BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA

TUESDAY 10:04 A.M. JUNE 23, 2026

PRESENT:

Clara Andriola, Chair
Mariluz Garcia, Vice Chair
Alexis Hill, Commissioner
Jeanne Herman, Commissioner, via telephone

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

ABSENT:

Michael Clark, Commissioner

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 10:04 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, Deputy County Clerk Evonne Strickland called roll and the Board conducted the following business:

26-0434 **AGENDA ITEM 3** Invocation.

Invocation provided by Heather Perkins, Director of Communications for the Church of Jesus Chris of Latter-day Saints (LDS) for the Mt. Rose Stake.

26-0435 **AGENDA ITEM 4A1** Informational Update.

General Update from Truckee Meadows Fire & Rescue, Chief Richard J. Edwards.

County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas acknowledged that the public was eager to hear information about the incident that occurred the previous weekend.

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) Fire Chief Richard Edwards shared that the region had begun to experience increased wildfire activity. He said that fuel moisture had decreased, humidity was low, and windy conditions had contributed to elevated fire danger. He noted that several fire weather warnings had already been issued for the region. He mentioned that, in alignment with State and federal partners, Washoe County had implemented the first level of seasonal fire restrictions. He explained that, until further notice or until the restrictions were rescinded, the following activities would be prohibited: smoking outdoors, welding or operating an acetylene or other open-flame torch, operating a chainsaw or related equipment powered by an internal combustion engine without a spark-arresting device, and operating or parking a vehicle or other motorized equipment on dried or cured vegetation. He added that building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire was also prohibited, as was using wood, charcoal, or other combustible material in a campfire or stove fire outside a developed fee campground or picnic area, unless authorized by a permit. He clarified that portable stoves fueled by gas, jelly, petroleum, or pressurized liquid fuel were exempt from the restriction. He stated that barbecues on private property, including backyard barbecues, remained permitted, as did the use of established barbecues or campfire rings that were clear of flammable vegetation. He reminded the community that all fireworks, tracer ammunition, and exploding targets were illegal year-round in Washoe County.

Chief Edwards encouraged the public to follow the TMFPD on social media for updates on wildfires and fire restrictions. He noted that any changes to the restrictions would also be posted on the TMFPD's website and encouraged residents to download the Smart911 application. He pointed out that Smart911, TMFPD's social media platforms, and the Perimeter Map platform were the most effective ways for the agency to share emergency and incident information. He said that the Perimeter Map displayed the boundaries of active incidents, evacuation routes, and shelter information, which were critical during time-sensitive emergencies.

Chief Edwards discussed a significant incident that occurred in the region on June 19, 2026, at approximately 4:00 p.m. He explained that an intense thunderstorm passed through the area, bringing significant rainfall to the Hidden Valley neighborhood in a short period of time. He noted that the downpour dislodged large boulders and generated a substantial amount of mud, water, and vegetation debris, which overwhelmed a catch basin in the area. He shared that the debris flowed down Pembroke Drive and neighboring streets, carrying mud and debris throughout the neighborhood. He indicated that the initial 911 call was for flooding. He commented that when the first engine from the Reno Fire Department (RFD) arrived on scene, firefighters recognized that the incident was far more extensive than initially reported. He mentioned that the response was then upgraded to a first-alarm rescue assignment, bringing additional units from several other agencies. He said that firefighters rescued a family trapped in their home after the debris flow dislodged their gas meter, causing an active gas leak. He stated that the top priority throughout the emergency was life safety, with an emphasis on search-and-rescue operations to ensure all residents were accounted for and removed from harm's way as quickly as possible. He reported that no human injuries or deaths occurred from the incident, although he believed there were many opportunities for serious injury or loss of life. He shared that, sadly, one cat perished in the incident. He emphasized that no single agency could have managed the emergency on its own. He expressed his gratitude for the TMFPD’s partners, including the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO), Washoe County Search and Rescue, the Washoe County Emergency Management (WCEM), NV Energy, Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority Health (REMSA Health), Washoe County Regional Animal Services (WCRAS), and Washoe County Community Services Division (CSD). He encouraged the public to visit WCEM’s website for future updates.

WCEM Administrator Kelly Echeverria said that she had responded to the incident. She mentioned that, while first responders tended to be modest about their efforts, she believed that both firefighters and law enforcement had saved lives during the incident. She explained that CSD crews had been working in the neighborhood every day, including Father's Day, and had removed approximately 4,600 tons of rock and mud. She noted that CSD had completed safety assessments and emergency access clearing, and was continuing right-of-way mud and debris removal, infrastructure integrity assessments, and infrastructure restoration. She stated that, in addition to the impacts in the Hidden Valley neighborhood, the storm also caused land and rock to slide into the Truckee River near Vista Boulevard. She explained that the Truckee River in that area had approximately two-thirds of its normal flow blocked. She informed that the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) response had been activated and that the American Red Cross of Northern Nevada was in the neighborhood distributing cleanup kits, conducting damage assessments, speaking with residents, and ensuring needs were being met. She indicated that first responders conducted the initial windshield assessments, followed by a more detailed damage assessment from the Red Cross, and that the results were then consolidated. She noted that a CSD engineer was also conducting assessments to provide information needed to meet Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements. She shared that the WCEM had requested that the State send its damage assessment teams as part of the recovery process. She reported that one home was destroyed, six sustained major damage, seven sustained minor damage, and nine were affected. She said that WCEM had requested assistance from Team Rubicon to help community members remove mud and rocks from their homes. She stated that the WCEM was also coordinating with BELFOR Property Restoration, Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC), and other partners to assist residents with cleanup efforts. She advised that the incident had a significant impact on the community and that recovery would take time. She instructed the community to contact Washoe 311 for assistance, explaining that requests would be forwarded to WCEM, which would coordinate resources to help address community needs.

Chair Andriola thanked Ms. Echeverria and her team, the TMFPD, public safety personnel, and law enforcement for their response. She recognized the coordinated effort to quickly establish shelter and described emergency response events as managed chaos. She noted that the team's actions reflected their training and emphasized the importance of strong relationships and communication in allowing agencies to respond quickly, which she felt had occurred during the Hidden Valley incident. She acknowledged the effectiveness of the communication and coordination efforts but noted that conflicting information during emergencies made it difficult for residents to determine what information was accurate. She said that she was impressed by the speed of the response and CSD’s efforts, adding that Hidden Valley residents were grateful for the rapid debris cleanup. She recognized that significant work remained and encouraged residents to submit requests through Washoe 311. She shared that she and Commissioner Hill served on the Truckee River Flood Management Authority (TRFMA) and noted that projects underway at Vista Narrows were expected to cost millions of dollars. She added that additional long-term plans were being considered to further support the community. She thanked everyone who assisted with the incident.

Vice Chair Garcia expressed gratitude for the tremendous work and coordination. She asked what structural issues would classify a home as a total loss versus those that would result in other damage classifications.

Ms. Echeverria replied that one home was destroyed after nearly three feet of rocks and mud entered through the back doors and spread throughout the home. She shared that damage designations based on water levels and debris impacts were in accordance with FEMA's guidelines.

Vice Chair Garcia acknowledged the horrific and traumatic experiences witnessed by families and neighbors. For those who had not attended the strategic workshop, she shared WCEM's website, which included maps and other resources. She explained that the website served as a concise informational tool for disseminating information. She asked Ms. Echeverria who the members of Team Rubicon were.

Ms. Echeverria replied that Team Rubicon was a group of volunteers, primarily composed of retired military personnel, that assisted with removing debris. She shared that WCEM had previously partnered with Team Rubicon on a defensible space project near the former Patagonia warehouse to remove vegetation. She stated that Team Rubicon members valued the opportunity to assist the community.

Vice Chair Garcia thanked all the volunteers.

Commissioner Herman thanked everyone who was involved.

26-0436 **AGENDA ITEM 5** Public Comment.

Katherine Yriarte stated she would speak on Item 21. She thought the electric vehicles (EVs) tax was a good idea to capture lost revenue from fuel tax avoidance, but felt it would not capture enough. She also expressed that making up the revenue through registration would not capture income from those traveling through the County and the State. She claimed Nevada was a tourist State, and attaching the revenue to registrations missed the opportunity to capture additional revenue from people traveling through Nevada from other counties, districts, cities, and states. She suggested handling it the same way as the fuel tax per gallon on gas and diesel, such as a per-kilowatt tax for charging stations. She added that it would also apply to those who had their own charging stations at home, as they could meter that usage to tax it at a similar rate. She declared that many EV owners were driving significantly more than those with gas- or diesel-powered vehicles. She felt the bigger issue was missing the opportunity to capture revenue from travelers through Nevada and to maximize that capture to make up for the loss the County was currently experiencing.

Terry Brooks read an original poem on discrimination and politics when it came to disabilities.

Kyle Sundland introduced himself as the Vice President of Behavioral Health at Northern Nevada HOPES. He stated he was before the Board to discuss Agenda Item 22, the Washoe Opioid Abatement and Recovery Fund (WOARF) Grant. He explained that their transitional living program, Hope Springs, was unique, and as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), they had a real opportunity to combine medical and behavioral health to make significant strides towards housing stability. He announced that he was accompanied by fellow Northern Nevada HOPES therapist Heather Milligan, and that one thing they tried to communicate to their residents was the importance of sustainability over immediacy. He clarified that Northern Nevada HOPES was developing a program to create that stability for their unhoused and at-risk populations.

Oscar Williams stated that, regarding Agenda Item 14, he was concerned about protecting the public's money, with an emphasis on elections. He thought that, excluding the cost of the new warehouse and lease, as well as the remodel, there was likely a $15 million budget. He estimated the remodel at $3 million and the lease at $8 to 10 million over 20 years. He reiterated that all the money was tax dollars. He gave a rough estimate of the capital improvements for elections from 2023 to 2026 as $15 million. He stated he had limited disposable income. He alleged that the Board continued to tax and spend beyond its means and had an insatiable appetite for spending. He felt there was something in between that made more sense. He expressed that he had questions for the Board, even though he knew they could not answer. He asked what the cost per ballot counted was. He stated he did not know, but that the public should know. He announced that the Registrar of Voters (ROV) Andrew McDonald had stated that it took 10 to 12 hours to process a mail ballot when the ROV's Office had state-of-the-art equipment that could process tens of thousands of ballots per hour, and that Mr. McDonald had been quoted in the news saying that they could process 15,000 ballots a day. He expressed that, despite all the equipment and resources Mr. McDonald had access to, the County still did not seem able to process all the ballots in time. He declared that approximately 1,000 votes were not processed and that results came in late or inconsistently. He estimated that the County was supposed to receive updating of reporting after elections. He believed it should take 2 to 3 hours. He reiterated his thought that 100 mail ballots, from intake to completion, should take three hours. He felt that if the ROV Office could not complete it in that time, there was a problem. He requested that the Board table Agenda Item 14 until there was more input.

Jeff Church displayed a document, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. He announced that he ran the website renotaxrevolt.com. He mentioned that he agreed in part with Ms. Yriarte that, if the public were to be taxed, charging stations were the appropriate place to do so for EVs. He commented on Chair Andriola's comment that the Vista Narrows flood was one of the best agencies he had ever worked with via renotaxrevolt.com. He felt they were responsive and effective, even if the voters had said no to their new taxes. He stated that the point carried over to Agenda Item 21. He said the annual index gas tax increased without a public vote or public input hearing, just an increase every July 1. He expressed that it was 4.2 cents on gasoline and 4.7 cents on diesel fuel. He opined that the total tax for Washoe County, based on his math, was $1.14 per gallon. He alleged this was the highest gas tax in the entire Nation. He challenged the Board to prove him wrong. He was thankful there would be a new District Attorney (DA) who might have ideas for legally addressing the gas tax. He pointed out there were legal issues. He stated that he had no personal interest, had litigated before, and was not afraid of litigation. He expressed that the County should try to resolve the issue so that people would not have to travel to Carson City to buy gas, as he did. He stated that he would drive to Carson City with his wife to shop, have lunch with friends, and buy gas. He noted that all the money spent went to Carson City and the State, and that Washoe County did not receive a penny of it. He declared the gas tax was a regressive tax and a Laffer curve, reaching a point where citizens would not pay it and would instead travel elsewhere. He reiterated that when he traveled to Carson City and made purchases, he paid a 7.6 percent sales tax. He stated that he purchased his car in Carson City. He emphasized that Washoe County's sales tax was 8.26 percent. He felt the County was spending far beyond its means. He expressed that more taxes were not the answer. He referenced Creedence Clearwater Revival lyrics that suggested when the government came to the door, the only answer was more. He referred to the cartoon he was displaying and said that it expressed his points.

Lindsey Harmon stated that she supported Agenda Item 21. She felt it was a common-sense solution to ask EVs to pay their fair share to support infrastructure that everyone used and relied upon, and which desperately needed improvements.

Adriane Alcala Moss stated that she was a nurse practitioner and worked for The Life Change Center. She explained that it was an outpatient opioid treatment center with three locations across Reno, Sparks, and Carson City. She shared that they were recently selected to be part of the WOARF Grant with an outreach and engagement project. She noted that she had lived in Nevada for just over a year and was looking for ways to get involved in her community. She felt it was exciting to witness the County's civic engagement process. She expressed gratitude for the upcoming project and the chance to help her community, and to engage with people and get them into treatment to help them move on with their lives. She introduced her companion as John Saderlund, a peer support lead and the project lead. John Saderlund stated that he was the peer recovery support specialist supervisor at all three The Life Change Center sites. He thanked the Board for the grants and funding, as opportunities like those were why he was before the Board with 25 years in recovery. He expressed that if the upcoming program touched even a single person's life, it would have a positive effect across generations of addiction. He felt that if everyone in the community were able to affect one person, they would be able to reverse the effects of fentanyl in their community.

