refunds currently unknown. She opined that the most prominent news was the growing conflict in the Middle East and its impact on both national and local economies. She reported that the rate of property tax (p-tax) growth was slowing, which she intended to discuss in more detail in her slide on the County's five-year forecast. She explained that, based on data from previous years, a conservative estimate for FY 2027, and pro forma figures from the State, staff anticipated an increase of approximately 6.5 percent. She explained that the Treasurer's and Assessor's Offices compiled information that would eventually be submitted to the State, which would then transfer those figures to create its pro forma. She explained that the State would centrally assess those details and would provide Washoe County with the net proceeds of mining. She reported that a new development rate would

enter the tax rolls at 100 percent with no abatement, resulting in an estimated 5.2 percent increase to p-tax. She stated that such an increase not only impacted the available resources for FY 2027 but also the budgetary forecast for later years. She emphasized that staff wanted estimates to be as accurate as possible. She acknowledged that the increase in p-tax was lower than in previous years, rather than remaining flat, as was also the case with the rate of consolidated tax (c-tax) growth. She reported that during the COVID-19 (C19) pandemic, c-tax was nearly double digits in revenue percentage and was the reason staff anticipated continued growth at previous rates, though she acknowledged that c-tax growth rates had normalized since the C19 pandemic. She explained that the details she had shared about p-tax and c-tax growth rates provided context for staff's recommendations and forecasts.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *What Steps Have We Taken?* slide. She explained that the County had begun work on certain budget-related efforts, some of which had been implemented recently, while others had shown impacts after being instituted a decade prior. She described the picture on the right side of the slide as the loneliest road in America, US Route 50, which showed the road running both ahead of and behind the vehicle in the image. She emphasized that the County had taken actions to attempt to become more streamlined and efficient while saving funds. She reported that the Community Services Department (CSD) used to comprise five separate departments, each with its own leadership. She explained that she had conducted a management structure analysis before and after the combination of those departments and found that the change in management structure had saved the County \$2 million annually. She acknowledged that certain departments had activities that were more likely to facilitate such a change by employing alternative means to address needs, such as technology. She referred to the information listed on the slide regarding the Human Services Agency (HSA) and recalled that in 2016, following the retirement of the former Director of Senior Services, that position was integrated into the HSA rather than remaining a separate department. She noted that the activities overseen by that role had since been transferred to a single department rather than being performed by two separate divisions. She reported that in September of 2023, Housing and Homeless Services was also absorbed into the HSA from the Office of the County Manager (OCM). She explained that the HSA's management structure had not expanded following those departmental changes, allowing the creation of an entirely new regional initiative without increasing the number of management positions.

Ms. Cooke referred to the next item listed on the *What Steps Have We Taken?* slide, noting that staff had taken steps for reorganization, reallocation, and departments being dissolved. She stated that most recently, the Department of Alternative Sentencing (DAS) activities had been reallocated to other supporting departments, including the courts, the HSA, and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO). She noted that the Board had previously voted to abolish the Incline Village Constable office and had investigated other actions, such as transferring the County's golf operations to other operators and divesting water resources by allocating that task to the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) in 2015 or 2016. She explained that there were several other divisional examples of the reorganization, reallocation, and dissolution efforts. She stated that continuous personnel improvement was expected of the County.

She noted that there was no hard hiring freeze in place, but departments were encouraged to voluntarily hold vacant positions to offset expenses. She noted that one department in particular, which would be highlighted during the meeting, served as an example for such an action, which was always appreciated. She explained that departments would hold positions vacant after reviewing their organizational structure to determine whether they could employ contractual or temporary work and possibly identify new classifications to best deliver service. She noted that those departmental actions were not required by any specific instructions mandating them, but rather were examples of what certain departments had chosen to do. She noted that the personnel topic included discussions of personnel growth. She stated that she would provide additional details in the presentation she would give for the final budget. She reported that impacts on personnel had been experienced since FY 2008, which was considered to be before the 2008 Great Recession and the increase in p-tax abatement, implemented due to the detrimental impacts of declining property values. She explained that the FY 2027 certified demographer population count in Washoe County showed 110,000 more citizens in the County than in FY 2008, representing a 27 percent increase. She noted that Washoe County had 16 fewer full-time equivalents (FTEs) in FY 2027 than in FY 2008, despite an increase in residents, which she described as staggering. She noted that there had been many discussions about whether the population increase was comprised primarily of seniors or vulnerable individuals. She explained that the County provided services to those individuals through its departments, referral services, collaboration with the State of Nevada's agencies, and community partners, which reinforced the other ongoing efforts of realignment, reorganization, and consideration of departmental structure.

Ms. Cooke stated that there was an overlap between technology and process improvements. She explained that the County had made advancements in remote services due to increased opportunities for online engagement through payment submissions, permit applications, and online appointments. She explained that the County had multiple case management systems for its judicial function and had employed automation, robotics, and artificial intelligence (AI) where possible. She reported that a department had researched using a product or technology solution to read reports and automate tasks previously performed manually by humans. She noted that such an action was associated with maximizing resources. She stated that even with a flat budget, if more needed to be done with those funds, it would feel like an overall decrease in the budget. She reiterated the County's focus on expanded virtual engagement, noting that platforms such as Legistar and Zoom, as well as regional permits, had been utilized. She reported that the Technology Services (TS) department had completed preparing an application survey, which provided information about the departments using different applications and enabled staff to identify how to use that data to maximize process improvements. She explained that investigations into physical space improvements began in response to the 2008 Great Recession to identify ways the County could reduce costs associated with leased spaces and save money while maintaining the highest level of service to the public. She provided an example, noting that, while it was not necessarily a reduction in space, it was a change in space designed to best suit the Registrar of Voters (ROV) Office. She reported that the ROV Office was being relocated to a new warehouse that was soon to be completed. She explained that many similar examples were happening all the time, and she did not want to

disregard those instances, as they allowed departments to do work in areas with the best use and outcome.

