

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

MAY 13, 2025

PRESENT:

**Alexis Hill, Chair**

**Jeanne Herman, Vice Chair**

**Michael Clark, Commissioner**

**Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner**

**Clara Andriola, Commissioner**

**Janis Galassini, County Clerk**

**Kate Thomas, Assistant County Manager**

**Mary Kandasas, Chief Deputy District Attorney**

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

**25-0273      AGENDA ITEM 3 Public Comment.**

Mr. Terry Brooks read an original poem regarding health and homelessness.

Mr. Richard Thomsen displayed an insurance document. No copy was submitted for the public record. He noted that he was a County employee for roughly 21 years before retiring early due to the loss of his leg while working for the Roads Department. He mentioned that he attended a Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting 36 days prior to discuss the long-term disability policy he purchased. He reported that the plan was specific to County employees, but became void if the employee received a government pension. He indicated that he paid \$192 per month from 2014 to 2023 for the policy and used to make \$115,000 per year, but now made \$38,000. He believed that what happened was wrong and expressed concern for employees who possibly went through the same grievance. He did not want the County selling the policy to employees and planned to participate in every meeting he could. He communicated that the County had yet to contact him about the issue and speculated that the County did not care. He noted he did not meet the minimum qualifications for his job and did the right thing by not visiting Human Resources (HR) or attempting to receive another job with the County. He divulged that he never received an hour of sick leave from anyone, donated his vacation time to sick individuals, followed the rules of the County, and missed nine Christmases with his family while working in Lake Tahoe.

Ms. Cynthia Cooper indicated that she read the *Senior Spectrum Newspaper* and the *American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Bulletin*. She mentioned that

many of the publications focused on quality of life. She said that a significant issue amongst seniors was mental decline and avoiding dementia. She noted that eating right, receiving quality sleep, physical activity, socializing, and engaging the brain combated dementia. She reported that she mostly quit drinking coffee, was attempting to reduce sugar intake, received plenty of activity on a bicycle, and utilized the library for socialization and engagement of the brain. She commented that reading and socializing exercised brain muscles, allowed for better recall, and improved focus. She explained that she visited the Northwest Library to play chess with a librarian and would attend a reading group the following day at the Downtown Library. She said that the library was a foundational resource for the community. She expressed that she had not heard a strong commitment from the BCC regarding their support of the Washoe County Library System's (WCLSs) budget.

Ms. Carol Burns recalled that two weeks prior, the residents at 5060 Rampion Way in Sun Valley parked a recreational vehicle (RV) on the right-of-way across from her home. She noted that a young woman was living there, and the RV did not have a license plate or registration. She mentioned that the RV received electricity from an extension cord across the road at 5060 Rampion Way. She explained that the RV required children to walk in the street instead of the right-of-way to reach the bus stop, and that the RV was a nuisance to the vehicles on Columbine Court due to obstructing visibility of the intersection. She indicated that four Columbine Court residents reported the issue to Washoe 311 and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO). She said that a deputy informed her that the owners of 5060 Rampion Way removed their daughter from the home. She communicated that the owners had removed the tow hitch from the RV, and the vehicle was still parked. She assumed that the RV was now abandoned because the young woman left. She commented that the County needed to remove it, but did not want taxpayer money used for the removal. She wanted the residents of 5060 Rampion Way to remove the RV they parked because she said it was illegal and a safety hazard. She asserted that she was willing to participate in any legal action needed. She noticed a tag placed on the RV that stated it was deemed an abandoned vehicle.

Ms. Cindy Bansen thanked the BCC for their service because she knew it was challenging to meet the community's needs. She explained that the WCLS was wonderful and hoped the BCC would continue its support. She noted that the library was one of the aspects that made a community good. She mentioned that people researched whether the community's library was maintained before moving there. She indicated that the BCC had heard comments regarding the library every day but hoped they would continue to consider supporting the library.

Mr. Pete Bansen supported the WCLS because he felt it had many resources and services for all demographics and incomes. He noted that individuals relied on the library, and he hoped the BCC would consider retaining the WCLS budget.