Eileen Ecklund thanked the Board for their efforts on behalf of Washoe County libraries. She explained that the week prior, she missed the vote for the new library trustees, but wanted the Commissioners to know that she was encouraged by their choices, and believed the new trustees had knowledge and skills to bring to the Library Board of Trustees (LBT). She expressed gratitude for the appointment of Commissioner Hill as liaison, which she felt would improve communication between the two boards. She shared that when she first began attending LBT meetings, she was worried about the future of the library system. She explained that the meetings over the current year had given her a sense of relief. She stated that the new director had been effective from the start, and that the director's reports to the LBT indicated they understood the current challenges and were enthusiastic to work on them. She added that the new director understood the importance of investing in libraries and ensuring they remained central hubs in the community. She felt hopeful that, with all the recent changes, the library could stabilize and move forward with the resources, staffing, and support it needed to succeed.

Wendy Colborne identified herself as Chief of Staff for the Building and Construction Trades Council of Northern Nevada (BCTCNN). She explained that they supported requiring EVs and hybrid vehicles to contribute to road funding. She stated that Washoe County's roads were critically underfunded and that all vehicles should pay their fair share. She noted that the BCTCNN's preference would be for the State of Nevada's Legislature to act on the issue Statewide, ideally through a vehicle-miles-traveled structure rather than a flat registration fee. She added that they were also concerned about what would happen if the question was put to the voters and failed to pass. She declared that a *No* vote in Washoe County would make it more difficult to pass legislation at the State level. However, she clarified that they would not let the perfect be the enemy of the good, and that the building trades would support the measure if it was put before the voters.

Laura Wetherington displayed a document, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. She thanked Chair Andriola for asking additional questions of the LBT applicants and Commissioner Hill for joining as a liaison. She felt the Board's stewardship of the library system was heartwarming, and asked them to amend future LBT applications to include a question about the applicant's home library. She noted that the previous week the Board had discussed how future appointments to the LBT would be considered by Commission district, and she was curious about the reasoning. She wondered if the primary reason would be to ensure that people within each district were equally represented on the LBT and to ensure that the Board felt represented by their appointments. She stated that she understood and supported those reasons but then questioned whether it would lead to over- or under-representation. She explained that she mapped the number of libraries in each district and noted that some had more than others. She then, prompted by the new library director's recent report, which viewed each branch as a hub of a different micro-community, had a different thought. She mentioned knowing that each library in the system was unique, but that the library director's explanation that the hours, materials, and events at each location were tailored to the needs of the micro-community opened her eyes as to why. She wondered if fairness was part of what the Board was aiming to achieve via appointing by district. She felt it might make sense to consider the districts the Board represented, as well as the library micro-communities the LBT represented, similar to library jurisdictions, so they could see if, for example, District 1 was overrepresented. She wondered if all the recent candidates were coming from the same branch. She expressed that she would hate it if the Board overlooked candidates from Incline Village or Verdi. She alleged that the Sierra View Library had historically been supplying board members to the Board. She announced it was a question she hoped the Board would discuss as they prepared for the next set of applicants. She shared what she described as one last wild idea, which was running a program like the Washoe County Leadership Academy (WCLA) but smaller in scope and budget, in order to work with the library system and develop outreach to potential cohorts, either through each branch or by targeting specific micro-communities, such as underrepresented branches or areas of the County represented by the Library on the Go Bookmobile. She reiterated her request to train the whole community in library trusteeship.

Jane Fox identified herself as the Director of the Larson Institute at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) School of Public Health and the lead for their Street Reach project. She expressed gratitude for the Board's support of the StreetReach project. She reminded the Commissioners that the project was a collaborative effort between the School of Public Health, the Orvis School of Nursing, and several community partners. She explained that they provided street-based healthcare to unsheltered individuals in the community. She noted they were currently offering nursing assessments, wound care, blood-borne virus testing for Hepatitis B (HBV) and Hepatitis C (HCV), and then linking community services for those who tested positive. She added that they were working in the Fourth Street corridor three days a week since launching 12 weeks ago in April. She felt it had been a very busy time. She detailed that they had engaged over 450 individuals on the streets, enrolled 128 patients into their care, provided wound care to over 35 individuals, tested 103 individuals for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and HBV and HCV, and identified 16 past HCV infections and 8 current infections. She mentioned that the positivity rate was approximately eight percent, which was higher than the general population. Beyond medical services, she explained how they connected individuals to primary care, prenatal care, women's health services, behavioral health support, and crisis care. She added that they had also helped individuals access housing, employment resources, and basic needs such as food, clothing, shoes, and showers. She noted that the StreetReach efforts were about meeting people where they were and responding to their most immediate needs. She declared that the financial investment from the Board would significantly expand their reach and build upon the Board's recent transfer of the Mobile Health and Action Clinic, as well as the provisioning of space the team was working on at the Cares Campus through both their street-based services and their Mobile Health and Action Clinic. She explained that with those resources, they would be able to serve more areas in Washoe County and expand their services in the future. She detailed that the expanded services would include a psychiatric nurse practitioner, chronic disease management, preventative care, and oral health screenings with referrals to community dentists. She reiterated her gratitude and that the Board's investment enabled them to provide high-quality, compassionate care to individuals who were too often left without access, all while advancing shared goals in serving the people who were unsheltered in the County.

Penny Brock displayed an image of a cartoon pig with the caption, *You Can Put Lipstick on a Pig. It's Still a Pig*. No copy was submitted for the public record. Addressing Agenda Item 14, she detailed that during her hours of observation in the ROV, the plan for an observation area in the new ROV location was raised. She requested a meeting with Assistant County Manager (ACM) Ryan Gustafson, for herself and another observer, to meet with him and Mr. McDonald to determine whether floor plans were available and view them. She stated it took two weeks, but they had a meeting on June 16 after the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting, from 2:00 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. She shared that she and the other observer arrived, but that Mr. McDonald was not there. She detailed that ACM Gustafson confirmed there were floor plans, though he did not have a copy to share at the time. She noted that Mr. McDonald arrived close to 2:45 p.m., though he had no floor plans. She said she asked where the floor plans were and was told it was not legal for them to see them. She was shocked, as under Nevada law, specifically Public Records Act, Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 239, the Washoe County Elections Department was required to disclose existing compiled plans and records regarding space remodels and implementations. She stated that she told Mr. McDonald that the floor plans were public information paid for by taxpayers, and that they had a right to see them, to which ACM Gustafson agreed. She shared that there was further waiting, with the clock edging closer to the deadline, until Deputy ROV Reginald Greer arrived, also with no floor plans, but with a small copy instead. She explained that she and the other observer could not easily read the different areas on the copy or determine where the observation room would be located. She stated that it was pointed out that the observation room would be a long hallway outside the ballot processing room, with work areas blocked by walls, which she felt meant a lack of transparency. She added that observers would not have chairs or counters for their items and would have to move from window to window along the hallway. She shared that they had expressed concern that observers and other stakeholders had not been asked for input on the floor plans, and that they did not think there would be meaningful, transparent observation of the ballot processing room, as mandated under federal and State law. She reiterated that the floor plan layout was unacceptable. She shared that, then, the elections manager attacked the other observer, and a heated exchange ensued. She described it as shocking behavior by the ROV manager and said his yelling and false accusations were unprofessional.

Veronica Cortes noted she was running for Assembly District 27. She shared that her father used to get box seats for the Reno Rodeo ever since she was a child. She added that when she attended Virginia Palmer Elementary School, she was asked what she wanted to be when she grew up, and she chose a cowgirl in a rodeo. She stated that was the only dream she had wanted to pursue. She shared that her father never allowed her siblings to join organized sports. She elaborated that she enjoyed doing rodeo and became a barrel racer with the Sierra Nevada Junior Rodeo & Gymkhana Club. She shared that she used to sell the programs outside the Reno Rodeo to raise money for the organization. She encouraged parents to get their children into rodeo, adding that they could learn to rodeo from a young age. She noted there would be a free kids' rodeo that Thursday and Friday at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park. She declared it would be hosted by her foundation, Valley Amigos. She described the youth rodeo pathway as moving from Gymkhana to junior rodeo to high school to amateur rodeo, then to pro rodeo. She explained that she was in amateur rodeo right before pro, but broke her arm, received stitches in a leg, and had a child. She felt it was a sign she should stop, so she did. She shared that there were still children who wanted to join and learn, but could not afford it. She announced that she founded Valley Amigos for that reason and that the current top rider in the Mutton Bustin' category was from her organization. She stated that she was an advocate for Sun Valley and that a little over a year ago, she had posted on Facebook that the area should get rid of the vendors on the side of the street, as they could be collecting money from them. She suggested that Washoe County's finances were insolvent and that they could collect revenue from day permits. She felt that after making that suggestion, she received negative feedback from the Sun Valley General Improvement District (SVGID) and others. She shared that there was a woman selling flowers on Father's Day in Sun Valley, and a man walked up and shot the woman and then himself. She stated that she was advocating that Sun Valley was unsafe. She expressed that Sun Valley was not safe, but they still wanted to hold large events. She offered the example of the first day of the Food Truck Thursday event series, where people in a crosswalk were hit by a car. She referenced Rob Pierce on November 4, saying that an agenda item was needed to clarify the desired pattern of growth in Sun Valley. She requested that the Board get that agenda item for the people.

Donna Clontz stated that she worked with senior communities across the County, and wished to speak about a few items on the Agenda for the day, including Item 20, the Hope Landing development project. She expressed that it was something the County desperately needed. She felt that homelessness was a major issue in the County, and that half of the people living at the Cares Campus were seniors aged 60 and up. She explained that many seniors were living on fixed incomes and no longer working, yet costs were rising and putting them in financial trouble. She noted that some were one paycheck, a retirement check, or a Social Security check away from not being able to afford where they lived and would then wind up on the street. For that reason, she thought the housing project was wonderful. She stated that the second topic she wanted to discuss was Agenda Item 21, which concerned taxing EVs and hybrid vehicles. She explained that she and her husband had recently purchased a hybrid vehicle. She thought it was great that the County would begin collecting funds from those who were not buying much gas to help maintain the highways. She liked the idea raised by earlier speakers about finding a way to generate income from people using the roads through the State who were not paying taxes in the community at all. She stated that her final topic had been discussed many times since 2009. She alleged that the Legislature granted the Board the ability to impose a supplemental General Services Tax (GST) of 1 percent per dollar by a simple vote of the Board. She noted it had not been something the Board had wanted to do, but that it would allow for collecting approximately $16 million a year that could be used for any service or need in the County, not simply roads or housing. She urged the Board to look at that measure. She reiterated that there were needs in the County for services supporting all ages, from kids in school to seniors in the community.

Monty Turner announced that he lived in Sun Valley and that the gas tax bothered him. He stated that he owned a 1985 Peterbilt, which held 250 gallons of fuel. He declared that he drove it to Middlegate a few weeks ago, and the round-trip cost him $300 in fuel. He described it as an antique truck that did not haul anything and was only displayed at shows. He shared a story of a call he received on a recent night from a woman in Susanville whose horse had fallen. He noted that he had to drive from Reno at 4 a.m. to pick up the horse, transport it to the vet, and return the trailer to the woman. He declared that by the next morning, the trip had cost him $900 in gas. He stated that most retirees could not afford current prices. He related another story of a woman who lived down the street from him who ran out of gas, so he had to remove fuel from his gas generator and give it to her. He reiterated that she could not afford gas, which meant that she could not afford to get medication, nor afford to do much of anything. He proposed an alcohol tax and a gaming tax as replacements for a gas tax. He felt it made total sense. He explained that many people came to Washoe County and drank alcohol. He related that it was difficult for truckers, that he paid taxes on his driving in both California and Nevada, and did not understand why he had to pay taxes both ways. He shared that another topic he wanted to cover was the apartments being built behind his house. He requested that a wall be put up because construction was dropping rocks, and the debris and dust were constantly making his and his wife's vehicles dirty. He felt it was also not safe to breathe. He stated that Vice Chair Garcia was aware of the fire hazards in that area. He said that for the previous week, he and his wife had been smelling smoke around their house, so he thought his neighbor was doing something with the trees that might cause spontaneous combustion. He alleged that the neighbor below him had smoke coming up from his house, and if that caught in the trees, it could be devastating for the neighborhood.

Matt Buehler identified himself as a retired Air Force veteran with 22 years of service, a 30-year legal resident of Nevada, and a 19-year Washoe County resident. He stated that his purpose was to ask the Board why they certified the 2026 Washoe County primary election results, given what he described as egregious irregularities. He understood that 15,000 or more legal residents did not receive their ballots by mail, as mandated by the NRS. He questioned how they could deny any legal voter the right to vote. He declared that three of the five Commissioners had dictated through their political affiliation that every registered voter in Nevada received a mail ballot unless they personally opted out. He emphasized that the Commissioners had made the rules, and now wanted to step them back after the results were not in their favor. He felt that as a veteran, it was an affront to his dedication and service. He proposed that the affected citizens should file a class action lawsuit against three of the five Commissioners, along with Washoe County and the State of Nevada, to have their property taxes waived or paid by the Commissioners for the 2026 to 2028 election cycle. He thought this was a better alternative than dumping tea into Virginia Lake or the Sparks Marina.

26-0437 **AGENDA ITEM 6** Announcements/Reports.

Chair Andriola asked County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas to speak about the emergency declaration announcement the Board would be hearing, specifically in relation to the presentation from the Board of Fire Commissioners (BOFC) meeting earlier.