Ms. Cooke continued to refer to the slide titled *What Steps Have We Taken?*. She stated that re-established infrastructure investments were a core strategic objective of the County. She noted that the topic encompassed more than what people often imagine when considering roads, as it also included technology and building infrastructure. She noted that the County's transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Improvements Fund was \$12.4 million for FY 2007, which she emphasized occurred prior to the 2008 Great Recession, while the base transfer between the same funds for FY 2026 was \$12.5 million. She stressed that it had taken the County approximately 20 years to return to the same rounded transfer amounts, without accounting for inflation. She noted that such occurrences were an aspect of the discussion surrounding the re-establishment of infrastructure investments. She referred to the listed step titled *Strengthened regional footprint* and noted its relation to her earlier comments regarding Housing and Homeless Services being absorbed by the County's HSA. She reported that the County had recently begun implementing the Project 25 (P25) public safety radio system, for which Washoe County served as the lead agency. She noted that the P25 radio system was included in the County's focus on infrastructure investments. She reported that Washoe County had already begun updating its radio systems before the P25 infrastructure change, but she clarified that the project was still ongoing because the equipment did not last forever and was costly. She noted that the County also had a regional Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Records Management System (RMS), the regional Accela Citizen Access (ACA) portal, and had extended some of its services to span beyond and within Northern Nevada, including the Washoe County Regional Medical Examiner's Office (WCRMEO), the WCSO Forensic Science Division crime lab, and behavioral health initiatives. She reported that staff had updated the budget process to include more collaboration and engagement. She opined that the process could always be improved and emphasized that the focus was on making more information accessible while ensuring more opportunities for discussion. She noted that the final item listed on the slide was associated with diversion investment growth. She explained that more detailed information on that topic would be presented at the BCC strategic workshop meeting scheduled for the following week.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *Fiscal Year 2027 Manager's Recommendations* slide, stating that she would not read the entire slide. She emphasized the need to balance resource allocation with current fiscal conditions while accounting for future commitments. She explained that the slide detailed a longer-range perspective on the recommended budget for FY 2027. She explained that the recommended budget needed to be balanced, as too many reductions made too early could require pursuing restorative efforts or potentially forgo a community investment, and if too few implementations were made in a timely manner, more severe measures might become necessary. She noted that the same tenets that were a priority for the recommended budgets three to four years prior were the framework for the current FY 2027 recommended budget. She stated that those tenets were maintaining service, honoring the commitment to County employees to keep them working by re-emphasizing that a hard hiring freeze was avoided in the recommended budget, and using the County's resources wisely. She acknowledged that there were some

natural cost-saving benefits from turnover, but emphasized that such events were not associated with hard hiring freezes.

Ms. Cooke introduced the slide titled *General Considerations*. She stated that the County was at risk of national and local economic impacts due to federal policy, which she attributed to the reason staff closely monitored those matters. She acknowledged that there were questions about what could happen if there were changes to federal election law, which she noted had been raised during prior items at the BCC meeting. She explained that there could be other impacts from such changes as well and emphasized that staff were monitoring more than just potential monetary consequences. She reported that sustainability costs were rising faster than the revenues that supported them, noting that this was not new information but something she wanted to reiterate for the Board. She explained that p-tax was the largest revenue source across all funds, accounting for between 70 and 75 percent of the County's total revenue. She stated that p-tax revenue accounted for 52 percent of the General Fund's income, excluding one-time revenue sources. She explained that certain one-time revenue sources were budgeted in the General Fund for FY 2027 and intended for the planned Washoe Children's Behavioral Health Center (WCBHC). She emphasized that the income from those sources would not be recurring and that, after adjusting for non-recurring revenue, p-tax accounted for 52 percent of the General Fund's revenue. She introduced the concept of p-tax abatements, noting that they totaled approximately \$87 million across all County funds, with \$78 million of that revenue going to the General Fund in FY 2027. She explained that p-tax abatements were based on the p-tax rate limit, which was capped at 3 percent for residential properties and 8 percent for other property types. She emphasized that while those caps were the maximum p-tax rates for those property types and could not go up, the value of the p-tax abatements could increase, and that they were funds that taxpaying property owners would not pay into a stagnant account. She reiterated that p-tax abatements represented \$78 million in General Fund revenue for FY 2027, sourced from the State's pro forma information. She explained that in addition to abatements, there were exemptions and other items to consider. She explained that the details she had shared regarding the p-tax abatement were related to the 2006 Legislative Session on the abatement tax.

Ms. Cooke reported that c-tax accounted for approximately 32 percent of General Fund revenues, which had experienced steady rates over several years, excluding one-time revenues. She noted that interest income had been bolstered substantially and accounted for approximately 1.5 percent of General Fund revenues. She noted that when staff reviewed methods for reducing fund balance for future years, they anticipated the interest rate being lowered simultaneously. As there would be a smaller balance, there would subsequently be less interest. She referred to the list titled *Cost Inflation* on the *General Considerations* slide, noting that personnel was the highest cost for almost every fund, except the Capital Fund, due to its differing structure. She reported that 78 percent of General Fund expenditures were attributed to personnel costs, with 21 percent to services and supplies. She explained that another cost was General Fund transfers that support other governmental funds, which were also impacted by inflation. She noted that she did not want it to appear that other funds were not experiencing the same struggles as the General Fund, such as the special revenue funds, p-tax funds, and funds for animal

services, senior services, and child protective services. She acknowledged that, despite seeing p-tax increases, there were also impacts from cost growth and from the people contracted through those various funds. She reiterated that cost inflation was not just a consideration for the General Fund but rather something to be considered from a sustainability perspective across all funds. She noted that infrastructure was another area affected by cost inflation and recalled a Commissioner mentioning in the past that the cost of construction and related investments was rising faster than CPI. She emphasized that such a trend had persisted for many years and was expected to continue.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *Fiscal Year 2027 Outlook* slide. She reported that staff had received budget requests for FY 2027 for approximately \$46 million from the General Fund and about \$4 million from other funds. She noted that submissions from both categories included requests for new positions and were particularly associated with shifting positions from different restricted funding sources and grants to the General Fund. She noted that such requests could not be recommended because they were not sustainable. She expressed her intent to review the different themes and feedback staff received regarding Washoe County services. She listed those themes as expectations, service levels, service delivery, personnel, infrastructure, and technology. She explained that the information on the slide would be discussed in more detail during the upcoming BCC workshop on April 21, 2026.