Mr. Matthew Ohare indicated that he was part of the 2025 Reno Leadership class and thanked the BCC for their service to the community. He believed that a challenge for the County was the Washoe County School District's (WSCDs) ranking in the Nation

due to absenteeism and graduation rates. He believed that a well-educated population was significant for the community to thrive.

Ms. Nancy Podewils-Baba thanked the BCC for their service, attending long meetings, listening to the community's different points of view, and making the best decisions for the County. She supported the WCLS and believed that it was a lifeline for people who did not have resources. She recalled a recently deceased friend of hers who used the internet at the library. She noted that there were opportunities for children and community services at the library. She requested that the BCC did what they could to support the WCLS's funding.

Ms. Bonnie Billings explained that she was the Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) Chair. She expressed that she wanted to advocate for the CABs and believed that the BCC relied on them to hear from constituents regarding issues and concerns. She reported that the Spanish Springs CAB brought topics that were of interest to the residents through collaboration with constituents and Commissioner Andriola. She explained that the Spanish Springs CAB created a quick response (QR) code on their agendas for constituents to provide input. She said that there was a process created to meet with speakers before they attended the meeting to ensure the concerns were pertinent to Spanish Springs. She mentioned that feedback was available at every meeting if a constituent's concern was reported at the previous meeting. She indicated that there was a personal relationship with the residents who provided public comments and speculated that providing feedback created encouragement to return to future meetings. She commented that some recent topics included presentations from the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, the Planning Commission (PC), the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), the Spanish Springs Library, the Emergency Preparedness Department, and City of Sparks Mayor Ed Lawson. She felt that the CABs were important for Spanish Springs.

Mr. DeAndre Burleson displayed documents. No copies were submitted for the public record. He read the Open Meeting Law (OML) requirements for public comment previously relayed by Assistant County Manager (ACM) Kate Thomas at the opening of Agenda Item 3. He reported that he was homeless and slept between the Wild River Grille and The Eddy. He explained that he had a specialty court case manager and advocate assigned to him and that he was waiting for an RTC bus pass. He mentioned that the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) told him they needed additional information, which he indicated he provided. He referred to his displayed documents regarding receipts, a monthly RTC bus pass, a case management appointment confirmation, and personal health information. He noted that he was in the hospital for three days due to his homelessness.

Ms. Kristen Kennedy reported that she was the Executive Director for the Domestic Violence Resource Center (DVRC) and thanked Commissioner Garcia for the special fund designation to the DVRC. She expressed appreciation towards the BCC for their thoughtful consideration. She explained that the County had a critical domestic violence issue. She recalled Sheriff Darin Balaam shared that his team had success processing driving under the influence (DUI) and burglary calls; however, aggravated

assault rates increased by 24 percent in 2024, which was attributed to domestic violence. She noted there was a post that stated in the last four months, the WSCO responded to 133 domestic violence-related cases. She mentioned that the DVRC knew for many years how serious domestic violence was in the community and that the County could not address the concerns alone. She indicated that the DVRC planned to build a 43,000 square foot (SF) resource center to quadruple capacity for sheltered individuals, including parents and children fleeing domestic abuse. She said that there should be 75 to 80 shelter beds in a community the size of the County for domestic violence survivors, but Reno and Sparks only had 35. She reported that the DVRC raised close to \$17 million in private funds for a \$25 million project and that every dollar raised made a difference. She communicated that the DVRC was active in the community for 48 years and partnered with law enforcement, health care, social services, and the community's most vulnerable individuals. She said that the DVRC would continue to partner with the BCC and anyone needing their services until domestic violence ended.

Mr. Scott Johnston indicated that he visited the public input session regarding the CABs, which he said was well attended. He explained that he was opposed to the bylaws set by the BCC because he felt they should continue to be set by the CAB members. He questioned why the minutes were removed from the CAB meetings and believed that the CABs were essential to the community. He noted that he was attempting to become a CAB member and felt the CABs should be expanded so that constituents could provide additional feedback. He encouraged the BCC to strengthen the CABs and provide them with more power.