CM Thomas shared that she and County Clerk Jan Galassini had signed the emergency declaration, and the Board would be ratifying it. She clarified that it declared a local emergency in response to the impacts of the June 19 flash floods. She announced that the severity of the incident had exceeded local response and resource capabilities. She noted that when conditions continued to pose a significant threat to the safety, health, and welfare of residents, the County formally declared an emergency so they could seek recompensation for those resources. She announced the Board would hear the ratification for the item on Friday.

Commissioner Hill wanted to ensure the Board and community were aware of another upcoming appointment to the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) following a resignation. She was not certain when that would be agendized, but said that the Board would likely use the same slate of candidates they had already received.

PRESENTATIONS

26-0438 **7A1** Taylor Adams, President and CEO of EDAWN, to provide the EDAWN annual update. (All Commission Districts.)

Taylor Adams, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN), conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Northern Nevada Economic Update; What Is EDAWN?; The EDAWN Team; Assisted Companies; EDAWN Assisted Companies FY 25-26 - New Facilities; EDAWN Assisted Companies FY 25-26 - Expansions; Industry Breakdown; Assisted Companies; Out Of Market Attraction; Organizational Performance; Business Attraction; Business Retention and Expansion; Entrepreneurial Development; What's Next?; Thank You!.

Mr. Adams greeted the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas. He introduced himself and acknowledged William Thomas, a member of the EDAWN Board of Trustees, who was in the audience during the meeting. He stated that EDAWN considered the items being presented to the BCC later in the meeting to be of substantial merit, and he opined that all of the public systems required everyone's support. He expressed EDAWN's appreciation for the Board's consideration of the upcoming items and spoke on behalf of the organization, noting that it was common sense to ensure infrastructure was taken care of in the future.

Mr. Adams displayed the slide titled *What Is EDAWN?*. He explained that EDAWN was a public-private partnership (P3) that was established over 43 years ago. He recalled that EDAWN's framework had changed during former Governor Brian Sandoval's administration. He noted that EDAWN presently saw approximately 30 percent of its revenue from public agencies, with reports for the current year reflecting 26 percent. He stated that it was important to note that Washoe County contributed to that revenue through a service agreement that was negotiated annually. He explained that the majority of EDAWN's funding came from contractual work with the Governor's Office of Economic Development, while the remainder, or about 70 percent, was raised in the private sector. He noted that EDAWN was committed to growing and maintaining a vibrant and sustainable economy in Northern Nevada.

Mr. Adams introduced the slide titled *The EDAWN Team* and indicated that he would describe the different teams within EDAWN. He stated that business attraction was what EDAWN was best known for, and it accounted for approximately 23 percent of the organization's work in 2026. He reported that business expansion and retention of existing business partners accounted for the majority of EDAWN's work and that it primarily collaborated with Northern Nevada companies to ensure they could grow locally. He stated that if the promises EDAWN made to the companies that it was attracting to Nevada were not true for the companies already in the area, then the organization's systems were broken. He added that EDAWN spent substantial time working to ensure that existing local businesses had the resources they needed to succeed. He described EDAWN's efforts in entrepreneurial development and explained that the organization believed the free market depended on entrepreneurial activity in many ways and that it represented the gateway to living the American dream for many families. He noted that EDAWN wanted to ensure that there were vast opportunities for creating and growing businesses in Northern Nevada. He reported that he often received questions about who EDAWN worked with, and he clarified that the organization worked exclusively in the commercial and industrial economies, and specifically did not operate in the retail sector. He explained that the Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) worked in that field and did an exceptional job of caring for that community. He noted that, in addition to the teams he had described, EDAWN also handled functions such as investor relations, marketing, and operations.

Mr. Adams showed the *EDAWN Assisted Companies FY 25-26 – New Facilities* slide and provided an overview of the companies EDAWN assisted the year prior. He acknowledged that the Board would likely recognize the slide format, and he commended his team for always trying to make presentations more interesting. He noted that the current presentation was the first time EDAWN was sharing that version of the slide format. He stated that he liked to begin the presentation by providing a list of the data that was used for the charts he would show later. He explained that the slide listed the companies that chose EDAWN in 2025, as well as the jobs they created and the capital investment they were making in the region. He displayed the slide titled *EDAWN Assisted Companies FY 25-26 – Expansions* and noted that the listed results were a combination of EDAWN's efforts in business attraction, retention, expansion, and entrepreneurial development.

Mr. Adams displayed the slide titled *Industry Breakdown*. He indicated that he would review the data included in the slide's chart based on the industry. He noted that the graph reflected that there were 12 projects in advanced manufacturing, which was very important to EDAWN, as advanced manufacturing, logistics, and distribution were all employee-heavy functions. He elaborated that those projects represented companies that were creating jobs for the community and opportunities for local residents. He said that it was interesting that 15 years earlier, approximately half of the young people completing their education in Nevada would leave the State to pursue their desired careers. He remarked on the expansion of manufacturing and logistics, stating that he was glad to see the trade groups represented in the graph. He opined that it was wonderful that it accounted for a healthy share of the local economy, with that data including the 4,000 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), among others. He reported that seven out of ten young people who completed their education in Nevada were currently choosing to stay in the area. He explained that EDAWN wanted that statistic raised so all youth were choosing to stay in the region, and he noted that incremental work mattered. He stated that the importance of those factors was shown in the manufacturing and distribution fields.

Mr. Adams reported that EDAWN had found that Nevada was becoming a location for technology-based companies to relocate. He surmised that many people believed that such a trend meant an increase in data centers, and he emphasized that was not what he was referring to. He acknowledged that while data centers were certainly relocating to Northern Nevada, that trend was not represented in the slide's data for technology companies. He explained that the provided statistic comprised companies he would endorse and were listed on the *EDAWN Assisted Companies FY 25-26 – Expansions* slide, such as SendCutSend and Future Form Manufacturing, as well as Ampersand Incorporated (Inc.), as shown on the *EDAWN Assisted Companies FY 25-26 – New Facilities* slide. He opined that those businesses were great manufacturing companies that just happened to be in the technology industry. He noted that one of the companies he had mentioned had recently achieved a $1 billion valuation, which designated it as a *unicorn*. He stated that Tesla had been the only company EDAWN had worked with prior to 2026 that achieved such a valuation upon its arrival in the region in 2017. He reported that Positron Artificial Intelligence (AI) and SendCutSend were two local companies that achieved the same milestone in 2026, which was incredible progress for the region's community, future economy, and financial maturity.

Mr. Adams referred to the *Out of Market Attraction* slide. He noted that he often heard from others that every company that was coming to the region was from California. He acknowledged that a large portion of the companies coming to the area were from California, as technology manufacturers in the Silicon Valley region experienced difficulty scaling and expanding in that community. He emphasized that his statement was not meant to create a political conversation about the cost of real estate and the other factors involved with developing those decisions, but rather to highlight how the local cost of real estate, the low tax environment, the location being close to their origin, and the appropriate, responsible regulatory environment allowed Northern Nevada to be a preferred destination for those companies. He reiterated that those factors resulted in continued inbound industrial business traffic from California. He referred to the map on the slide and noted that each shaded state represented a location from which EDAWN had a business deal come in over the previous two years. He noted that Nevada was not just a preferred destination for companies based in the western United States (US), but also an attractive location throughout the entire Country. He reported that EDAWN had attracted companies from three other continents the prior year and that the organization was excited about the region becoming a preferred global destination. He thanked the BCC for their role in ensuring EDAWN could continue those efforts by making the region a great place to relocate a business and hire new employees.

Mr. Adams showed the slide titled *Business Attraction*. He reported that, in 2025, EDAWN witnessed the creation of 800 jobs, over $500 million in capital investment, 284 qualified leads, and 155 site visits. He explained that the site visits showed how 155 companies visited Northern Nevada as they made a real estate decision about whether to grow a business in the region. He stated that approximately 5 million square feet (sq ft) of new industrial space was delivered to the region in 2025 due to the great work of local real estate developers, which he thought was exciting, as that square footage represented a tax base and was how the region was able to continue providing for the community's future needs.

Mr. Adams displayed the slide titled *Business Retention and Expansion*. He noted that EDAWN worked directly with 305 companies in 2025, which demonstrated why business retention and expansion were a majority of the organization's efforts. He stated that EDAWN was in a new era for that work, as the organization had greatly expanded its focus. He recalled that when he began his role with EDAWN three years prior, there were only two employees on that team who were meeting with approximately 140 companies each year. He reported that there were about 700 primary companies, as defined by the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), in the region. He explained that EDAWN's goal was to increase the number of companies it met with from 140 to 600, and in his first year with the organization, they met with 250. He recounted that in 2025, EDAWN met with just over 400 and set a goal of meeting with 500 during the current year. He noted that during the following year, EDAWN would set a trend of meeting with 600 Northern Nevada primary companies annually, which had revealed a great deal of work for the organization. He reported that with the 385 companies EDAWN worked directly with in 2026, they were able to assist in adding just under 900 jobs that would be integrated over the next 12 to 24 months. He stated that 687 jobs had been created organically, which he thought was a great number, as those positions were generated by companies EDAWN did not directly assist. He explained that every company did not need EDAWN's help, though the organization wanted to ensure that the great stories happening in Northern Nevada were being told. He opined that it was great that the number of jobs created by companies through their success alone was nearly equal to that of the roles that had been added by companies with EDAWN's assistance. He stated that the creation of just under 700 jobs was a testament to the strength of the region's economy, as they had been created entirely by local businesses growing and finding success. He reported that EDAWN saw nearly $200 million in new capital investment from the region's existing industry, which he described as a very powerful number. He reminded the Board that, if those funds were in the local existing industry, it was an incredible investment in the community. He described the local investment and choice to locate their business in the region over every other community in the world as a very powerful thing for the area's economy. He thanked the Board for their support of EDAWN in ensuring the organization's success.

Mr. Adams showed the *Entrepreneurial Development* slide. He reported that the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year (FY) might have been EDAWN's best year for entrepreneurial development. He introduced EDAWN's Senior Vice President of Entrepreneurial Development, Doug Erwin, and noted that Mr. Erwin was working to quantify statistics for the region's entrepreneurial development. He noted that it was the first time EDAWN was calculating reports on those statistics, and with the end of the FY approaching, they had found that $950 million in venture funding had entered the economy in a single year. He opined that there was no region in the US that would not love to have nearly $1 billion in venture capital enter their community in a single year, especially when one considered the data by population. He emphasized that it was a special year for EDAWN. He explained that EDAWN's Entrepreneurial Development team comprised three employees who, in addition to the achievements listed on the slide, worked with 300 founders to help them live their version of the American dream. He reported that 18 startups were funded, and the $950 million in venture funding was divided amongst them. He noted that 46 startups had been created through the funding methods he had mentioned previously or through family self-funding. He stated that 89 jobs were created through the activity listed on the slide, which he acknowledged might not sound like a high number, but he clarified that those jobs were created by young companies that were possibly just beginning their businesses. He noted that those companies could have founders like those of Microsoft, who began working out of a garage before growing their businesses and creating jobs. He emphasized that those startup companies would shape the region's future, as they were locally founded and their businesses embraced the cultural pillars that embodied the greatness of Northern Nevada. He explained that the 89 jobs created in a single year could likely result in there being thousands of new jobs ten years in the future, as those companies were only beginning to do business. He expressed excitement for that and noted that EDAWN was very happy with the entrepreneurial development results from the previous year.

Mr. Adams displayed the *What's Next?* slide. He noted that EDAWN suspected the next year would include a substantial amount of advanced manufacturing opportunities. He stated that energy generation was really important and referred to his earlier comments regarding data centers. He noted that EDAWN thought computation and data were a really important part of the community's future, and he compared data centers to a digital parking lot. He explained that parking lots were constructed around businesses because they unlocked opportunities nearby, which EDAWN believed was true for data centers as well, given their impact across the Country. He emphasized that EDAWN would be the first organization to acknowledge that no use should occur in any community without regulations and a full understanding of the impacts an industry could have on the surrounding environment and local residents. He stated that while EDAWN fully supported the industry, the organization equally believed it was important to have common-sense regulations that governed its use within their jurisdiction and throughout all of Nevada. He noted that the organization was aware that the computational uses were energy-intensive, so EDAWN did not want to wait to determine the right set. He reported that EDAWN was actively working to bring a new generation to the community that was appropriately located so it would not adversely affect residents, while still actively participating in safeguarding the electric rate and the local cost of living. He explained that he spent approximately half of his time working on energy generation to ensure the necessary actions were being taken to be a good community partner for the jurisdiction and all the other individuals EDAWN served, even before those regulations were implemented.

Mr. Adams elaborated that EDAWN had similar feelings for both energy generation and the water industries. He stated that the organization was fortunate to have great partners in that field, including Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) General Manager John Zimmerman. He acknowledged that many members of the BCC also served on TMWA's Board of Directors. He noted that EDAWN was fully supportive of the work being done in that field to ensure that water uses were being provided currently and in the future. He explained that technology was the next category of goals EDAWN was working on, as technology and manufacturing were coming together and collaborating in Northern Nevada. He reported that the majority of manufacturing businesses the organization had seen had an extensive technology component, which he attributed to the success of Tesla drawing companies like Redwood Materials and many similar businesses to the region over the previous ten years. He noted that EDAWN was focusing on ensuring that employees in the region knew how to work at those companies and that the organization would continue to provide great opportunities for employment growth and career expansion for the resident population in the future. He showed the *Thank You!* slide, concluding his presentation by thanking the Board and emphasizing that he would be happy to answer any questions.