Ms. Cooke referred to the slide titled *Fiscal Year 2027 Total Budget Appropriations*. She noted that she would discuss what she believed people were most excited to hear, which included updates on the FY 2027 budget. She explained that total appropriations were associated with expenditure appropriations, transfer authority, and General Fund contingency. She explained that discussions among staff, elected officials, and department heads had concluded that there would be no net new positions, but that there could be reallocation between departments, which she noted had already happened. She opined that such reallocations had been exciting to see, as they strengthened the idea of sharing resources and developing alternative solutions. She reported that the FY 2027 budget included a net reduction of 3.38 FTEs in the General Fund, the majority of which were vacant positions from expired grants. She explained that as grant funds expired, the associated positions would be considered vacant and removed per direction and BCC policy, which dictated that positions were authorized only if they were funded. She stated that reclassifications would only be approved with permanent offsets, which would be applied across all funds for the FY 2027 budget. She acknowledged that, while the reallocations might involve slight differences, the factors affecting the General Fund also applied to non-General Fund areas. She reported that the library budget reflected the same budget previously included in the Expansion Fund, which was treated largely the same as departments within the General Fund. She recalled that during FY 2026, the library expansion funding was transferred into the operating rate cost, resulting from a previously discrete and segregated tax rate being added to the General Fund operating rate. She noted that those expenditures had thus been incorporated into the General Fund's operating rate, which had created no budget reductions and meant such matters would be handled the same as other departments that experienced personnel increases and other changes.

Ms. Cooke explained that another implementation of the FY 2027 budget was an increase to the General Fund transfer for Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH), which she noted was the same as action taken for the FY 2026 budget. She reported that there would be a General Funds transfer to the roads fund, which she reiterated would be discussed further in a subsequent slide. She stated that the remaining support positions funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) would continue to be paid for with the residual interest from that grant. She noted that when staff mentioned permanent offsets, they meant a period of at least five years. She stated that consideration was being given to methods for implementing those offsets and to how they would impact the budget in future years. She explained that plans for FY 2027 also included continued enhanced communication briefings, workshops, BCC meetings, and any other efforts that might occur to ensure everyone had an opportunity to receive the same information regarding the functional department fund budgets. She provided an example of such action by noting that discussions about public safety would include consideration of the departments associated with those efforts and their budgets. She explained that more information on that topic was detailed on the slides labeled as Pages 28 and 29 in the presentation, which included the appendix and supplemental information.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *FY 2027 Financial Outlook and Recommended Budget – General Fund* slide, noting that, as the County's largest fund, her review of the FY 2027 budget recommendations would begin with an overview of the recommendations associated with it. She showed the slide titled *General Fund Highlights*. She explained that the information listed on the slide did not detail the total FY 2027 budget, but rather the specific elements being changed. She reported that it was currently recommended to add a chief information security officer position, which was included in the net reduction and would not increase positions in the General Fund, as permanent funding for the role had been identified. She explained that there would be an increase in contingency, with discussions on the matter recommending raising it to the maximum 3 percent rate allowable by statute due to the considerable number of upcoming outliers. She noted that during FY 2027, there would be another legislative session, and at the end of FY 2028, the County's collective bargaining agreements would expire, thereby necessitating renegotiation. She explained that with the ability to request a higher contingency, the County could prevent taking funds from other departmental budgets to pay for unexpected potential increases to a bill that would be issued in September from an agency she did not name. She explained that contingency requests would come before the Board and would require approval. She noted that the FY 2027 recommended budget included an increase in the ongoing General Fund transfer to the regional CAD and RMS fund. She recalled having discussed that topic previously while reviewing the County's expansion into regional initiatives. She noted that such an increase required implementation into the General Fund to ensure the project would proceed to support the ongoing costs associated with the County's portion of the initiative.

Ms. Cooke reported that there would be a one-time transfer to the golf fund for improvements to the Sierra Sage Golf Course, with operator repayment over time. She explained that the operator would recoup funding through their desired fee restructure for the facility, which would be paid back to the General Fund. She noted that those revenues had been implemented in the budget forecast. She reiterated that the Sierra Sage Golf

Course facility still belonged to the County and that the County did not want to see it fall into disrepair or become unavailable. She acknowledged that there were questions about that action and the availability of municipal golf facilities in general. She emphasized that she was not trying to deflect attention to anyone in particular, but stated that it was unknown what would happen to the Red Hawk Golf and Resort and that there were many ongoing changes at that facility. She opined that the golf fund represented an important community service. She reported that there was a recommended fairly large increase to the detention medical services contract with NaphCare. She explained that the juvenile detainees served under that contract had valiantly tried to operate the program with loaned nursing staff from other departments, but it was determined that those measures were insufficient. She acknowledged that the increase was substantial and noted that those services were not discretionary, as the County was required to provide medical care and to feed the people in custody. She reported that the FY 2027 recommendations for the General Fund included reallocation of positions, duties, and budget resulting from the dissolution of the DAS, as discussed earlier in her presentation. She noted that the recommendations also included the increased support for a contract with the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) for fire suppression in North of Township 22 (NT22). She explained that the contract covered areas like Red Rock and parts of Gerlach, and that the TMFPD would update the interlocal agreement to reflect its activities in providing services in that region.