Ms. Tammy Holt-Still displayed a document, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She said that she visited Washington, D.C., in March and provided Congressman Mark Amodei with her distributed documents. She reported that the documents explained Swan Lake's health hazards. She mentioned that she conducted a \$350 test to expose metals in Swan Lake that were above standards. She indicated that the test reported arsenic, lead, barium, and uranium, which she believed was not due to mining otherwise mercury would be present. She commented that the metals were due to medical and industrial waste that was not properly cleaned and discharged from the sewer plants. She said that the County sewer plant was a Class C plant that did not clean well. She communicated that the County needed to deal with Swan Lake and not avoid the concerns. She noted that the lake was full and located next to an elementary school where children played and reported that the lake was encroaching on the playground. She indicated that 2 million gallons of fluid were pumped into the lake and that snow melt and storms would continue to raise the water level. She asked where the water was supposed to go. She asserted that the lake was for stormwater runoff only and that the County needed to take responsibility and fix the lake. She said that Congressman Amodei had promised her a meeting with the State that had yet to happen.

Ms. Sieglinde McTigue noted that every Commissioner had a tough job that she never wanted to do. She mentioned that the County had problems that needed to be addressed. She indicated that the community could not agree on the importance of a healthy and robust library system and wondered if there was anything else she could express that

could convince the BCC to support the library. She asserted that she would continue to ensure the WCLS was funded because the library provided an incredible resource and investment for the community. She commented that the library was not a medical resource, but an intangible resource that had a payoff. She thanked the BCC for their hard work over the last contentious six months. She reported that she had lived in the area her whole life, worked for the Nevada Division of Water Resources, and witnessed the financial scandals the County experienced. She divulged that she was the catalyst who discovered an embezzling plot in 2008 and that her concerns were dismissed at first because she was just a clerk. She communicated that \$1.8 million was lost in the embezzlement scheme but she had never seen a scandal occur at the library. She did not understand where the accusations of wasting library funds were coming from.

**25-0274      AGENDA ITEM 4    Announcements/Reports.**

Assistant County Manager (ACM) Kate Thomas noted that there were two regular and one alternate member applications open until June 20, 2025, for the Board of Equalization (BOE) with terms beginning January 2026. She mentioned that one member application was open until May 21, 2025, for the Nevada Local Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council (NLJRCC) with the term beginning July 1, 2025, and that one member application was open until May 30, 2025, for the Board of Adjustment (BOA) District 4 with the term beginning July 1, 2025. She advised those interested to visit [washoecounty.gov](http://washoecounty.gov) and search for boards and commissions to apply.

Commissioner Garcia hoped everyone had a happy Mother's Day with family and friends. She reported that Biketopia was taking place the following Saturday at the Reno Public Market (RPM), where bike checks, helmet fittings, classes, raffles, and many activities would occur. She indicated that the Washoe County School District (WSCD) was hosting an event after Biketopia with student performances and artwork. She believed that pedestrian safety was essential to promote healthy habits. She sponsored a t-shirt contest for WSCD high school students and announced the winner, Ms. Maliyah Sanders, a 9th grade graphic design student from Spanish Springs, whose teacher was Ms. Kendra Marsh. She said that Ms. Sanders' design was beautiful and creative, and while she did not win money, her design was printed on t-shirts to be distributed at the Biketopia event.

Commissioner Garcia indicated that the T&T event to drop off tires and televisions (TVs) in Sun Valley was taking place on May 31, 2025, from 9 a.m. to noon. She said that TVs were historically complicated to dispose of in the County, and she asked all to spread the word about the event. She reported that she would be out of town the following Tuesday to attend the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. but would be available via phone for the budget meeting. She noted that the County was awarded the 2024 Transportation Project of the Year for the Oddie Wells Project from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the Transportation Achievement Award for the intelligent transportation system (ITS) program, which was a collaboration between the University of Nevada, Reno

(UNR), the City of Sparks, and the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) to optimize faster and more efficient signals.