Chair Andriola thanked Mr. Adams and noted that another interesting statistic was that EDAWN was composed of a small but mighty team. She wondered how much each member of EDAWN's staff generated to benefit the community per person. She stated that she had lived in the region for nearly 40 years, and attested that the data Mr. Adams had shared were exemplary. Mr. Adams thanked Chair Andriola and responded that her requested number was one of the figures he was not yet prepared to answer. He remarked that he had seen a draft of that data, though it was not something EDAWN could fully defend, as they were still confirming those calculations. He noted that one of the reports he would be sharing with the BCC in the future was some true fiscal impact data that was based purely on the net new real estate tax generated in the jurisdiction. He opined that it was a powerful number to present to the Board, and stated that he wanted to have it prepared for the current presentation, though it was not yet ready. He hoped to have those figures prepared to provide to the Board within the following two weeks. Chair Andriola stated that the Board would anticipate seeing them.

Commissioner Herman commended Mr. Adams for providing a wonderful presentation.

Chair Andriola invited Vice Chair Garcia to ask Mr. Adams any questions, as she served on the EDAWN Board of Trustees. She noted that her desire was to ensure that Vice Chair Garcia was recognized for her service on that board, as those meetings were held very early in the morning. Vice Chair Garcia agreed and opined that the meetings were great. She thanked Mr. Adams for his annual report and leadership. She referred to the slide titled *Entrepreneurial Development* and acknowledged that Mr. Adams had focused heavily on the statistics included on the slide. She stated that the slide was very exciting, and she thought it was often overlooked when discussing the financial impacts and the change that factor was having on the community. She noted that the US was renowned as being among the top countries in the world for innovation and entrepreneurship. She remarked that EDAWN's small but effective entrepreneurial development staff had generated tremendous results in a short amount of time. She recalled when the BCC approved a $150,000 grant for EDAWN's Startup Week. She noted that the Board had been very curious about the event and interested in helping bolster the entrepreneurial spirit in the County, because they knew amazing things would happen when they invested in the workforce, innovation, and entrepreneurship to create a healthy community. She asked whether EDAWN's entrepreneurial development team had anything else planned for the future. She acknowledged that they had already performed exceptionally well, but expressed curiosity about their long-term vision, as many new startups were being created. She asked what sustainability measures were in place so that the small team could ensure those startups would continue to have resources, and whether EDAWN had a community partner that the organization could transfer those businesses to for further support.

Mr. Adams thanked Vice Chair Garcia for her question and for her service on EDAWN's Board of Trustees. He noted that Vice Chair Garcia's children enjoyed attending several of those meetings each year when they were not in school, and he thought it was wonderful that they would come to listen to the conversations. He thanked Vice Chair Garcia for acknowledging EDAWN's entrepreneur development efforts, and opined that it was important to note that those supported by that team were the most diverse group of business owners the organization worked with. He asserted that when EDAWN mentioned the American dream, it was something the organization truly meant and that it was captured throughout its work. He emphasized that such a goal was particularly applicable to entrepreneurial development, as it was where the most opportunity existed for many citizens who might not have had it before. He noted that Mr. Erwin had established the entrepreneurial development function in EDAWN since the organization was created. He reported that Mr. Erwin had worked at EDAWN for 14 years, and began his role with a mentality that prioritized entrepreneurs, which he developed the program around. He stated that the Startup Week event demonstrated that mentality. He explained that Startup Week was a larger operation than EDAWN could achieve alone and was possibly the most inclusive part of the organization's operations. He noted that EDAWN worked with a broad consortium of community resources to ensure the most suitable resources were shared directly with the right founder at the best possible moment.

Mr. Adams explained that the College of William and Mary conducted research in 2011 for the City of Richmond, Virginia, which first defined the cyclonic effect of an entrepreneurial ecosystem through the metaphor of a founder standing on the ground with a cyclone above them, composed of several inputs. He described some of the inputs associated with an entrepreneurial ecosystem, including access to capital, mentoring, joint venturing, initial opportunity, and process outsourcing. He stated that it was EDAWN's job to attempt to identify which of those inputs were beneficial and provide them to the founder at the right time. He opined that such work was important and represented a responsibility greater than EDAWN's entrepreneurial development team alone could handle. He suspected that more of those efforts would be conducted in the future.

Mr. Adams expressed his excitement that EDAWN was currently seeing many founders of young companies from California and other parts of the Country approach the organization to grow and scale their businesses. He reported that there was an abundance of wealth relocating to Nevada's portion of Lake Tahoe. He opined that it was interesting how EDAWN had noticed that wealth had brought many individuals with fairly broad technological expertise, who were willing to invest in the local community when given the opportunity. He stated that EDAWN believed that the technology and technological manufacturing industries would continue to represent the majority of entrepreneurial trends. He acknowledged that EDAWN currently had a significant amount of work left to do in addressing the employee-related issues associated with those trends, as there were not enough people in the region working in those specific fields to adequately staff those businesses without relocating workers from other parts of the Country. He reported that EDAWN was working with the University of Virginia, the Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC), and the Washoe County School District (WCSD) to ensure that they were reinforcing those needs in the region. He explained that EDAWN believed that if the organization could address the shortage, there would be a significant opportunity in the future for technology startup creation, funding, and scaling.

Vice Chair Garcia referred to the quote on EDAWN's website, which included the phrase *a small-town feel with big city benefits*. She noted that the quote corresponded well with what EDAWN had built in the region, and she thanked Mr. Adams.

Commissioner Hill thanked Mr. Adams and said his presentation was great. She commended him and EDAWN's staff. She acknowledged that other regions across the State were experiencing difficulty, while Northern Nevada's industry was thriving, which she attributed largely to the relentless work EDAWN had done to ensure that people wanted to move to Nevada. She expressed curiosity about what Mr. Adams heard from those he had spoken to who ultimately chose not to relocate to the region, despite the many economic development benefits in Nevada. She asked what the top three reasons those individuals had provided for not choosing to come to Washoe County or Storey County.

Mr. Adams answered that the most common reason the region lost those opportunities to other regions was that larger communities had slightly more capital to offer in business dealings. He clarified that the issue was not necessarily about abatement incentives, but rather was the reality of EDAWN's research into communities in the southeastern US. He reported that he was currently primarily competing with Huntsville, Alabama. He noted that EDAWN was attempting to finalize a major business deal, but the company was ultimately deciding between relocating to Northern Nevada and Alabama. He requested that the Board recognize that the incentives he had mentioned were calculated by adding all of the taxes the company would pay, projecting those estimates over a ten-year period, and identifying a portion of those funds to give back. He explained that such projections were difficult to calculate for Nevada because offers could not be made for a tax that did not exist. He clarified that when he had mentioned other communities offering capital or actual cash in those negotiations, it was essentially an advance against taxes that the company would have to pay in that location. He reiterated that those same taxes did not exist in Nevada at all. He stated that EDAWN would explain during those dealings that, while the competing community might offer the business a ten-year incentive, the same levy did not exist in Nevada, so the company would never have to pay the tax if it relocated to the region.

Mr. Adams noted that Northern Nevada often won out over other communities due to that tax system, but the challenge was that a company sometimes needed a cash advance to make the deal financeable, since that was often counted as equity by a bank. He reported that those concerns had been the reality for the previous two years due to high rates and market uncertainty. He noted that there were also other inputs associated with that issue, and he emphasized the need to acknowledge that, despite many having suspected that fuel costs and the ten-year US Treasury yields would be on a downward trajectory, current events in Iran had halted those trends. He expressed hope that those international conflicts would conclude, and that the recent trend of oil rates tentatively decreasing would continue. He stated that EDAWN wanted to see the ten-year US Treasury yields follow that trend and decrease as well, as that would be a critical factor in new housing developments being built and residents purchasing homes again. He explained that the US Treasury yield needed to come down, as fixed mortgage rates largely fluctuated in tandem with it, which had impacted the region, as there had been less owner-occupied housing and fewer housing projects begun in the region than he would have liked. He directed his comments toward the residential development community and acknowledged that the market had not been conducive to those matters, given trends in ten-year US Treasury yields and the Federal Reserve having kept rates high for an extended period. He noted that the Federal Reserve was trying to lower rates, though due to the conflict in Iran, it was reported that they might have to raise them again. He emphasized that it was important to know that the Federal Reserve had been on a trend toward lowering rates, and that the ten-year US Treasury had not moved due to market uncertainty. He stated that the market was expected to return to its normal trajectory in the upcoming fiscal quarters, at which point he believed the issues he had described could be resolved.

Mr. Adams explained that the third reason companies might choose to move elsewhere was related to the fact that many of the communities that Northern Nevada competed with were close to other large, dense urban areas, unlike the local region. He noted that the region acted almost as a standalone, self-sustaining community, which he opined was incredible for residents but posed an issue for companies shipping goods elsewhere due to the potential need for longer delivery distances. He explained that companies on the East Coast could access 70 percent of the US population in one day by truck from wherever they were based. He acknowledged that while Northern Nevada did not offer the same population density, it was the preferred region to be located in order to access the other 30 percent of the population. He asserted that as companies continued to grow and expand into the region, Northern Nevada would continue to out-compete other communities. He explained that the reasons he had provided for choosing other markets were factors EDAWN needed to focus on to ensure it remained competitive and stayed ahead of other areas, including Salt Lake City, Utah, and Boise, Idaho.

Commissioner Hill thanked Mr. Adams and noted that his explanation was great, unexpected, and very interesting. Chair Andriola noted that her colleagues on the BCC were wonderful and had already asked all the questions she had intended to inquire about. She noted that she had intended to discuss any barriers EDAWN faced and wanted to bring attention to the Startup Week event. She expressed appreciation for Mr. Adams having attended the meeting and presented his report to the Board. She stated that his presentation was great and she was hopeful to review the fiscal impact data Mr. Adams had mentioned to learn what the organization had achieved and the progress EDAWN had made for the goal it set of meeting with 600 Northern Nevada businesses. She opined that it would be very helpful for Mr. Adams to keep the Board informed on those matters. She described the Board's appreciation for his hard work, acknowledged that EDAWN was comprised of a small but effective team, and asked Mr. Adams to extend her thanks to those staff members as well.

Mr. Adams thanked the Board, noted his appreciation for their time, and stated that it had been wonderful to be with them.

26-0439 **<u>7A2</u>** Tracey Bowles, Public Guardian to discuss updates to the Public Guardian Department data, innovative solutions to current challenges, and department successes. (All Commission Districts.)

Public Guardian (PG) Tracey Bowles conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Washoe County Public Guardian Annual Update; Mission; Budget; Guiding Principles; Fun Facts; Caseload 1:30 Ratio*; Caseload Numbers 2025; Estate Management; Mandatory Reports; Continuing Support Given Budgetary Considerations; Case Management Pilot Project; Pilot Design and Implementation; Outcomes and Recommendation; Exploration in AI; Intern Program with University of Nevada School of Social Work; Internal Training Academy; Plans for Fiscal Year 2027; Looking to the Future; Questions?.

Ms. Bowles said the County had a mission to sustain a safe and healthy community, and she believed the PG's Office was a small part of that mission. She read from the *Mission* slide and explained that the PG's Office served about 300 individuals who were appointed by the Second Judicial District Court (SJDC) because those individuals lacked capacity. She said the individuals were 18 years of age or older, with the oldest currently seeking assistance in their 90s. She noted that the PG's Office provided a variety of services similar to those of case management workers but different, as the staff made decisions for protected persons.

Ms. Bowles referred to the slide titled *Budget* and pointed out that the PG's Office had 3 fiscal staff, 3 administrative staff, 11 guardian case managers, and 2 supervising guardian case managers. She said that the authority of the PG's Office was derived under the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 159 and 253, as well as anything contained within Titles 12 and 13. She referenced the *Standards and Ethics of Guardian* slide and indicated that the PG's Office followed the guiding principle of the National Guardianship Association's (NGAs) standards of ethics. She recalled that she had previously provided the Board with an overview of the standards at a Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting the previous year. She reported that the PG's Office had six certified guardians through the Center for Guardianship Certification (CGC). She said that certifications had become incentivized within the PG's Office over the last few years. She mentioned that the CGC was organizing an agency certification for the future and said that the PG's Office had participated in discussions with the CGC regarding the agency benefits associated with becoming departmentally certified.

Ms. Bowles relayed information from the slide titled *Fun Facts* and said that most of the PG's clientele were over the age of 65, with a growing segment between 40 and 65. She indicated that the individuals between 40 and 65 were difficult to place because they experienced housing challenges and likely came into the PG's service as homeless. She referred to the *Caseload 1:30 Ratio** slide and noted that the PG's Office did not experience an increase in new cases over the previous year; however, the current clientele was living longer, which raised the overall caseload from 277 to 302. She said that the PG's Office was experiencing its highest caseload since its inception. She reported that no new staff had been added to the PG's Office, resulting in an average caseload of roughly 30 per employee. She pointed out that the *Caseload Numbers 2025* slide contained data from June 2025 to June 2026 and that some case managers were managing almost 50 clients.

Ms. Bowles referred to the *Estate Management* slide and noted that the funds had decreased over the past year due to the PG's Office locating other practitioners in the community who could take cases with substantial funding. She said there were community partners to whom referrals could be made for other guardianship services, which helped limit the County's liability. She pointed out that the *Mandatory Reports* slide displayed information related to the mandatory reports due to the SJDC. She believed that the data was not great, but that it was important to be transparent when there were challenges. She explained that the timeliness of the annual reports had decreased while inventories had increased. She said that inventory improvements had occurred due to structural changes within the agency. She recalled that the PG's Office presented the previous year and had asked the Board for improvements due to the challenges the office was experiencing. She read from the slide titled *Continuing Support Given Budgetary Considerations* and said that the PG's Office would like to streamline reporting and paperwork burdens, process terminations efficiently, simplify policies and procedures, foster teamwork, and engage private providers and family members in guardianships.