Ms. Cooke introduced the slide titled *Roads Fund*. She explained that several slides detailed the recommended increase in the General Fund transfer to the roads fund by \$4 million. She reported that the roads fund had been increased in FY 2026, and the additional transfer in FY 2027 was intended to address the short-term gap needed to maintain the current pavement condition index (PCI). She stated that there were ongoing structural deficits in the fund, as well as many factors related to fuel taxes and road maintenance. She explained that the BCC's policy on PCI condition was a score of 73, with the County's current PCI score only reaching 68, which had declined from the score of 69 reported for the previous year. She displayed the *Untitled Pavement Images* slide. She referred to the chart at the top left of the slide and explained that, with a PCI of 69 based on the average of current road conditions in Washoe County, most of the County's roads would not fall into the *Good* or *Very Good* condition categories. She acknowledged that the roads in the County that did receive those ratings would help support a higher average PCI score. She described the graph at the center of the top of the slide, noting that it was associated with the price per square foot (sq ft) for reconstructing or resurfacing roads. She explained that the graph showed the cost of resurfacing or reconstructing was approximately 10 times higher than the cost of maintaining and caring for the roads before such measures became necessary. She noted that the images on the right of the slide demonstrated how the roads would look under various condition ratings and helped depict what a PCI of 68 looked like. She emphasized that the County invested in the front-end, preventative maintenance for many things, including pavement, as such actions would ultimately save money.

Ms. Cooke showed the slide titled *General Considerations – Sustainability*. She explained that the slide detailed the impacts on the five-year forecast for the General

Fund, which differed from those reported during the BCC budget workshop in January. She explained that Board action had been taken during the interim, including the one-time revenue replacement for the WCBHC, which was anticipated for FY 2027. She noted that the updated forecast also included the Board's approval of a one-time \$17 million transfer to the Capital Improvements Fund to support the WCBHC project. She explained that aside from those measures, the five-year forecast had remained unchanged, as the County did not have new or different revenue sources and had not made any other additional changes to service provision. She explained that the appendix on Page 27 of the presentation included further assumptions on the matter. She noted that the detailed sources and uses used to construct the summary on the current slide were included on Pages 30 and 31 of the presentation. She reported that the trend of growing or compounding deficits in the outer year of the five-year forecast, which had been experienced in the past, was expected to continue. She noted that the data on the slide had been updated for the tentative recommended budget, year-to-date (YTD) activities, and the staff's estimate of c-tax. She recalled having discussed c-tax with the Board in March, and reported that staff estimated a 4.5 percent increase in c-tax through the end of the current FY in June of 2026, with that rate subsequently changing to 3 percent, which was commensurate with what the Cities of Reno and Sparks anticipated. She explained that the final revenue projections from the State of Nevada were still lower than anticipated, and noted that the County had not historically used State data for c-tax estimates.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *Fiscal Year 2027 – General Fund Revenues/Sources - \$582.7 Million* slide. She noted that the pie chart on the slide depicted the revenues and sources for the General Fund, with the majority of the revenue coming from c-tax and p-tax. She explained that when staff mentioned a deficit or the causes of a budgetary deficit, consideration would need to be given to the fact that 82 percent of the total General Fund revenue generated by c-tax and p-tax had a weighted increase of 3.6 percent for FY 2027. She reported that c-tax had an increase of 3 percent while accounting for 30 percent of the General Fund revenue, indicating a nearly 1 percent increase to the General Fund. She explained that the p-tax increase was 5.2 percent and accounted for approximately 50 percent of the budget, resulting in a weighted increase of approximately 2.6 percent in the General Fund. She explained that those two taxes represented the majority of the County's funding. She noted that deficits appeared in the budget when costs exceeded those rates without being accounted for through other revenue source categories like charges for services, licenses, and permits.

Ms. Cooke showed the slide titled *Fiscal Year 2027 - General Fund Appropriations – \$588.4 Million*. She explained that the chart on the left listed the General Fund appropriations by function. She noted that public safety was the first category on the list and represented the highest percentage of the appropriations. She stated that those appropriations included various departments, such as the WCSO, the Public Administrator, the WCRMEO, Juvenile Services, and Washoe County Emergency Management (WCEM). She reiterated that there were many departments under the public safety category, with the largest being the WCSO. She reported that the category for judicial appropriations included the County's courts, the District Attorney's (DA) Office, the Public Defender's Office, and the Alternate Public Defender. She noted that the *Transfers*

to *Other Funds* category had recently become the third-highest appropriation category for the General Fund, including transfers to the roads fund or NNPH, as she had mentioned previously. She explained that the *Culture and Recreation* category included appropriations for the libraries and parks. She noted that expenditures within that category had increased after being moved to the General Fund. She emphasized that there had not been a substantial increase in the budget as a result of that transition, but rather that those expenses were being reflected elsewhere. She noted that the *Public Works* category included community services, and the *Other* category also included support for various community welfare matters. She reported that the majority of welfare expenditures were accounted for in funds separate from the General Fund. She explained that the category titled *Contingency* was associated with the recommended increase of contingency to 2 percent. She displayed the *General Fund Appropriation Breakout Per Dollar* slide, noting that the graphic represented how each dollar leaving the General Fund would be spent and what each portion would support. She noted that the largest expenditure categories were salaries, wages, and employee benefits, followed by services and supplies, transfers out, and contingency. She noted that the graphic provided an alternative way to consider the categorical expenditures depicted in the pie chart from the previous slide.