Commissioner Andriola hoped everyone had a great Mother's Day. She explained that Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH) was hosting the Second Annual Food Business Resource Fair on May 15, 2025, which she felt was a wonderful community event for food establishment permits. She noted that the businesses could request a \$500 pre-inspection for free. She commented the event was taking place at the Neil Road Recreation Center (NRRC) from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Commissioner Clark reported that he attended a meeting with two judges at 75 Court Street that morning. He noted that the judges were worried about radon testing and remediation at the courthouse and that some staff had worked for over 30 years in the facility in areas of high concentration of radon gases. He indicated that some of the regions monitored had the equivalent of 200 chest x-rays per year. He explained that the Chief Judge requested information and was told that she needed to submit a public records request (PRR). He believed there was a five-day requirement for public records according to the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS); however, he was told by the Chief Judge that she would not receive the information until November. He asked Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Mary Kandaras what the NRS PRR issuance time requirement was.

CDDA Kandaras indicated that the NRS required an acknowledgement of the records request within five days. She explained that the request should be answered within five days if possible, but the Chief Judge's request was extensive and involved communications that would take approximately six months to compile. She indicated that requests were answered in the order they were received and that it was legal for the request to take six months.

Commissioner Clark believed that the radon issue was an ongoing problem, and that judges had to sit in the courtroom with the radon gas. He felt that the County should have the information easily accessible and thought that it was embarrassing that the Chief Judge had to go through the standard process with long turnaround times. He explained that the Chief Judge was trying to protect the public, staff, and those unwillingly required to be at the courthouse. CDDA Kandaras asserted that a PRR did not fix a radon issue, and if a problem existed, it should be directed to facilities. She thought that contacting the department that could resolve the issue was a better approach. Commissioner Clark expressed that the information was needed, whether it fixed the problem or not. He speculated that the first step to eliminating a problem was understanding it, and that County employees needed protection since they spent a lot of time in the building.

Commissioner Clark noted that he attended the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) meeting the previous week and believed that it was nice to see the contentious nature of the meetings calming down. He felt that the former Library Director falsely claimed that hours and staff would be cut, which caused an abundance of emails, phone calls, and public comments made to the Commissioners. He indicated that the LBT was solvent and that Trustee Ann Silver wanted to research the budget to ensure efficiencies were in place. He

opined that much of what was said by the former Library Director was not true and caused anguish and hard feelings. He communicated that the statements made by the former Library Director were fear-mongering. CDDA Kandaras attempted to advise Commissioner Clark on his comments, to which he said he was moving on from his comments about the former Library Director. He asserted that asking the Commissioners to overturn the voters' decision regarding Washoe County Question Number One (WC1) was denying the election. He urged everyone to be careful because they may receive a request for something they voted for to be overturned. He said that people asserted that the ballot question was confusing, and he wanted to know who wrote WC1 and why they chose that language. He said that the verbiage became ammunition for arguments supporting either side. He asked the Office of the County Manager (OCM) what percentage of the budget they were willing to cut. He thought it would show leadership to cut 10 to 15 percent of their budget when asking other departments to lower their costs.

### **PROCLAMATIONS**

**25-0275**      **5A1** Proclamation for the month of May as International Internal Audit Awareness Month. (All Commission Districts.)

Vice Chair Herman read the proclamation.

Internal Auditor Manager Katelyn Kleidosty thanked the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for recognizing Internal Auditors Awareness Month. She appreciated the support and acknowledgement of the important role internal audit played in accountability, continuous improvement of County operations, strengthening operations, and building trust.

Char Hill thanked Ms. Kleidosty and believed she had a hard job that was appreciated.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5A1 be adopted.

**25-0276**      **5A2** Proclamation for the day of May 14 and the week of May 11 - 17 as Peace Officer Memorial Day & National Police Week. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Clark read the proclamation.

Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) Chief Deputy Corey Solferino noted that May was an important month for the WCSO because it was a month of remembrance. He indicated that the WCSO had attended many events over the previous weeks at many locations to recognize no line-of-duty deaths for the year. He reported that

there was a line-of-duty death in Southern Nevada that would be memorialized next year. He thanked the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for its support and work.