Ms. Bowles referred to the *Case Management Pilot Project: Role-Based Workflow Redesign* slide and recalled that in the previous July, the PG's Office performed an internal audit to better understand its strengths and challenges. She felt the data was well collected; however, it showed the department was struggling to manage its workload. She reported that two senior managers proposed changes to how the work was performed. She asserted that she believed good ideas came from everywhere and encouraged staff to share their ideas. She said that many conversations were held about how the workload could be adjusted to improve success. She relayed that after the audit concluded, shutdown work, including cleanup, was performed before a pilot project could begin. She said that the goal of the pilot program was to strengthen documentation, reporting, and accountability while streamlining efficiency and teamwork.

Ms. Bowles read from the *Pilot Design and Implementation* slide and noted that, normally, a case manager was assigned to a single person and performed many investigative tasks to better understand the individual and to better organize resources. She said that some of the tasks were financially driven while others were more personal. She explained that the pilot program's objective was to separate personally-oriented tasks and assign financially-oriented tasks to more financially-minded staff. She said the change in workflow was due to the idea that it was more difficult to stop desk work to go into the field, and vice versa. She opined that the new workflow allowed staff to remain focused on a single task category, thereby reducing interruptions. She asserted that many meetings were held throughout the change to keep everyone informed and to allow staff to provide feedback.

Ms. Bowles referenced the *Outcomes and Recommendation* slide and explained that with the new pilot program, work was audited monthly to ensure consistency and compliance. She noted reports of faster compliance, task prioritization, and resource marshaling, which she believed were critical to paying for services, obtaining placements, and marshaling assets more efficiently at the forefront of the case. She said that staff had experienced stronger internal collaboration with clear boundaries, creating a positive workflow. She noted that many members of staff reported that the psychological pressure of their work had decreased because they no longer had to worry about what other staff members were doing, due to increased transparency. She asserted that the program would continue with further refinements as needed.

Ms. Bowles read from the *Exploration in AI* slide and noted that artificial intelligence (AI) was being researched as a potential option to offset paperwork. She asserted that the PG's Office was not a psychologist's, internist's, or cardiologist's office, but rather a place where documents containing specialized information had to be read. She explained that the goal of reading such documents was to understand what the information was and how to address the protected persons' needs. She said that staff made monthly visits to clients to report how they were doing, what they needed, and how to follow up. She mentioned that at the end of the year, reports were provided to the SJDC. She said that using AI would involve uploading internal and external reports to a safe, secure system accessible only to staff. She speculated that AI would assist the staff in reading the documents to formalize the annual reporting. She clarified that the use of AI in reporting was still in the testing phase and had not been released. She said that the AI proposal would be presented at the NGA Conference in October for other guardians to witness.

Ms. Bowles referenced the *Intern Program with University of Nevada School of Social Work* slide and believed that the 2026 intern program was successful. She explained that a master's student from the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) School of Social Work worked with the PG's Office to create a document and system for reviewing policies and procedures with staff, and to use the collaboration to further improve Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). She reported that the student completed the guardian-of-person SOP during her internship, which the office appreciated. She said the student learned a lot about guardianship, policymaking, and behavioral health in the process. She referred to the *Internal Training Academy* slide and recalled that she had informed the Board of the Internal Training Academy the previous year. She said that Supervising Guardian Case Manager Sue Weyl was able to present at the NGA Conference in Washington the previous October.

Ms. Bowles read from the *Plans for Fiscal Year 2027* slide and explained that the PG's Office hoped to have outcome measures for the AI project. She said the team also anticipated implementing a comprehensive communication plan. She recalled that staff had met with the Communications department and had organized great ideas. She reported that she would be speaking at the North Valleys Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) meeting the following month with the Public Administrator. She said that continuing progress regarding the internal SOP was important and that a peer audit program would be implemented soon.

Chair Andriola indicated that every presentation Ms. Bowles provided included improvements the PG's Office had made for the community. Ms. Bowles asserted that the team worked hard. Commissioner Herman noted that she looked forward to Ms. Bowles' visit to the North Valleys CAB meeting. Vice Chair Garcia said that the presentation was great and appreciated the amount of reporting the PG's Office was required to do. She asked whether reporting waivers were available to apply for or whether the Board could advocate for them. Ms. Bowles explained that NRS did not allow the PG to pause its work, but noted that the SJDC had been very kind in its partnership. She said that sometimes the reporting period was a struggle, and the SJDC had allowed for an oral report in lieu of a written report. She relayed that the PG's Office had to report any time an individual moved and used to have to report when that person went on vacation, but the policy was changed by statute. She said she had been working to understand what was necessary for the report. She clarified that her staff cared deeply for their clients, but the reports needed to be concise for the SJDC. She said that not only did the staff have to write many reports, but they also had to seek SJDC permission at many stages of the process, such as when selling a client's home or reinvesting funds. She speculated that it would be helpful if the PG's Office could decline a client or triage cases; however, an NRS stated that staff had to manage the case upon submission. She asserted that there were many times when the staff had to advocate for clients who did not need guardians or who had located family members. She said that the family members were educated on guardianship because myths were being perpetuated in the community, such as the need for an attorney before becoming a guardian, funding the client with personal funds, becoming a caretaker, or making every decision for the individual. She opined that people were scared to become a guardian because the SJDC was involved; however, the PG's Office attempted to educate family members to help them understand what guardianship truly was. She expressed appreciation for Vice Chair Garcia's question and urged her and the Board to consider ideas that could be implemented to lessen the burden on staff for each additional case. She felt that the PG's Office wanted to do a good job and did not like to fail, but when caseloads were significantly increased, it was a concern. Vice Chair Garcia commended the work of the PG's Office.

Commissioner Hill expressed appreciation for the PG's Office and believed that they handled very difficult cases. She indicated that, unfortunately, the government was unable to pause work and that everyone needed care. She said she loved the idea of figuring out how to better educate family members about the process and the support available. She expressed gratitude to the PG's Office for continuing to improve following their recent audit. She said that if the County were to implement artificial intelligence (AI), it needed to be a closed system. She asked Ms. Bowles to keep the Board apprised of the work being performed. She opined that every department had difficulty finding proper housing for vulnerable individuals. She reiterated her thanks to Ms. Bowles and the PG's Office.

Chair Andriola commended the team's work and believed it reflected the leadership characteristics of the PG's Office. She speculated that embracing Madison AI and researching other technologies could sometimes be scary due to uncertainties. She believed that measurable outcomes were important and that witnessing progress in relationship-building and education would be interesting. She opined that separating duties and giving staff the ability to reduce workloads were important for concentration and accomplishment. She said that there might be hindrances, but they could also relieve concerns for staff. Ms. Bowles thanked the Board.

<u>12:01 p.m.</u> **The Board recessed.**

<u>12:11 p.m.</u> **The Board reconvened with Commissioner Clark absent.**

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Chair Andriola announced that Agenda Item 21 would be heard next.

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26-0440 **<u>AGENDA ITEM 21</u>** Discussion and possible adoption of Resolution R26-25 as the "2026 Streets and Highways Funding Advisory Question Resolution", thereby approving submittal of an advisory question to the registered voters of Washoe County at the General Election on Tuesday, November 3, 2026 concerning the need for new fees to be imposed on electric and hybrid vehicles to pay for roadway construction and maintenance, as requested by the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) Executive Director Bill Thomas conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: 2026 Street and Highway Funding Advisory Question; How Roads Are Funded Today; Local Fuel Tax Investments; 2026 Pavement Preservation Program; Challenge: Revenue is no longer keeping pace with system needs; Vehicle Miles Traveled; Taxable Gallons Sold; Changing Vehicle Fleet; Fuel Taxes Lost; Options Explored; Electric Vehicle Fees and Taxes by State; Polling: Supports Registration Fees; Supporters cite the need to invest; Poll #2: Support Continues; Why This Matters to Washoe County; Thank you!.

Chair Andriola welcomed Mr. Thomas and asked him to explain the RTC's authority.

Mr. Thomas thanked County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas and her staff, as well as Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Michael Large, for their assistance in bringing Agenda Item 21 forward. He explained that the RTC served as the steward of fuel and sales tax revenues collected in Washoe County for public transportation. He explained that the RTC Board was composed of elected officials from the Cities of Reno and Sparks and Washoe County. He clarified that the RTC did not have independent authority to regulate, levy taxes, or establish fees. He reiterated that the RTC served on behalf of the elected bodies and residents of Washoe County to ensure designated transportation funding was spent appropriately.

Chair Andriola recognized Commissioner Hill and Vice Chair Garcia as members of the RTC Board. She thanked Mr. Thomas for his explanation and noted there had been many discussions and proposed solutions. She added that the Legislature was the appropriate place to explore additional opportunities.

Mr. Thomas thanked the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for the opportunity to speak and mentioned that, although the BCC was likely familiar with the information, it was important to share it with the public. He stated that the presentation included the important facts that prompted the RTC to ask important questions.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *How Roads Are Funded Today* and said that infrastructure was critical to the quality of life and to society's ability to function. He shared that everyone attending the meeting had used roads during their travel, whether by vehicle or bus. He noted that infrastructure, including roads, was a necessity of daily life, and that many people did not fully understand how roads were funded. He stated that the slide included a chart illustrating the scale of road funding. He explained that Washoe County voters, through the RTC's five-year gas tax (RTC-5), chose to fund not only road maintenance but also projects that addressed community concerns, such as widening roads and improving safety. He commented that the slide showed expenditures over the previous five years, which he believed would help share detailed information about the funding needed to maintain roads.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Local Fuel Tax Investments* and said the significant projects shown had recently been completed and likely would not have been completed or would have been delayed without the local revenue source. He highlighted the recently completed Mill Street Capacity Project, which provided additional capacity for vehicles entering and exiting Mill Street and improved safety. He shared that safety was a constant consideration when discussing transportation. He explained that funding was not solely used for widening roads or repairing pavement, but also for improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling along roads with heavy traffic and high speeds. He stated that the Arlington Avenue Bridge Project was highly impactful and would not have been completed without the local fuel tax. He indicated that the slide covered only a few of the larger projects and emphasized that transportation projects were costly, due to rising construction material prices.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *2026 Pavement Preservation Program* and said it explained which roads the RTC maintained. He noted that roadway quality was something the community experienced every day and that, as soon as road projects were completed, roads began to deteriorate. He explained that the fuel tax in Washoe County enabled the RTC to pursue a philosophy of maintaining good roads in good condition rather than focusing solely on the worst roads and directing all available funding toward a single roadway. He informed that the RTC evaluated road quality annually using the nationally recognized Pavement Condition Index (PCI), which served as the national standard for road quality. He shared that Washoe County's score was 80, which indicated that roads were in good condition, generally smooth, with minor cracking and normal wear. He pointed out that preventive maintenance was the most effective way to optimize public tax dollars by preserving roads before costly reconstruction was required. He noted that maintaining roads in good condition enabled more improvements while ensuring the public experienced safe, acceptable roadway conditions.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Challenge: Revenue is no longer keeping pace with system needs* and said that available revenue resources were not keeping pace with the transportation system's needs. He suggested that the public policy question had been under discussion for more than six years. He believed that Agenda Item 21 was an intentional proposal and the culmination of many years of conversation involving not only the RTC and regional partners but also discussions with the Legislature.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Vehicle Miles Traveled* and said he believed the next two slides would demonstrate the magnitude of the issue. He explained that the increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) throughout the community was driven not only by population growth, but also by people driving more. He added that the VMT was not a static measure and continued to grow, resulting in increased wear and tear on roadways and a greater need to address congestion.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Taxable Gallons Sold* and said the decline in fuel sales was the primary driver of the revenue decrease. He noted that, without the fuel tax revenue, the RTC would not have the resources needed to maintain and improve the transportation systems. He mentioned that available funding was declining because the number of gallons consumed was directly related to the revenue available to maintain and build the system. He pointed out that the trend reflected increasing demand for transportation improvements while available resources continued to decrease.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Changing Vehicle Fleet* and said that the RTC had conducted research to better understand changes in the vehicle fleet. He believed that while some things were intuitive, strong public policy decisions required data and research. He highlighted the trend beginning in June 2022, showing that electric vehicles (EVs) and hybrid vehicles continued to increase as a percentage of the overall vehicle fleet. He acknowledged that cars were generally becoming more fuel-efficient but noted that EVs were not contributing to the fuel tax revenue.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Fuel Taxes Lost* and said the RTC had quantified the impact of lost fuel tax revenue in Washoe County. He explained that the slide showed the difference in fuel taxes paid by EVs and hybrid vehicles compared to what would have been paid by vehicles with internal combustion engines. He mentioned that if all vehicles in the fleet contributed at the same level, approximately $15 million in additional revenue would be available for transportation investments in the community. He suggested that the information demonstrated the scale of the challenge and the importance of addressing it proactively before it became a crisis.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Options Explored* and said that, before bringing the item to the Board, the RTC asked questions to identify and evaluate potential options. He noted that the RTC had engaged the Kenny Guinn Center, a nonpartisan public policy organization focused on conducting objective analysis to inform public policy. He shared that the VMT was viewed as a potential long-term alternative to the gas tax, requiring individuals to pay based on the number of miles driven, an option that had been discussed for many years. He mentioned that implementing a VMT system would likely be the most complex and challenging option. He believed the cost of implementing a VMT system would likely be substantial, as it would require developing a new data-collection and billing system. He explained that the fuel tax system was simpler because the tax was collected incrementally when individuals purchased fuel and was incorporated into the pump price, rather than being assessed as a separate charge. He stated that the RTC had conducted research and that there had also been national studies examining EV charging based on kilowatt-hours. He described the approach as highly complex because it would involve a different energy source delivered through a different system. He explained that determining how to separate energy used for EV charging from all other household electricity usage and then reporting that information to a system capable of assessing and collecting the charge would be challenging. He indicated that all options would be considered, while emphasizing the need for a near-term solution. He stated that the Kenny Guinn Center recommended implementing an enhanced registration fee.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Electric Vehicle Fees and Taxes by State* and said that Nevada was not the only state considering an EV registration fee. He noted that the slide showed only ten states in the Country had not yet implemented such a fee. He suggested that many states had likely experienced a decline in gas tax revenue due to increased EV’s. He speculated that implementing a registration fee was the most economical and efficient approach to addressing the issue.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Polling: Supports Registration Fees* and said that, to gauge the community's views on the issue, a poll of 800 registered voters was conducted in December 2025. He noted that the RTC had examined approaches used in other states and had worked with the Kenny Guinn Center, but had not yet gathered community sentiment. He shared that the poll found that six in ten respondents supported a fee on EVs and hybrid vehicles.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Supporters cite the need to invest…* and said that the RTC examined the public feedback and found that the common public sentiment was that EV and hybrid vehicle owners should contribute to maintaining infrastructure.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Poll #2: Support Continues* and said that, given national issues such as rising fuel prices, the war in Iran, and other factors, a second poll was conducted in early June. He reported that the results were consistent with the first poll, with six in ten respondents saying the proposal was the fair thing to do and supporting placing an advisory question before the public. He emphasized that Agenda Item 21 did not propose imposing a tax or fee but rather sought to gauge public sentiment in Washoe County on a viable and reasonable solution to address the funding shortfall for transportation improvements.