Ms. Cooke displayed the slide titled *Fiscal Year 2027 Other Governmental Funds*. She acknowledged the importance of the County's funds outside the General Fund and explained that the budget was split: approximately half was associated with the General Fund, and the other half comprised all other funds combined. She noted that the other governmental funds did not include the County's proprietary funds, which she intended to discuss later in the presentation. She reported that the *Health* category for the chart on the right of the slide was associated with NNPH, and the *Library* category was budgeted at zero, as it would instead be accounted for in the General Fund. She reported that funds for Animal Services, Senior Services, and Regional Public Safety had also been listed. She explained that the left column of the chart provided the total revenue and other sources for each of the listed governmental funds, and the column to its right detailed their relative appropriations. She noted that the difference between those two columns was shown in the furthest right column, which demonstrated whether each fund represented an overall use of fund balance by the number being listed within parentheses to represent a negative value, an increase to the fund balance by a positive number, or no impact to the fund balance by a zero in that column. She noted that many of the funds with overall uses in parentheses included one-time expenditures, such as the Capital Improvements Fund, which was expected to experience a \$13 million reduction in its fund balance due to spending on some projects. She clarified that those reductions were either ongoing efforts from the past or multi-year projects for which the County was using the current fund balance. She reported that her staff had worked with various departments to review special revenue funds to develop departmental five-year forecasts, which were to be reviewed when departmental requests were received to identify how they might impact the budget in the long term, even if funding would be sourced outside the General Fund.

Ms. Cooke showed the *Capital Improvement Highlights – Total \$47.6M* slide. She explained that the pie chart on the slide showed the total budget for the listed capital funds, excluding capital investments in the roads fund and capital projects in the

utilities fund. She noted that there were three funds within the capital funds, including the capital facilities fund, which was a p-tax rate of \$0.05, with the majority of that tax passed back to the State of Nevada and the Cities of Reno and Sparks. She provided an example of that distribution by recalling that, of the \$12.7 million in transfer fund revenue from FY 2007, \$7.6 million was distributed to the State of Nevada, \$1.43 million was transferred to the Cities of Reno and Sparks, and the County used \$2.4 million of those funds to support the roads fund. She explained that the listed total appropriations on the chart were the result of staff's efforts to refine the process to utilize year-end actuals to develop budget estimates for projects extending into the future. She noted that staff could identify more realistic figures rather than trying to estimate how much the County would spend before the end of the current FY and throughout the following FY. She stated that a project could be delayed or accelerated, so the new process allowed staff to develop a better reconciliation, and for the budget to be reflected in the financial system much sooner. She noted that the FY 2027 budget re-appropriation was estimated at approximately \$80 million and acknowledged that, if the current figures were compared with those from two years prior for the capital improvement fund, there might appear to be a substantial increase. She reiterated that the process had been changed and that the current figures were commensurate with the adopted FY 2026 budget.

Ms. Cooke displayed the slide titled *Capital Improvement Highlights – New Projects*. She explained that she would review the upcoming projects listed on the slide. She explained that the *TS Undesignated* category was associated with ideas related to automation, robotics, or other technology-related projects that would increase efficiency. She noted that the slide's chart included a category for projects funded with General Fund transfers from previous years. She stated that the category contained funding for support related to the ROV Office warehouse project. She reported that another category was provided for projects funded with FY 2027's \$13.5 million General Fund transfer for current or ongoing projects. She explained that the \$13.5 million transfer was what staff would call the *new base*. She recalled mentioning that the General Fund transfer revenue from FY 2007 was approximately \$12.7 million, indicating that those amounts had increased since then. She opined that many interesting things associated with the parks capital fund were happening, with some of which were contingent on grant funding. She noted that the listed projects in that category were all new, and emphasized that many other ongoing, recurring, or multi-year projects had not been listed. She explained that all the projects would be detailed during the presentation for the five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) scheduled for the BCC meeting on May 19, 2026.

Ms. Cooke introduced the *Proprietary Funds – Totaling \$157 Million* slide. She explained that of the two proprietary funds, the enterprise funds operated similarly to private businesses, while internal service funds were those the County recouped and used to provide services to other departments and agencies within the County. She stated that the health benefits fund was associated with retirees and current employees, and the equipment services fund was related to the County's fleet, with the risk management fund also being considered a proprietary fund. She noted that proprietary funds were accounted for with operating revenues and expenditures, and were slightly different than a governmental fund. She reported that the total appropriations for the proprietary funds were

nearly \$157 million. She displayed the slide titled *Budget Summary - \$1.13B over 28 Funds*, and explained that she would provide a summary of the total budget. She noted that the chart on the right side of the slide was the total FY 2027 tentative budget designated by function. She acknowledged that the general government fund and judicial fund were listed at the top of the chart, even though their values were not the highest, because the items in the chart had not been sorted by size. She noted that the total governmental funds appropriations were \$976 million and that the chart provided the functions those funds supported. She explained that the information beneath the chart detailed appropriations for proprietary funds, separated by enterprise and internal service funds, with the total budget figures listed at the bottom of the slide.

Ms. Cooke showed the *Next Steps* slide. She explained that the next time she would present to the Board would be on May 19, 2026, as the County needed to publish the intention to hold a public hearing on the FY 2027 tentative budget, which had already been filed with the State of Nevada. She noted that the County had to wait for the tentative budget to be certified by the Nevada Department of Taxation (NDT) before the Board could vote to adopt the final budget, as required by NRS. She explained that the final budget was required to be filed with the State of Nevada by June 1, 2026. She noted that the public hearing for the tentative budget could not be scheduled earlier than the third Monday in May, with final submission necessary by June 1, 2026. She emphasized that those time requirements established a very limited window for those steps in the statutory process. She explained that the five-year CIP needed to be filed with the State of Nevada and the Debt Management Commission (DMC) by August 1, 2026, meaning the five-year CIP, the County's debt management policy, and the statement of indebtedness needed to be brought before the Board prior to that filing deadline. She noted that each of those documents would be submitted to the NDT and the County Clerk. She stated that additional information had been provided in subsequent slides of the presentation.