Chair Hill thanked Deputy Chief Solferino for his service.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Clark, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5A2 be adopted.

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Assistant County Manager (ACM) Kate Thomas asked for Agenda Item 5A3 to be postponed due to Judge Egan Walker being delayed.

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**25-0277** **5A4** Proclamation for the day of May 18 as Spanish Springs Library Day. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Andriola read the proclamation.

Spanish Springs Library Librarian Lynsy Nolan was thankful for the proclamation and was excited to celebrate 20 years of operation with the community at an event from 2 to 4 p.m. on May 18, 2025. She mentioned that there would be pageant dancers, relatives of historical figure Sarah Winnemucca, and an Indian taco food truck at the event.

Chair Hill thanked Ms. Nolan for her work.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

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

**25-0278** **AGENDA ITEM 6A1** Presentation by Elko County Commissioner Rex Steninger and Demar Dahl to discuss possible support for Elko County's Common Sense Land Act. The Act was passed unanimously by Elko County in 2023 and has received support from several rural Nevada counties. (All Commission Districts.)

Elko County Commissioner Rex Steninger greeted the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and introduced himself. He explained that he had come to the meeting to ask the Board to join in the support for Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act. He stressed that the bill was very limited in scope and was designed to transfer land needed for development, recreation, and conservation to the counties throughout Nevada.



Mr. Steninger reported that the Elko County Board of Commissioners (ECBC) unanimously voted to pass the measure in Elko County two years prior. He explained that the ECBC had since endeavored to rally support that would progress it towards acknowledgment by Nevada Congressman Mark Amodei. He noted that members of the ECBC repeatedly received questions from individuals who asked how the counties in the State could afford to fight wildfires or assume the role of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). He acknowledged that those questions might pose legitimate arguments, but did not apply to the ECBC's bill. He stated that, if passed, Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act would only enable the counties to ask for specific regions of land needed for public purposes. He opined that the confusion regarding the bill came from the Sagebrush Rebellion movement in the 1970s and the effort during the 2015 Nevada Legislature to wholesale transfer all public land to the State of Nevada. He clarified that Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act was not attempting to do that, and was a point the ECBC had been very specific about.

Mr. Steninger opined that Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act differed from all other land bills offered at that time because it would apply to every willing county in the State. He emphasized that the ECBC's bill would give any county in Nevada the choice to participate should they want to. He noted that every other land bill, including the bill proposed by Washoe County, was solely for efforts to be achieved in one county. He explained that such was the case for the lands bill introduced by Clark County. He reiterated that Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act would apply to all counties across Nevada. He stated that the ECBC believed it was just common sense for land-locked communities to be able to expand into the open spaces surrounding them. He explained that under the ECBC's bill, the land would be transferred without consideration, as he believed that it would be illogical to use public funds to purchase public lands for public purposes. He explained that it took the ECBC 20 years to obtain a small piece of land for a cemetery in Jarbidge, Nevada, and another 20 years to secure land just outside Elko County for a shooting range. He considered the excessive length of both timelines to be absurd. He opined that a better way to transfer land ownership to the counties was needed. He emphasized his disagreement with the system used for land transfers at that time. He described that process as each county developing massive land bills, submitting them to Congress, and watching the measure die in two years when Congress adjourned.

Mr. Steninger opined that something had gone terribly wrong when the United States (US) expanded westward, as the action marked the Nation's leadership abandoning the principles set forth by the founding fathers. He voiced that one of the major departures from those principles was moving away from the ideas expressed by the equal footing doctrine. The doctrine dictated that when a state was admitted to the Union, it would be given the same rights and authority as the original 13 states. He explained that former President Thomas Jefferson first put the equal footing doctrine into words. Mr. Steninger asked how Nevada could be considered equal to the original 13 states when the federal government controlled nearly 90 percent of the land in the State. He explained that the control granted by such a policy stifled growth, stripped the State of a tax base, and opposed the fundamental concept of a republic. He opined that for a republic like the US to function properly, each member was supposed to have sovereign power, yet the local

governments and the State of Nevada did not own the land in the State. He noted that the lack of land ownership put the State of Nevada at a significant disadvantage to the federal government and the 38 eastern states that maintained ownership of their land. He explained that a state being denied its land made it politically and economically inferior to the federal government and the states with land ownership. He noted that arguments similar to his had existed for many years. He believed that the logic behind those arguments still applied and carried more weight in consideration of the bill proposed by the ECBC, which only asked for particular and relatively small portions of land rather than all land in the State.

