

Laura Freed

Pam Derby, Executive Recruiter
CPS HR Consulting
2450 Del Paso Road
Suite 160
Sacramento, CA 95834

VIA EMAIL: pderby@cpshr.us

September 18, 2025

Dear Ms. Derby:

Having been in government budgeting and management in northern Nevada for over 20 years, I was very interested to read your brochure for the vacancy of Washoe County Manager.

Most recently, I have been the Director of Administration for the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Washoe County, a special purpose county-level agency that provides transportation master planning, transit services, and regional road construction to the communities in the Truckee Meadows. As such, I understand the regional perspective that a County Manager would need in guiding services and forging collaborative relationships with partner entities. As Director of Administration, I have led people-centered studies, such as a culture study of the RTC with focus on effectiveness of senior management. Additionally, I led a compensation and classification study, something that has not been done at RTC for 10 years. A main focus of my work is ensuring that RTC employees feel valued and listened to, and I hope to have a chance to tell you how I do that, and what steps I would take to improve communication and morale at Washoe County.

I also have a grounding in public sector budgeting and leadership from my previous positions. As Director of Administration for the State of Nevada, I oversaw a 550-employee organization with an operating budget of approximately \$180 million per fiscal year, as well as a \$400 million capital improvement program via the State Public Works Division. Additionally, that position is where I gained valuable labor relations experience. Previous to the 2019 Legislature, state workers had never had collective bargaining rights, and I was on the team that conducted the first labor negotiations with four different unions.

Prior to serving on the Governor's cabinet, I held various budget analysis and human services roles in both the legislative and executive branches of Nevada state government.

As a result, I am very familiar with the tradeoffs decision makers face when revenues do not meet projections, and difficult choices that must be made about levels of government services.

Washoe County appears to be at a crossroads with this recruitment, and I think I can provide the kind of ethical, collaborative leadership that will help the Board of County Commissioners, the staff, and outside stakeholders move forward with more comity. I am eager to discuss the position with you and your colleague Fatima Nukic, and I can be reached at the email or phone number above.

Sincerely yours,

Laura Freed

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Experienced government leader driving culture change and progress

EXPERIENCE

Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, Reno, NV — Director of Administration

MARCH 2023 - PRESENT

Oversee human resources, IT, administrative personnel and communications staff, for a total of seven direct reports and a \$X million annual operating budget; led agency-wide culture study of RTC leadership; led classification and compensation study; managed RTC messaging through Keolis/Teamsters labor negotiations; currently revamping agency personnel policies.

State of Nevada Department of Administration, Carson City, NV — Director

JANUARY 2020 - JANUARY 2023

Supervised 11 division administrators and three Director's Office staff, led implementation of Governor's policy priorities for central services (e.g., labor relations), participated in first-ever union negotiations with state bargaining units; directed development of biennial budget submission to GFO and Legislature with a \$367 million biennial operating budget; chaired Public Employees' Benefits Program Board; sat on State Public Works Board.

State of Nevada Governor's Finance Office, Carson City, NV — Executive Branch Budget Officer II

OCTOBER 2015 - JANUARY 2020

Supervised, mentored a team of EBBO I staff, developing their skills in analyzing budgets and budget amendments, reviewed bill draft requests from agencies, drove monthly Board of Examiners agenda by reviewing and annotating agency contracts for compliance with statute and policy.

State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Carson City, NV — Deputy Administrator, Regulatory Services

OCTOBER 2014 - OCTOBER 2015

Oversaw public health regulatory programs within the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, including medical cannabis program rollout, guided staff on policy development and regulation promulgation.

SKILLS

Effective manager of people and teams.

Culture studies experience and culture change agent.

Policy and fiscal analysis.

Leadership excellence and motivation.

PROJECTS

RTC Culture Study - 2024

Project managed outside consultant review of RTC agency culture and trust in leadership, including employee survey, in person focus groups, and report to RTC Board of Commissioners; led to culture indicators being added to RTC strategic priorities, including KPIs

RTC Classification & Compensation Study - 2024/2025

Working with HR consultants, evaluated all agency job descriptions and benchmarked current salaries to various market comps (Reno, Las Vegas, Sacramento) for transportation and transit agencies; currently working through consultant's report to

State of Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, NV
— *Senior Program Analyst*

AUGUST 2011 - OCTOBER 2014

Trained, mentored, and supervised program analyst team in biennial budget review, edited major budget bills for each legislative session.

drive policy decisions about job progressions, pay adjustments and fringe benefits.

State of Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, NV
— *Program Analyst*

NOVEMBER 2003 - AUGUST 2011

Evaluated biennial budget requests from various Executive Branch agencies; present written highlights to Legislature; analyze changes to approved fiscal work program throughout biennium.

EDUCATION

University of Washington, Seattle, WA — *Master of Urban Planning*

University of California, Berkeley, CA — *Bachelor of Science, Political Economy of Natural Resources*