Ms. Cooke displayed the slide titled *General Fund Forecast Assumptions*. She explained that the slide included staff assumptions related to the five-year General Fund forecast. She reported that the slide detailed the sources of some of the figures in the presentation and could be referred to by anyone curious about how certain estimates were calculated. She showed the first of the slides titled *Fiscal Year 2027 Total Governmental Fund Appropriations - \$976 Million - By Function and Department*. She noted that both slides sharing that title provided an analysis of appropriations based on function and their relation to departmental budgets. She displayed the second slide titled *Fiscal Year 2027 Total Governmental Fund Appropriations - \$976 Million - By Function and Department*, and noted that the categories were not listed in any particular order, but rather were included based on how the information would best fit on the slides. She introduced the first slide titled *Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund Sources & Uses – Tentative*. She explained that the first slide with that title provided the FY 2027 General Fund sources. She referred to the figures highlighted in green in the slide's chart, noting that they represented one-time revenue sources that needed to be accounted for separately, as they would appear in the five-year forecast but would not be included year-over-year. She displayed the second slide titled *Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund Sources & Uses – Tentative*, and explained that it listed the FY 2027 General Fund uses. She stated that one-time uses for FY 2027 were

identified by the green highlight in the chart. She explained that the \$17 million transfer out was associated with the one-time transfer to the Capital Improvements Fund she had discussed previously.

Ms. Cooke showed the slide titled *General Fund Expenditures, by Type*. She reported that the slide listed total FY 2027 appropriations by category, including *Salaries and Benefits, Services and Supplies, Transfers Out, and Other*. She explained that the majority of the *Other* category was comprised of funds related to contingency. She displayed the *General Fund Appropriation Summary by Type and Function* slide, noting that it provided the same information as the previous slide and included an additional chart for the functions of those General Fund appropriations. She introduced the slide titled *Other Governmental Funds – Sources Totaling \$356 Million*, noting that it included expanded details on the revenue sources of governmental funds outside the General Fund. She noted that the chart detailed the types of revenue associated with each of the funds. She displayed the *Other Governmental Funds – Uses Totaling \$388 Million* slide, noting that it was organized similarly to the previous slide, but instead focused on uses. She noted that the two previous slides were intended to provide more detail on topics she had discussed previously during her presentation.

Ms. Cooke introduced the *Property Taxes – Overview* slide. She reported that the proposed rates highlighted in blue in the chart reflected those with changes. She noted that there was a Youth Services tax levy to fund the China Springs detention camp, which was a facility now being managed by Douglas County. She reported that the County was required to pay a certain amount, which needed to be allocated to recoup that funding. She explained that the debt rate had to be increased slightly from 0.0057 to 0.0059, due to the assessed valuation increase being lower than anticipated. She noted that such an increase in the debt rate did not mean taxes would be increasing. She clarified that the increase would be offset by the operating rate highlighted at the top of the chart. She reiterated that the total tax rate levied by Washoe County, 1.3917, was not changing or increasing and had remained the same since FY 2005. She explained that the figures in the chart on the right side of the slide detailed the base rate for all of Washoe County, including those residing within General Improvement Districts (GIDs) or unincorporated portions of the County. She noted that additional rates would vary depending on a residence's exact location, and that the amount owed could be affected by rates from the Washoe County School District (WCSD), the incorporated Cities of Reno and Sparks, GIDs, and the State of Nevada's baseline rate of 0.1700. She explained that, despite those varying additional rates, the total overlapping tax rate could not exceed the 3.66 maximum. She reiterated that Washoe County's total rate was 1.3917, with a large portion of those proceeds being restricted for specific uses, such as the Senior Citizens Center and Capital Acquisition tax rate levies. She emphasized that the funds generated for those purposes were not being allocated to the County's General Fund, as they had specific requirements and uses.

Chair Andriola thanked Ms. Cooke for the substantial amount of great information. She asked County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas whether she would like to add anything or share any comments.

CM Thomas explained that she had intended to provide opening comments for Agenda Item 16, but Ms. Cooke had been so excited to provide information on the budget that she had begun the presentation before there was an opportunity to do so. She noted that she had intended to thank staff during the opening comments, as the County had a budget of over \$1 billion, which had been compiled into 25 slides and a few extra pages of appendices. She stated that organizing that information was no small accomplishment. She opined that the factor the County had gotten right in the budget process that year was communication, with the budget team being wonderful in preparing a very fluid document; when something would change, another idea would come up and cause further alterations. She expressed her intent to emphasize her commendation of the entire budget team, Ms. Cooke, and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Abbe Yacoben for the excellent job they had done in preparing the budget. She thanked the department heads, noting that the process was very inclusive and that they were very involved and present as staff conducted the budget congress meeting and the subsequent department head meeting. She stated that she had become fatigued by discussing the budget because it had been covered in depth, and she acknowledged that not everyone might feel similarly. She thanked the Commissioners for their willingness to meet, discuss, and regularly attend budget hearings without skipping any meetings and for consistently providing valuable input. She thanked them again for their involvement in the process and noted that she had finally seen it become integrated into the strategic planning process. She expressed excitement about the BCC workshop meeting scheduled for the following week, as it would include an item on the first iteration of the County's strategic planning efforts. She stated that each year, there would always be reminders of what the budget could look like several years in the future if nothing changed, which would cause panic. She explained that part of the strategic planning effort was to ensure that changes would be made that could prevent the County from being in that position. She noted that implementing such a change would require everyone's collaboration.