Mr. Thomas reviewed the slide titled *Why This Matters to Washoe County* and emphasized the importance of maintaining good road conditions. He explained that without continued investment, roads would deteriorate and require more costly repairs. He indicated that determining which roads to prioritize for repair could be difficult. He noted the need for safety improvements and the lack of a dedicated revenue source to fund major transportation improvement projects. He reiterated that a safety project on Mill Street, which installed traffic signals to allow pedestrians to cross safely at Golden Lane, would not have been possible without fuel tax revenue. He stated that the poll indicated the public's primary concern was traffic congestion. He added that fuel tax revenue was the only funding source available to widen roads, install new traffic signals, and implement advanced technologies for an intelligent transportation system to improve traffic flow and roadway efficiency.

Chair Andriola explained that the proposal would be presented to the public as an advisory question and emphasized that the BCC would not be imposing a tax. She asked Mr. Thomas to explain the next steps, including the process for placing the advisory question on the ballot and the anticipated timeline.

Mr. Thomas stated that the RTC lacked the authority to impose a new fee or tax and that Washoe County was limited to what the Legislature authorized. He mentioned that, currently, neither the RTC nor Washoe County had the authority to pass a law to tax or charge a fee on EVs. He explained that after the advisory ballot question was placed on the November ballot and the results were received, the next step would be to present a proposed bill during the 27th Legislative Session. He said that while the RTC did not control the outcome in the Legislature, it would lobby strongly for Washoe County's needs. He acknowledged that the issue had been discussed during the previous two sessions and would likely be considered again. He indicated that there would be an advantage in aligning the proposal with public sentiment and understanding the needs.

Chair Andriola thanked Mr. Thomas for the clarification. She felt that there was often a misunderstanding regarding which agencies had the authority to take certain actions and added that the Legislature had overall authority. She thanked Mr. Thomas for his presentation.

On the call for public comment, Katherine Yriarte said she agreed that the proposal was a good start toward alleviating revenue losses and creating greater equity for gas- and diesel-powered vehicles. She suggested addressing the issue of people registering their vehicles outside Washoe County to avoid local taxes and finding a way to capture that revenue. She felt that the County was missing out on significant revenue from people who did not live in Washoe County but were passing through the State. She alleged that many commercial transportation businesses, such as Amazon and the United Parcel Service (UPS), operated fleets in Nevada, many of which were registered outside Washoe County or the State. She hoped there would be an opportunity to require those businesses to register their fleets where their business operated, or to pay a fee to help fund road maintenance. She acknowledged that Agenda Item 21 was a great start, but hoped Washoe County could maximize revenue for the community.

Jeff Church displayed a document, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. He provided his website, which he maintained. He said he strongly disagreed with some of the statements included in the Kenny Guinn Center Report. He believed that Mr. Thomas failed to mention that taxis and buses were exempt from the RTC-5. He said that he opposed any new ballot measure that would increase taxes on EV and hybrid vehicle owners. He remarked that the issue of clean air had not been addressed and suggested that the BCC was represented on an air resource board. He said he contributed to cleaner air by owning an EV and reducing dependence on foreign oil. He noted that it was unclear what it would accomplish if he traded in his EV for a gas-powered Honda Civic, stating that it would not reduce the number of cars on the road. He suggested that a solution could be to explore light rail transit (LRT). He alleged that the RTC was opposed to LRT. He questioned whether the fee would apply retroactively because he already owned an EV. He believed the advisory question raised legal concerns regarding the proposed wording. He asserted that he had successfully litigated one of the most recent ballot measures and mentioned that he was willing to speak with the RTC's attorney to share his views if he was mistaken. He recalled that former President George Washington had labeled some enlisted troops as cunning. Mr. Church described taxpayers as being cunning and added that, when he needed fuel, he drove to Carson City. He said that Mr. Thomas attributed the decline in revenue to EVs, but Mr. Church did not believe that there had been one. He indicated that more than $110 million had been generated. He thought many people chose to purchase fuel in Fernley or Carson City and surmised that, if fuel taxes continued to increase, more people would buy their fuel outside the area. He opined that the RTC had not established the need for the proposal and that it could expose the RTC to potential litigation. He suggested that LRT was likely the solution. He shared that there had recently been a fatal accident, which he felt was occurring almost daily near USA Parkway. He indicated that increasing taxes on EVs would not reduce traffic and stated that he was already paying his fair share.

Veronica Cortes displayed a document. No copy was submitted for the public record. She said that she was an advocate for Sun Valley residents and explained that the document displayed was an RTC network plan survey. She shared that the RTC had surveyed about ten people, and she read responses indicating that pedestrians did not feel safe due to the lack of sidewalks. She read responses stating there was too much traffic and that vehicles were traveling at high speeds. She mentioned that when residents were asked how often they rode their bicycles or how safe they felt riding them, responses included rarely, never, and not at all safe. She shared that the questionnaire asked residents to rate the condition of walking and biking features in the neighborhood, to which the replies were that new or expanded facilities were needed, including sidewalks, crosswalks, street lighting, traffic signals, bike lanes, path separation from traffic through buffers or barriers, bus stops, and transit access. She said that when residents were asked where they needed to travel, the most common response was the grocery store. She asserted that residents wanted to be able to walk to a local grocery store in Sun Valley, which she felt was impossible because people were dying daily on the streets. She added that Sun Valley did not currently have a grocery store. She stated that a 60 percent statistic was not sufficient for her. She suggested that the RTC contact voters whose ballots had been returned to the Registrar of Voters (ROV), as she alleged those voters could not provide input on the measure because they could not be located. She continued by explaining that some survey responses indicated concerns about excessive traffic, wide ditches, and pedestrians feeling unsafe when crossing the street. She mentioned that, during a recent food truck event, a child had been struck by a vehicle. She said there were many off-road vehicles driving on the streets. She alleged that the police had been defunded, which she believed enabled unlawful activity in Sun Valley. She noted that the off-road vehicles were neither registered nor insured, and that they contributed to road wear and tear. She explained that some streets in Sun Valley were partially paved and partially dirt. She surmised that three agencies shared oversight of roads in Sun Valley and questioned why sufficient funding was not available to repair damaged roads. She suggested that some residents would walk to gas stations to purchase a few gallons of fuel to transport their families to grocery stores and medical appointments. She emphasized that community members opposed additional taxes.

Commissioner Herman thanked Mr. Thomas for his presentation and noted that she was trying to determine what the public needed.

Vice Chair Garcia asked Mr. Thomas to explain the steps the RTC Board had taken and what led them to propose Agenda Item 21.

Mr. Thomas shared that the issue had been discussed for at least six years, dating back to when he was appointed to his position. He acknowledged that the RTC had previously presented to the BCC about future transportation needs, the ability to keep pace with growth, and the condition of the roads. He indicated that the RTC had conducted research in support of previous proposals. He shared that the RTC had engaged its lobbyist, Michael Hillerby, who had worked with the Legislature during the last two sessions, but Mr. Hillerby had been unable to gain momentum. He noted that the RTC examined the issue further and began working with the Kenny Guinn Center. He said the RTC conducted a road maintenance study across the three local governments and the RTC, which found that Washoe County was falling further behind in its road maintenance. He acknowledged that most people did not like paying the fuel tax but stated that it was necessary to maintain roads. He added that the RTC received many complaints about road conditions and noted that all vehicles, regardless of type, used the roads. He said the fundamental question was whether the public wanted safe, well-maintained roads, noting that achieving that goal came at a cost. He explained that, although the proposal was not a final solution, it was intended to promote fairness.

Vice Chair Garcia felt that the historical context was important. She noted that Commissioner Hill served as the RTC Board's Chair and believed the RTC Board had received presentations that the public might not be aware of. She shared that the RTC Board had received information from a maintenance study, the Kenny Guinn Center study, and the results of the first poll conducted by the RTC. She asserted that the RTC had gone beyond its due diligence by conducting a second poll to provide additional information to the BCC. She shared that the RTC Board unanimously approved forwarding the item to the BCC. She clarified that the item was not about making an immediate decision, but rather about allowing voters to decide, which she felt was extremely important. She stated that allowing voters to weigh in would help determine public sentiment and provide greater transparency and accountability by giving elected officials public feedback before making policy recommendations. She said she was comfortable with the process and described it as an exciting time. She indicated that she was not a member of the BCC in 2008 when the fuel tax and its indexing were approved and acknowledged that those decisions likely involved challenging discussions. She stated that she fully supported hearing from voters in November about what they thought was fair. She recognized that there were more drivers on the road, and if those drivers were not contributing to the cost of maintaining the roads, the system would not be sustainable.

Commissioner Hill thanked Mr. Thomas for his hard work, advancing the initiative, and helping the RTC lead the way. She emphasized the importance of Washoe County continuing to receive the necessary funding and stated that, given the Legislature's inaction, it was important to advocate for the community. She cited the need to invest in infrastructure to support community safety and stated that such investments would create high-paying jobs. She believed it was important to understand the RTC's role and its stewardship of taxpayer dollars. She thanked Mr. Thomas for highlighting the RTC's projects and noted that the RTC team had worked hard to complete many successful projects. She shared that the RTC had evaluated LRT as a priority project, but estimated that implementation would cost approximately $2 billion. She mentioned that the RTC was considering transportation improvements beyond road projects. She believed the community would agree that EV and hybrid owners should pay their fair share. She stated that during her travels throughout the State over the previous nine months, people were surprised to learn that EV owners were not paying toward road maintenance. She stated that she supported the advisory question and would vote in favor of it.

Chair Andriola thanked Mr. Thomas for taking the time to present to the BCC. She thanked Vice Chair Garcia and Commissioner Hill for serving on the RTC Board and for their thorough review of the proposal. She mentioned that she owned an EV and did not pay her fair share toward road maintenance. She added that her vehicle was heavier than similarly sized vehicles and that, despite driving daily, she was not contributing to road wear and tear. She thought the proposal would give voters an opportunity to provide input and reiterated that the proposal was not a new tax. She added that EV owners were currently not contributing towards road maintenance. She recalled discussions at the Legislature regarding changes to the system to accommodate various options. She said it would cost millions of dollars for the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to implement the necessary changes to collect the fees and believed that, even if funding were available, implementation would take years. She commended the RTC Board for conducting its due diligence, including a second survey, and suggested an educational campaign to communicate that the proposal was not a tax. She clarified that the ballot question would serve as an advisory question. She thanked Mr. Thomas for the information he shared and for his presentation.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 3-1 vote, with Commissioner Herman voting no and Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 21 be adopted.

DONATIONS

26-0441 **8A1** Recommendation to acknowledge a donation of [$3,500.00] from the Reno Elks Lodge #597 to support ongoing operational expenses for District Court's Veterans Treatment Court and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. District Court. {All Commission Districts).

26-0442 **8B1** Recommendation to accept monetary donations from various donors in the amount of [$11,255 .02] and donations of dog/cat food and treats from the SPCA with an estimated value of [$7,906.32], and recognize numerous citizens and businesses who donated animal food and various goods with an estimated value of [$23,335.69] {see attached donor lists), and a donation of 400 Feline 1HCP doses and 275 Canine 1DAPPv doses from Petco Love with an estimated value of [$2,711.00] to Washoe County Regional Animal Services ("WCRAS") retroactive for the period of January 1, 2026 through March 31, 2026, to be used for the humane care and treatment of sick and/or injured, stray, abandoned, or at-risk animals; express appreciation for these thoughtful contributions; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Regional Animal Services. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0443 **8C1** Recommendation to accept a pass-through cash donation of [$3,000.00] from the Rocky Mountain Information Network to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office for the Western States Sheriff's Association venue and audio/visual equipment costs in retroactive support of the 2026 Conference held February 28, 2026 - March 04, 2026 at the Peppermill Casino; and direct Finance to make appropriate budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Vice Chair Garcia, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Items 8A1 through 8C1 be accepted.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 9A1 THROUGH 9G1

26-0444 **9A1** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' regular meetings of May 12, 2026, and May 26, 2026, and the workshop of May 19, 2026. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0445 **9A2** Acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Clerk on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, including the following categories: Communications, Monthly Statements/Reports, and Annual Statements/Reports. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0446 **9B1** Recommendation to 1) approve roll change requests, pursuant to NRS 361.765 and/or NRS 361.768, for errors discovered on the 2022/2023, 2023/2024, 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 secured and unsecured tax rolls 2) authorize Chair to execute the changes described in Exhibits A and Band 3) direct the Washoe County Treasurer to correct the error(s). [cumulative amount of decrease to all taxing entities $28,641.62]. Assessor. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0447 **9B2** Recommendation to 1) approve roll change requests, pursuant to NRS 361.765 and/or NRS 361.768, for errors discovered on the 2022/2023, 2023/2024, 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 secured tax roll 2) authorize Chair to execute the changes described in Exhibit A and 3) direct the Washoe County Treasurer to correct the error(s). [cumulative amount of decrease to all taxing entities $1,180.56] . Assessor. (Commission District 4.)

