



Sun Valley Citizen Advisory Board
Minutes of the regular meeting of the Sun Valley Citizen Advisory Board held on
April 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at Hobeys Casino.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION QUORUM

Present: Chair Heidi Soper, Vice Chair Amy Owens, Members Veronica Cortes, Mary Esposito, Michael Rider, Mark Neumann

Absent: Carmen Ortiz

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Mike Revty noted he is running for a seat on the Sun Valley General Improvement District (SVGID) and asked for support.

Ms. Amanda Santos, a health educator at Northern Nevada Public Health, spoke about the organization's Grab Healthy program, which works to increase healthy food options. This was especially challenging in Sun Valley because of the closure of the Scolari's. She invited residents to share feedback about their shopping habits through a survey that will remain open until April 24, copies of which were available at the meeting. She planned to make a presentation at the Sun Valley Citizen Advisory Board's May meeting.

Mr. Marty Turner expressed concern about which sewer system the new apartment complex being constructed on Dandini Boulevard would use, as well as about the involvement of an association with that complex. He expressed frustration about the lack of services in the area, challenges with code enforcement, and the failure of the Sheriff's Office to show when called.

Mr. Troy Regas, a lifelong Nevadan, stated he was running to represent District 3 on the Board of County Commissioners because he wanted to help the people of Sun Valley address their issues.

Ms. Veronica Cortes spoke about Valley Amigos, a nonprofit organization that works with the court for people who need community service due to DUIs or child support issues. The Cities of Reno and Sparks, as well as Washoe and Lyon Counties, work with the organization, whose purpose was to allow people to participate in service that will benefit their specific community. She encouraged people to donate to Valley Amigos to help pay for its annual renewal fee.

Mr. Mark Neumann indicated he was finishing up his first term on the SVGID. He said that because only he and one other person were running for the two vacant seats, they would not appear on ballots, but their swearing in would take place in January.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF March 2, 2026

Member Rider moved to approve the March 2, 2026, Sun Valley Citizen Advisory Board minutes as written. Member Owens seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved on a 5-0 vote with Member Ortiz absent.

5. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

A representative from the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) reviewed the report included in the agenda packet for this item, highlighting the incident statistics by incident type. He reminded people to change the batteries in their smoke and carbon dioxide detectors. More information was available by clicking on the QR code on the report, he noted.

Member Cortes asked whether the TMFPD responded to a recent fire that occurred near Harmony Lane and Quartz Lane. The representative explained that the TMFPD approached the fire from Harmony Lane, and he lauded citizens for reporting the fire.

Washoe County Sheriff's Office

Lieutenant George Gomez with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (SO) reviewed February's scorecard, reviewing statistics related to the calls for service and who initiated them, as well as offense and arrest data. He stated Sun Valley was the SO's most active area, or beat, in all of Washoe County, and he thanked the Citizen Advisory Board for its support. He noted last year's 4th quarter statistics were not included in the scorecard, but more than 3,800 calls for service were received during that time, including more than 1,000 dispatch calls.

Responding to questions from members of the public, Lt. Gomez said he was unsure which of the SO's beats had the largest population, but the concentration of population was highest in Sun Valley, which resulted in it being the most active area. He stated Nevada Highway Patrol (NHP) was the primary responding agency for accidents on Sun Valley Boulevard from Dandini Boulevard to 7th Avenue. He was unsure whether the SO typically requested NHP's presence or whether they initiated more patrols on their own, though he expected it was more likely the latter. He said he would explore getting more NHP patrols in the area.

Ms. Kay Dyer expressed concern about cars parking on the streets at night, particularly on school bus routes. Lt. Gomez urged residents to report those incidents to the SO's non-emergency line, and they would address the vehicles, whether they were abandoned or simply blocking traffic. Residents can also submit requests for traffic enforcement via the SO's website. Ms. Carol Burns inquired about people parking vehicles on rights-of-way where pedestrians are supposed to walk. Lt. Gomez responded that he would research the statute and get back to her.

In response to additional queries, Lt. Gomez said four-wheel quads are not allowed to race on Sun Valley Boulevard, and that is a problem the SO continues to battle, though they do not often chase them for safety reasons. Those that are stopped receive tickets. Mr. Monte Turner spoke about an incident where sheriffs illegally passed a school bus that was pulled over. Lt. Gomez offered to investigate that incident. Member Cortes asked about a parking garage planned for the SO, but Lt. Gomez did not know anything about it.

6. NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

Teresa Aquila, Community Liaison and Neighborhood Watch Coordinator, noted that Sun Valley was her first beat with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (SO), which she had for 17

years. Though it is one area, it has several communities, all of which are needed to make a difference. She encouraged residents to report things they see because the SO largely does not scour social media for complaints. She said residents, including kids and grandkids, see what is happening around them. She stated that Neighborhood Watch was not about spying; it was about making the community safe. She assured the public that complaints made to Washoe 311 are routed to the appropriate departments, but situations where crimes are not committed are considered nuisances. She remarked that she receives no higher priority when she reports something.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the different communities in Sun Valley. Ms. Aquila urged people to get involved in their communities by reporting things that are out of place. The SO's Intelligence Department looks for trends, a process which is helped when residents report things. She brought up the rearrest of a felon which was only made possible by a resident reporting an incident where someone tried to burglarize her home, and another involving a serial burglar that was caught because of resident tips.