On the call for public comment, Trista Gomez stated that she loved a good budget and noted that, because she was running for office, she was learning a great deal about budget-related issues, particularly employee budgets. She said that in all jurisdictions, the employee budgets comprised the large majority of the jurisdictional budgets. She noted her understanding that it was a sensitive topic. She stated that she did not want to get into trouble by saying something that was not entirely factual, and said that approximately 95 percent of residents throughout the County did not have an 80 percent guaranteed, defined benefit at retirement. She said that about 95 percent of County residents did not have access to the level of benefits that Washoe County or the Cities of Reno and Sparks employees did. She noted that she could not purchase the benefits available to County employees because they were not available or accessible. She stated that if she could possibly access them, they might cost \$7,000 to \$10,000 per month. She noted that she had worked for the County in the past and made more money as a social worker with Washoe County than she had ever made or currently makes in a private-sector position. She acknowledged that there were exceptions for some of the County's professional positions, such as lawyers and engineers, but that the clerical and support staff positions were unmatched. She stated that her comments were true, even if people could find a couple of examples to the contrary and told her she was not factual. She opined that,

when 78 percent of the County's budget was allocated towards that, it was prudent to remember that compensation and monetary consideration were directly related to power and priority. She reiterated that approximately 95 percent of Washoe County residents, with a potential variation of 1 or 2 percent, were not receiving 80 percent of their top three years of salary as a retirement benefit, and were hoping that the market would perform when they retired. She noted that the high salaries and benefits were included in the budget, and clarified that she was not suggesting they be decreased. She stated that the matter should be transparent and that a conversation about it should be held, because it was not possible in many cases to access the same benefits through employment in the private sector.

Commissioner Hill commended Ms. Cooke for her great work on the presentation. She referred to Ms. Cooke's earlier reports on the Sierra Sage Golf Course transfer, which she thought was a sensible action to invest in the County's resources, and asked if the County would require prevailing wage for that work due to its classification as government funds. Ms. Cooke confirmed that it would be required because the facility was County-owned. She explained that the County would be working with the operator and would be making payments directly to avoid the process that followed cutting checks for such work. She noted that the direct payment system was what necessitated the budget authority in the golf fund, rather than a simple transfer.

Commissioner Hill expressed confusion about the two vacant nursing positions Ms. Cooke had mentioned for the Juvenile Services increase and asked if had not been included in the detention medical services contract with NaphCare. Ms. Cooke confirmed that was the case and emphasized that it was the source of the problem, a view Commissioner Hill voiced agreement with. Ms. Cooke noted that Juvenile Services required two Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), but had experienced extreme difficulty recruiting, hiring, and retaining them to ensure those positions remained filled. She explained that those medical services were required to be provided for the juveniles in the detention center, so the Director of Juvenile Services was working with the WCSO to conduct negotiations with NaphCare. She reported that adding those services to the NaphCare contract was something the County had never done before, but there would be an expected increase in cost. She stated that, because of the expansion to that NaphCare contract, Juvenile Services would subsequently be abolishing the two vacant positions they had not been able to consistently fill. Commissioner Hill asked whether the difficulty in filling those positions was associated with the pay offered, and Ms. Cooke said she was personally uncertain and did not know if Human Resources (HR) was aware of the reasoning. Commissioner Hill expressed uncertainty about whether NNPH also had difficulty filling those roles, but she noted that it seemed strange. She noted that staff in the audience had nodded to indicate that it was a problem for NNPH as well.

Commissioner Hill referred to Ms. Cooke's previous comments regarding the roads fund, and she stated that she was glad the County would continue transfers to that fund. She opined that it would be great to outline where those funds would be invested, potentially using a similar approach that had been used to demonstrate those factors for other capital expenditures, as was done in the past for the parks. She suggested that there

could be a list of what specific road improvements would be made with those funds, which she noted had not been included in the presentation. Ms. Cooke explained that those details would be included in future presentations when staff received more detailed information. She recalled that, in the past, the plan for those funds had been contingent on what funding was approved. She suspected that once staff knew those funds were firmly recommended, they could develop a plan, as they had in the past and subsequently presented in the final budget.

Commissioner Hill noted that the investments in the roads fund were only for improving the condition of roadways and were not necessarily tied to public safety improvements. She expressed uncertainty about whether other Commissioners had also experienced constituents contacting them to report unsafe conditions, roads that needed crosswalks, and streets that needed sidewalks. She acknowledged that the County might not have the funds to address many of those projects, but she opined that it would be helpful to include those details in the next presentation to identify outstanding matters the County needed to budget for, along with a recommendation for the resulting gap. She explained that there was an online form that could be submitted when a safety study was desired, which produced a list of priorities for implementing those safety improvements. She stated that if the roads fund did not include safety improvements and only ensured the road quality remained stable, it could be helpful to have additional information on the matter. She commended Ms. Cooke for her great work and expressed her anticipation of continuing the dialogue. She stated that she felt comfortable moving forward with the recommended budget.

Commissioner Clark thanked Ms. Cooke for her report, noting that she had provided a significant amount of information to process. He echoed CM Thomas's earlier comments, agreeing that all the meetings held leading up to the current item had made a substantial difference in understanding the budget. He stated that it was unfortunate that the public and those in the audience did not have the same opportunity. He opined that it was very informative to meet in advance of any action on the matter and to have held meetings on a regular basis. He stated that those meetings had illuminated a lot of the issues with the budget. He noted that he had been involved in County budgets since 2015, when he worked as a department head at the Assessor's Office, where he collected much of the government funding. He explained that serving on the Board had provided him with a different overview of that process. He opined that Ms. Cooke and her staff had done an excellent job of sharing all budgetary information with the Commissioners. He referred to the slide titled *General Considerations* and stated his intent to review the p-tax abatement information. He noted that the left side of the slide detailed the p-tax abatement of \$78 million to the General Fund, which was comprised of the abatement for owner-occupied single-family residences receiving the 3.3 percent cap, with other property types not owner-occupied subject to a different cap. He opined that it was important to put on the record that the \$78 million abatement was money that would remain with taxpayers, and he expressed his belief that those funds were not going to people opening offshore bank accounts. He noted that there were approximately 189,000 parcels in Washoe County, which, when compared to the \$78 million in p-tax abatements, would result in under \$500 per property. He reiterated that those funds were not being invested outside the County,

but rather used to enhance the County's c-tax. He explained that the c-tax would then be supported, as people would invest in goods and services that would not escape the region and would circulate within the local economy, eventually reaching everyone. He noted that what he had described was another way of looking at p-tax abatements, which he thought people needed to put in proper perspective. He acknowledged that the County could not endlessly tax residents, as the more it took away, the less money people had to continue generating funds locally. He reiterated his belief that it was important for people to note that the \$78 million would be regenerated repeatedly in the County and help with the c-tax.