26-0448 **9C1** Recommendation to adopt six resolutions accepting real property for use as public streets, which pertain to portions of three official plats and three irrevocable offers of dedications as listed below totaling approximately 5.74 acres and 1.03 linear miles; and if approved, direct the Clerk's Office to record the resolutions to accept:

(1) R26-48 for a portion of the official plat of Lemmon Drive Estates Phase 1, Tract Map 5532, recorded on June 14, 2023, as document number 5386047, being Wolf Willow Court, Fire Wheel Drive and a portion of Sunset View Drive and Snowbrush Court; approximately 2.528 acres or 0.41 linear miles,

(2) R26-49 for a portion of the official plat of Lemmon Drive Estates Phase 2, Tract Map 5552, recorded on February 14, 2014, as document number 5435521, being Desert Sage Court and a portion Snowbrush Court; approximately 1.00 acres or 0.20 linear miles,

(3) R26-50 for a portion of Clasen Court, as offered through an Irrevocable Offer of Dedication, recorded on January 15, 2026, as document #5594947; APN 538-171-16; approximately 0.20 acres or 0.03 linear miles,

(4) R26-51 for a portion of 1st street, as offered through an Irrevocable Offer of Dedication, recorded on January 20, 2026, as document #5595588; APN 035-011-04; approximately 0.20 acres or 0.03 linear miles,

(5) R26-52 for a portion of the official plat of Sugarloaf Ranch Estates Unit 4, Tract Map 5580, recorded on September 19, 2024, as document number 5485540, being Coltra Springs Drive, Malquist Drive, Malquist Court, and a portion of Seaberry Drive and Cloud Berry Drive; approximately 1.940 acres or 0.36 linear miles, and
(6) R26-53 for a portion of Malquist Court, as offered through an

Irrevocable Offer of Dedication, recorded on May 05, 2026, as document #5620152; APN's 534-781-10 & 534-781-11; approximately 0.02 acres or 0.01 linear miles. Community Services. (Commission Districts 3, 4 & 5.)

26-0449 **9C2** Recommendation to approve the reappointment of Kathie Julian to the Washoe County Board of Adjustment to represent Commission District 1 (generally includes Incline Village and Crystal Bay, most of the Forest area along the west side of Mt. Rose Highway and portions of the Southwest Truckee Meadows area), to fill a term beginning on July 1, 2026, and ending on June 30, 2030, or until such time as Ms. Julian no longer serves on the Board of Adjustment or a successor is appointed, whichever occurs first. Community Services. (Commission District 1.)

26-0450 **9D1** Recommendation to retroactively acknowledge a supplemental grant of $20,000 which increases the original award to $1,141,787.71 [no match required], awarded to the Second Judicial District Court from the Supreme Court of Nevada, Administrative Office of the Courts, to support the Specialty Court programs, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. District Court. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0451 **9D2** Recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to retroactively acknowledge a grant of [$20,000, no County match required], awarded to the Second Judicial District Court from the Lee F. Del Grande Foundation, for Family Peace Center operating expenses; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. District Court. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0452 **9E1** Recommendation to approve Washoe County's Debt Management Policy as of June 30, 2026 which includes (1) a discussion of the County's ability to afford existing general obligation debt, authorized future general obligation debt and proposed future general obligation debt; (2) a discussion of the County's capacity to incur authorized and proposed future general obligation debt without exceeding the applicable debt limit; (3) a discussion of the County's general obligation debt that is payable from property taxes per capita as compared with such debt of other municipalities in this State; (4) a discussion of the County's general obligation debt that is payable from property taxes as a percentage of assessed valuation of all taxable property within the boundaries of the municipality; (5) policy regarding the manner in which the County expects to sell its debt; (6) a discussion of the County's sources of money projected to be available to pay existing general obligation debt, authorized future general obligation debt and proposed future general obligation debt; and (7) a discussion of the County's operational costs and revenue sources, for the ensuing 5 fiscal years, associated with each project included in its capital improvement plan if those costs and revenues are expected to affect the property tax rate; and direction to staff to submit to the Department of Taxation and the county debt management commission the policy or a written statement of the County's debt management policy on or before August 1 as required by NRS 350.013(1)(c). Finance. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0453 **9F1** Recommendation to approve budget amendments totaling an increase of [$137,124.23; no county match] in both revenue and expenditures to the FY26 STD Prevention and Control Subaward retroactive to March 1, 2026 through February 28, 2027, for the Population Health Division (PHD) to support Sexual Transmitted Disease (STD) Program agreement, and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0454 **9F2** Recommendation to approve budget amendments totaling an increase of [$2,173.91; no county match] in both revenue and expenditures to the FY26 AARP Community Challenge Microgrant effective June 23, 2026 through December 15, 2026, for the Population Health Division (PHD) to support the Chronic Disease Injury Prevention (CDIP) program, and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0455 **9F3** Recommendation to approve budget amendments totaling an increase of [$34,181.00 no county match] in both revenue and expenditures to the FY26-27 Hepatitis Surveillance and Prevention Subaward, retroactive to May 1 2026, through April 30, 2027, for the Population Health (PHD) Division to conduct viral hepatitis surveillance, prevention, and control activities in Washoe County, and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)

26-0456 **9G1** Recommendation to approve the acceptance of the Secretary of State's budget appropriation to Washoe County in the amount of [$160,702.91] to reimburse the county for voting equipment licensing and support fees [$160,531.00] and DVS backup drive (Samsung Portable SSD T7 MUPC1T0T - Solid State Drive - 1 TB - USB 3.2 Gen) [$171.91] for fiscal year 2026. No match required. The award period is retroactive from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. If approved, direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Voters. (All Commission Districts.)

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

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 9A1 through 9G1 be approved. Any and all Resolutions or

Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 9A1 through 9G1 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

BLOCK VOTE – 10 THROUGH 13, 16 THROUGH 20, and 22 THROUGH 25 EXCLUDING PULLED ITEM 14 HEARD SEPARATELY

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Commissioner Herman requested that Agenda Item 14 be pulled from the Block vote.

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26-0457 **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to acknowledge receipt of the annual report of the Assessor's Technology Fund (IN20280), a fund created by NRS 250.085 and Washoe County Ordinance 1300 for the acquisition and improvement of technology in the Assessor's Office, which has projected expenditures in Fiscal Year 2027 of $4,385,460. Assessor. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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

26-0458 **AGENDA ITEM 11** Recommendation to accept donations [$300,000.00] from the Wilbur May Foundation retroactive to date of receipt: $200,000.00 restricted for Fiscal Year (FY) 27 general operating support of the Wilbur D. May Center, excluding all County overhead; and $100,000.00 restricted to support FY27 temporary exhibits at the Wilbur D. May Museum. Community Services. (Commission District 3.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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

26-0459 **AGENDA ITEM 12** Recommendation to approve an Agreement for License and Professional Management Services for Sierra Sage Golf Course between Mazz Sierra Sage, LLC, doing business as Mazz Golf Management, and Washoe County for full management of Sierra Sage Golf Course, located at 6355 Silver Lake Road in Reno, Nevada. The proposed Agreement is for an initial term of 15 years beginning July 1, 2026, and a 10-year extended term, for a total of 25 years. Contractor will pay 10% of gross revenue on Green Fees collected, and payments will be made monthly through the term of the agreement. Contractor will pay a Capital Replenishment Payment of $16,942.60 per month beginning on July 1, 2027, throughout the balance of the term of the contract [$203,311.24 per year; $4,879,468.80 over the contract term of 25 years]. Contractor will also deposit $18,000 annually in a Capital Improvement Fund, held by the Contractor in a fiduciary capacity on behalf of the County. The Capital Improvement Fund will be used to make mutually agreed upon improvements to the course. Beginning in year 1 of the agreement, the County will initiate major capital improvements to the Course, not to exceed $3,000,000.00. Community Services. (Commissioner District 5)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be approved.

26-0460 **AGENDA ITEM 13** Recommendation to: (1) award a bid and approve the Agreement to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder for the Canepa Ranch Open Space Phase 1 Trailhead Site Improvements Project, PWP-WA-2026-311 [staff recommends Pokrajac Corporation, in the base bid only amount of $845,957.29]; and (2) approve a separate project contingency fund [in the amount of $35,000.00, for a total project cost not to exceed $880,957.29]. The Project is located along the Truckee River at 3550 Mario Road, Reno, Nevada and includes construction of a new trailhead with an access road, parking area, fencing, access gates, interpretive and wayfinding signage and kiosks, vault style restrooms, picnic areas, and landscaping with temporary irrigation. Community Services. (Commission District 1.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 13 be awarded and approved.

26-0461 **AGENDA ITEM 16** Recommendation to authorize the Comptroller's Office to renew the Excess Liability Insurance Policy with Safety National Casualty Corporation for a one-year term with an annual cost not to exceed [$574,417], effective July 1, 2025, and authorize the Comptroller's Office to sign the applications and agreements necessary to bind coverage, funding from the Risk Management Fund source. Comptroller. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 16 be authorized.

26-0462 **AGENDA ITEM 17** Recommendation to authorize the Comptroller's Office to renew the Excess Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy with Safety National Casualty Corporation for a one-year term with an estimated annual cost of [$388,470] effective July 1, 2026, and authorize the Comptroller's Office to sign the applications and agreements necessary to bind coverage, funding from the Risk Management Fund source. Comptroller. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 17 be authorized.

26-0463 **AGENDA ITEM 18** Information and acknowledgment of receipt by the Board of County Commissioners of contracts and purchases that have exceeded or are expected to exceed [$300,000.00] 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. A full list of specific contracts, vendors, and amounts is viewable in the staff report. The aggregate amount of known expenditures under these contracts to date is $4,836,515.27. Comptroller. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 18 be acknowledged.

26-0464 **AGENDA ITEM 19** Recommendation to award a contract procured via Request for Proposals (RFP) #3289-25 to Vestis Services, LLC in support of Laundry Services for the Human Services Agency's Housing and Homeless Services Division to provide laundry services at the Nevada Cares Campus and the Our Place Campus, for the original term of July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027, in amount not exceed [$492,427], with the provision for up to five (5), one (1) year renewals with contract rate increases as defined in the agreement; and if approved, authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the Agreement and related documents. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 19 be awarded, approved, and authorized.

26-0465 **AGENDA ITEM 20** Recommendation to approve a Sole Source waiver and a related award to the Housing Authority of the City of Reno for the Hope Landing project consisting of a 15-unit housing project at 1247 Carville Drive in the amount of [$1,400,000], funded by an allocation of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF), retroactively beginning May 1, 2026, with an expenditure deadline of October 31, 2026 and a project completion deadline of approximately June 1, 2027; authorize funds to be distributed from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, as authorized by Ordinance 1694 adopted on November 4, 2022; and if approved, authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the required contracts. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 20 be approved and authorized.

26-0466 **AGENDA ITEM 22** Recommendation, in accordance with NRS 244.1505 and NRS 433.742, to approve allocation of Washoe Opioid Abatement and Recovery Fund (WOARF) non-bankruptcy funds through the One Nevada Agreement, in the total amount of [$3,348,384.49], to government entities or nonprofit organizations created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes; approve associated resolutions, and authorize the County Manager to sign necessary award documents, for the following four projects awarded:

Human Services Agency - CrossRoads Families - WOARF27-00005 in the amount of [$1,353,104.18] to provide therapeutic living community to families impacted by OUD to engage in recovery together.

University of Nevada, Reno - StreetReach Mobile Health in Action-WOARF27-00002 in the amount of [$499,812.60] and approve Resolution R26-0000047. Funding supports housing service with embedded treatment supports.

The Life Change Center - Community Overdose Prevention and Engagement +- WOARF27-00003 in the amount of [499,840.78] and approve Resolution R26-0000046. Funding supports overdose prevention.

Northern Nevada HOPES -Hope Springs- Bridge Housing and Recovery Services for Unhoused Opioid Users - WOARF27-00004 in the amount of [$995,626.93] and approve Resolution R26-0000045. Funding supports housing service with embedded treatment supports.

And, if approved, direct Finance to make necessary net zero cross-fund and/or cross-functional budget appropriation transfers and budget amendments. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

On the call for public comment, John Saderlund was not present when called to speak.

Vice Chair Garcia disclosed that she was an employee of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), would be voting on the item, and had no pecuniary interest.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 22 be approved, authorized, and directed.

26-0467 **AGENDA ITEM 23** Recommendation to approve budget amendments totaling an increase of [$595,762.95; no county match] in both revenues and expenditures to the FY26 Women Infants Children (WIC) Notice of Subaward, retroactive to October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026, for the Community and Clinical Health Services (CCHS) Division to support Women Infants Children (WIC) Program and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 23 be approved and directed.

26-0468 **AGENDA ITEM 24** Recommendation to approve budget amendments totaling an increase of [$346,247.00; $1,690,490.00 in county match] in both revenues and expenditures to the FY27 Family Planning Title X Notice of Subaward, retroactive to April 1, 2026, through March 31, 2027, for the Community and Clinical Health Services (CCHS) Division to support Family Planning Title X Program and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 24 be approved and directed.