One resident discussed his efforts to watch a home he suspected of hosting drug deals. Ms. Aquila discussed the difficulty in apprehending drug dealers, adding that the I-80 corridor is used by many of them. Anyone interested in joining a Neighborhood Watch needs five to ten people willing to participate, at which time a meeting can be held. Staff tries to schedule meetings within the community but not at people's homes. She encouraged people holding garage sales to keep all sale items outside so patrons cannot see what they have in their garages or homes.

Ms. Aquila said communities can only put up Neighborhood Watch signs if they have an active program. The City of Reno used to distribute signs, but there were numerous guidelines about the placement of those signs. A brief discussion took place about a specific sign and the distribution of stickers. Ms. Aquila clarified that people should call in suspicious activity even if their community does not have an active program. The benefits of having an official program were that she and a dispatcher would provide training on how to be good witnesses. People should be comfortable saying they do not know something rather than making something up.

Ms. Aquila differentiated between filming a suspicious activity and pointing a camera at a neighbor's house to disrupt their privacy. The former can help law enforcement and help keep the community safe. She noted that law enforcement sometimes canvasses neighborhoods to determine if anyone captured anything on their camera networks that could be used as evidence. However, people cannot specifically target someone else with their cameras.

Ms. Aquila stated that businesses with storefronts do not automatically have the right to solicit, and representatives need to have name cards displayed on lanyards. She described the process by which the SO vets solicitors to ensure they are safe. She indicated that people who are approached by solicitors without name cards can call the SO, who can cite those individuals.

Chair Soper stated that a list of residents interested in forming a Neighborhood Watch would be generated and sent to Ms. Aquila.

7. SWIFT EXIT: EVACUATION STUDY

Emergency Management Administrator Kelly Echevarria conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Sections; Vendors; Evacuation

Zones; Perimeter map; Modeling; and Data Gathering.

Ms. Echevarria indicated that staff received a lot of feedback from the website about the Swift Exit study, and they are working with their analysis vendor, CNA, to categorize comments by Citizen Advisory Board and Neighborhood Advisory Board areas. CNA will also help staff update the plan. She noted the evacuation zones are for first responders, not members of the public. Having these zones helps run worst-case fire scenarios in a simulator. She said staff is running historical fire data against the evacuation zones that were created, and all fire partners were asked to come up with additional scenarios in areas of concern they have identified. The data from these scenarios will be used to improve processes and procedures.

Ms. Echevarria explained how Placer.ai uses cell phone data to provide details about specific historical events, including their attendance, which is then used in traffic modeling. She said staff is building out fire scenarios in the modeling software but is waiting for weather service data to complete the modeling. All groups are meeting next week to build the scenarios.

In response to questions from Board members and members of the public, Ms. Echevarria said she hoped the fire scenario analysis would be completed before June. She remarked that the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District is one of the agencies participating in the process to build fire scenarios, and Sun Valley is their primary concern given its fire risk. She brought up the very low snowpack this year, most of which has already melted, which could result in a dangerous fire season. She encouraged people to perform mitigation on their homes.

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Member Rider moved to modify the April 6, 2026, agenda to hear Agenda Item 9 next. Vice Chair Owens seconded the motion, which carried on a 6-0 vote with Member Ortiz absent.

9. CAB MEMBER/COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS/DISCUSSION/REPORTS

Commissioner Mariluz Garcia stated she was leaving for Washington D.C. on Sunday to speak with the U.S. Department of Transportation to request funds for the \$87 million Sun Valley Boulevard project, which currently has a \$25 million shortfall. Without that funding, the Nevada Department of Transportation will likely not address the road for 50 years. She hoped to hear back within the next few months.

Commissioner Garcia promoted a Sun Valley cleanup event on April 25, where residents can drop off up to 15 tires, and e-waste will also be accepted. She commented that the last event filled up within an hour. She encouraged residents to take their neighbors' tires to help them out, and anyone interested in volunteering for the event should speak to the Commission Support Team. She spoke about a food truck celebration she sponsored that will take place on June 11, June 18, and June 25.

Commissioner Garcia noted that progress is being made on abandoned properties and roadway parcels, which were prioritized by the greatest fire and public health risks each presented. 37 parcels were identified, and updates will be given on each as the process moves forward. This is her highest priority. She said these abandoned properties were the result of a loophole that occurred when property owners were deceased. Resolution will come

either via County takeover due to tax delinquency, which was not her preferred method, or through the public nuisance process.

Commissioner Garcia stated election day was in 64 days, and she listed the ways residents could vote. The County has Nevada's first Americans with Disabilities Act curbside voting program, where voting machines can be rolled out to curbs to accommodate eligible voters. Early voting for the general election is from October 17 to October 30, with election day being November 3, so she encouraged residents to check their voter registration. She expressed excitement about the Registrar of Voters moving to a new facility after the general election.