Chair Andriola expressed her desire to thank Commissioner Herman for her work associated with Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) revenue. She noted that she and Commissioner Herman served on the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) Board of Directors, where PILT was a primary subject of discussion. Commissioner Herman stated that her actions were just a small part of those efforts, to which Chair Andriola disagreed, noting that they played a big role. She reiterated her gratitude for Commissioner Herman's efforts on that matter and for her work in having the TMFPD and the community as a whole serve as a benefactor for those actions. She noted that she wanted to ensure everyone knew those efforts stemmed from Commissioner Herman's work, and she expressed her belief that TMFPD Fire Chief Richard Edwards would likely be thankful to her as well. She referred to Commissioner Hill's previous comments and explained that she also had comments to provide regarding the roads fund. She opined that Ms. Cooke's point that investment in the roads fund was a preventive effort was important to mention, as costs could increase by up to 10 times what they would be to repair the pavement if the issue were prolonged. She recalled the BCC's previous budget workshop meeting, where the Board was taught the meaning of the term *increasing at a decreasing rate*, which she emphasized was occurring and made imperative the need to practice restraint with funds.

Chair Andriola thanked Ms. Cooke, her team, and CM Thomas for meeting with the Commissioners to identify how the budget could be prioritized to address mandated requirements, note which areas did not have the same requirements, and implement methods to balance those details. She opined that transitioning to a priority-based budgeting process would help substantially, which she acknowledged would take time to fully implement. She recognized everyone she had listed for listening to that request and for considering implementing it. She noted that CM Thomas had been very kind in assuring her that such actions would be pursued. She reported that it would not be implemented for the current year's budgetary process, but some aspects of the priority-based process had already been instituted. She expressed her intent to ensure that those matters were fully transparent. She noted that she had been calling for those changes for several years, and she had recently seen them matriculating into the process. She stated that the budget caucus meeting was critically important, and she thanked CM Thomas and the department heads for conducting it. She opined that everyone must consider fairness and equity, as no department should suffer more than any other. She acknowledged that there was a balance to those matters, and every department was important to its departmental leadership. She stated that they had exercised very powerful leadership in sharing with everyone how to go through the budget process collectively and collaboratively.

Chair Andriola thought Ms. Cooke had mentioned how implementing efficiencies had resulted in savings for the County. She acknowledged that while such savings might not seem substantial in the context of the \$1 billion total budget, actions such as identifying \$2 million in savings, exploring regionalization options, and implementing technology solutions would present opportunities. She explained that during a budget crisis involving a substantial amount of money, people did not view those matters the same way. She opined that such events were the perfect time to consider those opportunities, and that it was very encouraging to learn what those efforts might be. She requested that Ms. Cooke provide an update on the Washoe County Checkbook during her upcoming presentation. She explained that she frequently visited that website, and that activity on it had remained constant, which she commended the community for, as it demonstrated that they wanted to research the information it provided. She noted that she had requested before that consideration be given to reinstating video publishing and other educational outreach methods to ensure budget details remained transparent and could be shared with everyone. She acknowledged that while those resources took time to create, staff capacity was a factor in implementation. She noted that reports could be pulled or information could be printed; it was also important that the County communicate those details, especially during the period when the budget was being deliberated.

Chair Andriola noted that the final budget would be deliberated by the Board during the BCC meeting scheduled for May 19, 2026. She expressed hope that the constant process improvement efforts would continue. She referred to the *What Steps Have We Taken?* slide and recalled Ms. Cooke's previous comments regarding the creation of the two combined departments and other process improvements. She opined that those achievements should be highlighted, as they meant everyone was working together to solve the budgetary issues. She acknowledged that funds would continue to tighten, but the impacts would become apparent as staff received statistics and reports. She stated that most of the important factors were increasing at a decreasing rate, aside from costs.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that the status report and discussion from the Board of County Commissioners, as outlined in the Staff Report, be acknowledged.

Chair Andriola thanked the entire budget team, CM Thomas, all department heads, and the County's over 3,000 employees for understanding that everyone was facing the budgetary issues together and would get through them.

PUBLIC HEARING

26-0233 **AGENDA ITEM 18** Public Hearing: Second reading and possible adoption of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code) in Division Three-Regulation of Uses and Division Nine-General Provisions. These amendments include adding various sections within Article 336 Housing Incentives to establish an expedited review process for attainable housing projects and to establish an expedited

process for projects which qualify as Tier 1-5 Affordable Housing. These amendments also include amending Section 110.902.15 to add and delete various definitions; and all matters necessarily connected therewith and pertaining thereto. This ordinance is part of a group of amendments the Board has identified as a top priority for implementation of the master plan. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Hill opened the public hearing.

County Clerk Jan Galassini, read the title for Ordinance No. 1754, Bill No. 1945.

Chair Andriola asked if any of the Commissioners needed to hear a staff presentation, but none accepted.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Clark, which motion duly carried on a 3-1 vote with Vice Chair Garcia absent, it was ordered that Ordinance No. 1754, Bill No. 1945, be adopted, approved, and published in accordance with NRS 244.100

26-0234 AGENDA ITEM 19 Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

26-0235 AGENDA ITEM 20 Announcements/Reports.

Chair Andriola reminded the Board and attendees that the community meeting on agrotourism would be held that evening in the Chambers, and that there was a survey online for those who could not attend.

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2:15 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
Brooke Koerner, Deputy County Clerk
Jessica Melka, Deputy County Clerk
Elizabeth Tietjen, Deputy County Clerk