26-0469 **AGENDA ITEM 25** Recommendation to approve payment for the Fiscal Year 2027 renewal of the Aumentum Technologies/Manatron Service Level Agreement ("SLA") for Maintenance and Support Services, in the amount of [$405,906], for the Treasurer's Tax System software maintenance and support. The Aumentum Technologies/Manatron SLA was initially approved by Washoe County on July 18, 2008, and payments for the annual renewals are approved by the Board of County Commissioners. Technology Services. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 25 be approved.

26-0470 **AGENDA ITEM 14** Recommendation to authorize the Guaranteed Maximum Price 1 (GMP1) Agreement for the Washoe County Register of Voters (ROV) Longley Lane Remodel-GMP1 Project with Clark/Sullivan Constructors, Inc., doing business as Clark Sullivan Construction, the Construction-Manager-At-Risk (CMAR), [in the amount of $3,180,760.00]; effective on July 1, 2026, and approve the installation of tenant improvements which includes demolition, concrete and fencing, carpentry, roofing, insulation, metal framing, drywall, doors and hardware, finishes, FRP, lockers, signage, metal racking, fire protection, plumbing, HVAC, and electrical systems. Community Services. (Commission District 2.)

On the call for public comment, Penny Brock displayed a document, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She expressed concern about the plans for observation at the new Registrar of Voters' (ROV) facility. She stated that she was surprised to find that the floor plans were not included in the attachments and questioned how the Board could approve the remodel without reviewing them. She asked the Board to table Agenda Item 14 until it had reviewed the revised floor plans, which included an observation area. She felt that the proposed long hallway would be worse than the current election observation area. She alleged that the proposal violated federal and State law. She suggested that the floor plans had been kept secret. She stated that Chair Andriola had expressed concern about transparency in elections, which she believed included all information related to Agenda Item 14. She said that there was still time for the architect to gather input from observers to ensure that the floor plan provided meaningful observation and transparency in the ballot processing room during elections.

She acknowledged concerns about the project's funding and noted that the lease had been approved at a cost of nearly $7 million over its term. She asked whether the required solicitation of bids had been completed in accordance with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) Chapter 332. She stated that, in her view, the reasons she had provided were sufficient to postpone approval of the item and ensure the process complied with NRS Chapter 332.

J. S. McElhinney was not present when called to speak.

Chair Andriola inquired whether the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) required a presentation on Agenda Item 14, and Commissioner Herman noted her intent to provide a comment on the item. Chair Andriola explained that she wanted to ask County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas to clarify the process for Agenda Item 14, describe the County's responsibilities associated with both the relevant policy and the related operations, and provide details on the item. She noted that she would also comment on the item following CM Thomas's response.

CM Thomas began by reading the item into the record and acknowledged that previous speakers had raised concerns about the meaningful observation at the ROV facility. She clarified that, in the past, the BCC had approved many projects without floor plans and without having seen them. She explained that the Board would not necessarily approve the facility's floor plan with their vote on Agenda Item 14; rather, they would vote to not exceed the general work anticipated. She invited Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Michael Large to correct her if any of her statements were incorrect. She explained that many of the facility plans were still being reviewed. She stated that she would be happy to continue to conduct conversations between staff and those interested in providing public input. She noted that Agenda Item 14 concerned more than the public observation area, which she acknowledged the Board was aware of, as when they initially approved the facility, it was described as a nearly 50,000 square foot (sq ft) warehouse. She noted that the warehouse would be a giant open space, meaning the ballot-processing rooms mentioned would not be separate rooms. She clarified that the intent of ROV Andrew McDonald when developing the outlined plans was to make the observation experience at the facility as transparent and visible as possible, noting that he had called it the *corridor of democracy*. She stated that, instead of separate rooms, chain-link fencing would be used to ensure visibility throughout the entire project, which she assured the Board, as she had been involved in discussions on that matter. She noted that the factors contemplated by Agenda Item 14 resulted from a very transparent list of pre-approved subcontractors and vendors, with the Staff Report clearly outlining that the Construction-Manager-At-Risk (CMAR) provided transparent access to all bids and was awarding the various work packages to the appropriate, responsive, and responsible bidder. She reiterated that she had wanted to address the procurement question and stated that she would answer any other questions she could assist with. She noted that additional details on the matter were included in the document provided to the public. She assured the public that staff would continue to discuss and work through their questions and suggestions on increased transparency and meaningful observation, as that had always been the County's intent.

Chair Andriola noted her appreciation for staff continuing to engage with the public. She opined that it was always difficult to understand a facility by only looking at the floor plan. She explained that the building was huge and recalled that the Board had toured the facility. She commended Mr. McDonald for his leadership and all of the work he put in to make changes and adhere to budget constraints. She opined that there was an opportunity to identify potential procedures through public awareness and feedback. She noted that she had heard a request for chairs and had spoken with CM Thomas about whether it could be accommodated. She expressed belief that Mr. McDonald was also amenable to those conversations. She stated that the County was committed to transparency based on the countless amount of feedback received on what she referred to as the *fishbowl* and the constraints and remodeling from years prior in an attempt to accommodate as much transparency as possible. She thanked CM Thomas and Mr. McDonald for their commitment to investigating opportunities to best ensure everything was available for full transparency, because there was nothing to hide. She acknowledged that there were those who wanted to look at everything, and the actions she had described had been done for transparency. She expressed appreciation to CM Thomas and Mr. McDonald for welcoming the opportunities to take those matters and any feedback into consideration, as well as ensuring they were balanced with the project as a whole. She asked Commissioner Herman if she had anything to add.

Commissioner Herman stated her intent to offer comments she said she had not previously had the chance to share. She noted that it seemed as though the Board was rushing to spend a large amount of money on the project despite the County's tight budget. She said that she had comments to share from members of the public. She noted that a large amount of money was being invested in a leased building, including a roof for the facility. She explained that many proposed changes were expected in the future, which would impact the County's needs and reduce physical requirements. She reiterated her feeling that it seemed as though there was a rush to pass Agenda Item 14 and said she did not know why. She stated that the first election the facility would serve would be in 2028, though she opined that there was a need to concentrate on ensuring an improved 2026 general election. She noted that she was concerned for those worried about the issue, as she represented them. She explained that she had wanted to discuss the item to voice those concerns and questions. She opined that the matter was serious and emphasized the need for caution, as the Board did not want to spend money the County did not have.

Chair Andriola thanked Commissioner Herman. She opined that the Board was in agreement that they were trying to adhere to the available funding and would cut items from the budget where applicable. She noted that if any legal requirements were implemented, the County would adjust and comply with the law. She asked CM Thomas whether there was anything she would like to add. CM Thomas reminded the Board that two warehouses were consolidated, and staff had consistently heard for years that the current facility was too small and not very visible. She explained that those operations would be moved to a larger, more accommodating space where the public could see everything, rather than being divided among three separate locations. She noted that moving the operation allowed improvements to be made to the proposed building to enhance transparency and safety for the public and staff. She applauded the Board for acting on the issue and opined that it would increase the County's ability to perform safe and secure elections in the future.

On motion by Vice Chair Garcia, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 14 be authorized and approved.

26-0471 **AGENDA ITEM 15** Introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 110 (Development Code) in Division Four, Article 408, Common Open Space Development to require the findings that reference site specific characteristics, including but not limited to the preservation of steep slopes and heavily treed areas and protection of natural and scenic resources including ridgelines and waterways, only when those characteristics are present on the parcels in question, in order to ensure the design flexibility and associated public benefits inherent to common open space developments is potentially available to all subdividable parcels; 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 July 14, 2026. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Board Records and Minutes Manager Evonne Strickland read the title for Bill No. 1955.

Senior Planner Doctor (Dr.) Eric Young conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Article 408 Amendments June 23rd, 2026; Article 408 Amendments; Article 408 – Common Open Space Development; Common Open Space; Common Open Space Standards; Article 408 Findings (site specific conditions); Article 408 findings (non-site specific); Article 408 Proposed Amendments; Article 408 Proposed Motion; Thank you.

Dr. Young greeted the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and noted that planning staff were asking the Board to consider an update to an amendment to Washoe County Code (WCC) Chapter 110, Division Four, Article 408, commonly referred to as Common Open Space Development. He recalled that some findings were added to Article 408 the previous year, and that prior to April 2025, no findings were required to approve a common open space development.

Dr. Young displayed the *Article 408 – Common Open Space Development* slide. He acknowledged that the Board would be familiar with the concept of findings, as most of the County's boards, including the Planning Commission (PC) and the Board of Adjustment (BOA), were asked to make findings when making a decision, though he noted that common open space developments had not required any findings to be made at all. He reported that in April of 2025, a series of five findings were added to Article 408, with that addition implementing the requirement for all of those findings to be met. He explained that throughout the past year, staff had recognized that two of those findings referenced very site-specific physical conditions, and the proposal the Board was being asked to consider would instead require that three of the five listed findings always be met, while the two findings with site-specific physical conditions need only be met when they actually exist on the site.

Dr. Young showed the slide titled *Common Open Space*. He explained that Article 408 existed to provide significant flexibility to a landowner, but also to achieve community goals that might not be attainable despite being desired. He stated that the purpose of Article 408 was to set forth regulations permitting variation in lot size, thereby allowing smaller lots to preserve or provide open space, protect natural and scenic resources, achieve more efficient land use, minimize road building, and encourage a sense of community. He noted that all the goals he had described were sought-after benefits for the community, and that the opportunity to vary lot sizes was offered in order to achieve those goals. He displayed the *Common Open Space Standards* slide. He clarified that the opportunity could not be used for all purposes, as the site had to be a common open space and could not be used for roads, proposals to give the community a park or school, or for a person's necessary facilities like ponds or drainage.

Dr. Young displayed the *Article 408 Findings (site specific conditions)* slide. He reiterated that there were two findings staff had recognized that provided open space and protected natural resources, but did not exist on every parcel, listed on the slide and labeled as Findings A and B. He noted that Finding A specifically referenced areas with steep slopes, developmentally constrained areas, and heavily treed areas, which were qualities not found on every property. He reported that Finding B identified and protected natural and scenic resources, including, but not limited to, ridgelines, waterways, large-diameter trees, and habitat for special-status species. He emphasized that if such spaces existed, they needed to be protected, though he acknowledged that few of those areas remained in Washoe County. He noted that there were occasionally flat parcels that an individual might want to use under Article 408 to minimize road-building, create a sense of community, or achieve more efficient development. He asserted that each of those goals was agreed to be a benefit to the community, but if the two findings he had described did not exist on the property, the site would not qualify as an Article 408 development. He introduced the slide titled *Article 408 Findings (non site specific)* and explained that the other findings, C through E, were not site-specific and required developments to achieve more efficient land use, minimize road building, and encourage a sense of community. He explained that those findings were often achieved to a greater degree when Article 408 was applied to a common open space development.

Dr. Young showed the slide titled *Article 408 Proposed Amendments*. He reported that the language on the slide demonstrated the proposed amendment, which would include a specification that Findings A through C needed to be satisfied and that Findings D and E would also need to be satisfied when they could reasonably be applied to the parcels in question. He noted that the order of some language within the article had been changed as an editorial choice made so that the two findings that were only occasionally applicable would be listed at the end of the sentence, while the three findings that always applied to an application were included first. He explained that the amendment altered the language so it would clearly reflect that all five findings were required if they all existed on the parcel, while clarifying that Findings A through C were always required, but a development could still qualify if the conditions for Findings D and E did not exist on the site. He noted that the article on the slide demonstrated the entire amendment staff was asking the BCC to consider. He stated that the proposed language was an update, betterment, and refinement to an amendment that the Board passed the year prior.

Dr. Young introduced the *Article 408 Proposed Motion* slide, noting that he would be happy to discuss the matter further should the Board have any questions. He stated that the slide included a potential motion for Agenda Item 15 for the Board to consider.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Vice Chair Garcia thanked Dr. Young for recognizing the unintended consequence of the amendment passed by the BCC the year prior and for finding a simple solution. She noted that the order of the proposed language in the article made a lot of sense to her. She asked whether the suggested changes would impact any of the projects that had already gone through the public process in the previous 14 months since the article's implementation, and if that were the case, how that might be remedied. Dr. Young answered that once a project had gone through the process, it was already settled. He noted that the proposed amendment applied to future applications and to projects that had not yet been processed. Vice Chair Garcia thanked him for the answer.

Chair Andriola asked if there were any other questions from the Board, and it was determined there were none. She thanked Dr. Young for the update.

Bill No. 1955 was introduced by Vice Chair Garcia, and legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

26-0472 <u>**AGENDA ITEM 26**</u> Conduct a second reading, public hearing, and possible adoption of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 5 (Administration and Personnel), to increase the departmental allowance for employee service awards from $25.00 to $50.00 per award, and to increase the) departmental allowance for employee retirement awards from $50.00 to $75.00 per award; and all matters necessarily connected therewith and pertaining thereto. If supported, adopt and enact the new ordinance by title. Human Resources. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Hill opened the public hearing.

Board Records and Minutes Manager Evonne Strickland read the title for Ordinance No. 1763, Bill No. 1954.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Clark absent, it was ordered that Ordinance No. 1763, Bill No. 1954, be adopted, approved, and published in accordance with NRS 244.100.

26-0473 **<u>AGENDA ITEM 27</u>** Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

26-0474 **<u>AGENDA ITEM 28</u>** Announcements/Reports.

There were no announcements or reports.

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<u>1:16 p.m.</u> There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

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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
Jessica Melka, Deputy County Clerk
Brooke Koerner, Deputy County Clerk
Elizabeth Tietjen, Deputy County Clerk