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Agenda Item 8 was opened at this time. However, Agenda Item 9 was reopened later in the meeting.

Chair Soper brought up an email that was sent out reminding veterans, disabled veterans, spouses of veterans, and blind people to reapply for their tax incentives by June 15. She promoted Farm Day at Rancho San Rafael on April 26. Member Cortes noted that Valley Amigos would attend the event. Chair Soper said flyers were available for the Sun Valley cleanup event discussed earlier. She spoke about a recent Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) meeting where road projects were discussed. A representative from the Regional Transportation Commission indicated that two stoplights will be installed on Highland Ranch Parkway, one at Midnight Drive and the other at Five Ridges Parkway.

Chair Soper said Sun Valley will have been in existence under that name for 80 years on August 19, 2027, and she wanted to form an informal action group to plan a celebration. The committee would find sponsors and help plan the event. She said the group would be informal so meetings would not have to follow Open Meeting Law requirements. Interested parties can sign up at the meeting, and the sign-up list will also be posted on Facebook and Nextdoor. She asked that the CAB meeting time be changed on the marquee from 10:00 to 6:00. The next CAB meeting will be on May 4, where an item on fostering, adoption, and mentoring children will be agendaized.

Member Rider spoke about a recent Easter Egg Hunt event and opening day for the Sun Valley Cal Ripken Babe Ruth baseball league. He encouraged people to attend games, which will be played every day except Wednesdays. He promoted a sports-themed photo contest being held by the Sun Valley General Improvement District. He offered to provide information about who to contact to sponsor children in the baseball league who needed equipment or support.

Member Cortes brought up the November 4 Planning Commission (PC) meeting where Chair Rob Pierce requested an item to discuss the desired pattern of growth in Sun Valley. She believed that has not yet been addressed, though an item on the April 7 PC meeting will contemplate changing open space in Ladera Ranch to medium-, low-, and high- density suburban zoning. She expressed frustration that the comments she made at the November 4 PC meeting were not adequately addressed and that Sun Valley was not receiving adequate representation. She felt new leaders were needed who would prioritize Sun Valley. She provided details for the April 7 PC meeting. Member Owens explained why the PC hears items that would require changes to zoning designations. Member Rider advocated for interested parties to sign up for notifications so they can be alerted of upcoming meetings.

Member Neumann stated that surviving spouses can submit the death certificates of their spouses and receive discounts on one of three things, including vehicle registration or property taxes. He expressed frustration by changes in CAB meeting times, which he felt have caused confusion.

8. NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB & OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Community Outreach Coordinator Alexandra Wilson noted that each Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) webpage has a portal for members of the public to provide input or raise concerns. QR codes and links to this portal are also included on CAB agenda packet. She demonstrated how comments can be submitted via the website and provided a brief overview of the Neighborhood Development Hub, noting there were no upcoming events in District 3.

Ms. Wilson indicated there were three openings on the Washoe County Board of Equalization, each for four-year terms. Meetings take place in January, February, and April, and Board members are compensated \$80 for each meeting they attend. She said there were also two vacant positions on the Library Board of Trustees, and anyone interested in applying for them can fill out and application and give it to staff to submit on their behalf.

Responding to Board member questions, Ms. Wilson stated these boards have no restrictions requiring representation by all districts, though the Board of County Commissioners tries to ensure that different districts are represented on them.

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Agenda Item 8 was reopened. Please see that agenda item for details.

9. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Carol Burns expressed frustration at the way Sun Valley residents were treated by the chair of the Planning Commission. She urged Sun Valley residents not to give up.

Ms. Veronica Cortes stated she was running for the Nevada State Assembly District 27 seat where she planned to advocate for a grocery store and safe streets. She listed some of the agencies who have endorsed her. She remarked that sex trafficking was occurring in the area, one reason why she believed different citizens will take over the positions held by career politicians. She thought money should be spent on the people, not on trips outside the district. She asked that residents support her, adding that leadership needed to change. She spoke about her goal to start a minibus line that makes trips to WinCo.

Mr. Mark Neumann talked about his regular attendance at local government meetings along with a handful of other Sun Valley residents. However, South Reno meetings are attended by 150 people, so they are prioritized. He urged people to get involved so change can occur.

Ms. Cindy Leslie opined that the Senior Advisory Board was not doing anything for seniors in Sun Valley. She noted she created all the activities at the Sun Valley Senior Center, and she expressed frustration at the lack of help provided by the County. The next Senior Advisory Board meeting will be held on April 8 in Building D of the Washoe County Administrative Complex.

Mr. Monte Turner agreed that change was needed because the area had many safety and fire concerns. He expressed frustration about a developer who buried insulation and aluminum in the backyard behind his house.

Noting her presence on the Swift Evacuation Committee, Chair Soper noted that at no time should all of Sun Valley need to be evacuated at the same time. The routes have been mapped out so that everyone should be able to be evacuated in an orderly fashion. Community Outreach Coordinator Alexandra Wilson suggested that anyone with questions about evacuation plans can submit them to her, and she will forward them to the County's emergency manager.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Rider moved to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Owens seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.