Mr. Steninger acknowledged that he could understand the basis of the arguments opposing the bill, as many people did not believe or doubted that the counties or state governments could manage the vast public lands in the Western US. However, he could not agree with those assertions. He reiterated that such arguments did not apply to Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act, as the bill was very specific regarding its scope. He emphasized that if passed, the act would empower the counties to take control of the land they might need for specific purposes. He noted that the act would bring decisions back to the governmental level closest to the citizenry. He opined that a county would never ask for land it did not believe could be managed. He reported that the ECBC went through great effort to ensure that substantial public comment and input would be involved in the process when any public land was put up for sale. He explained that for a county to sell land under the act, that sale would have to be approved in a three-part process. He noted that the sale would need to be granted approval by a county commission, the local wildlife board, and the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners (NBWC). He opined that nearly every county in the State had been clamoring for more land to develop on, as demonstrated by the bills proposed by Washoe County, Clark County, Pershing County, and several others. He reiterated that the pattern for such land bills was that they were introduced only to languish and die when Congress adjourned. He opined that it made no sense to continue such a cycle. He believed the counties had a better chance of succeeding with a simple bill, such as the one presented by the ECBC. He hoped that all counties across Nevada would support Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act because the bill applied to the State in its entirety.

Mr. Steninger stressed the importance of informing the Board that the ECBC investigated the land bills proposed by other counties throughout the State while drafting the Elko County Common Sense Lands Act. He explained that those actions were taken to ensure that the ECBC's bill made available everything sought by the other counties in Nevada. He stated that the BCC supporting Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act would do nothing to harm the efforts of the land bill proposed by Washoe County, as the Board could support both bills simultaneously. He speculated that, regardless of whether Congressman Amodei's amendment passed through Congress, Washoe County would likely still need access to more land in the following ten to fifteen years. He stated that Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act would provide a simple process to obtain that land in the future.

Mr. Steninger reported that the ECBC's bill had already received support from eight other counties in Nevada. He noted that the Board had been supplied with copies

of seven letters from those counties voicing their support for the bill. He explained that he received the eighth letter of support after initially providing the seven others included in the meeting's agenda. He displayed the eighth letter and placed a copy of the document on file with the Clerk. He emphasized the small size and rural nature of the eight counties that had provided letters of support for the bill. He opined that support was needed from Washoe County and Clark County for the bill to be taken seriously. He suspected that Congressman Amodei would not take Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act to Congress if Washoe County did not provide its agreement for the effort. He hoped the BCC would give the bill thoughtful consideration. He noted that he would try to answer any questions the Board might have on the matter. He acknowledged that his presentation had been marked on the agenda for discussion only and that action on the item would not be taken at that meeting. He noted that he needed to come back another time for action to be taken.

Chair Hill thanked Mr. Steninger. She noted that Vice Chair Herman had requested the presentation on the topic and invited her to begin the discussion.

Vice Chair Herman thanked Mr. Steninger for having traveled from Elko County to attend the meeting. Mr. Steninger remarked that Elko County had rain and snow that morning. Vice Chair Herman thanked Mr. Steninger for reminding the Board of the history of the Nation and how the past events he discussed had brought such possibilities. She opined that the way Nevada and its counties entered the Union differed from what counties on the other side of the Mississippi River experienced. She opined that the Board needed to be reminded of that history and why events occurred as they had. She suggested that the counties in Nevada might not be treated as fairly as other counties across the Country, as those counties owned all of their land. She thanked Mr. Steninger for his hard work.

Chair Hill echoed Vice Chair Herman's thanks. Commissioner Garcia stated that she was not privy to the conversations in the eight counties that had supported the ECBC's lands bill. She explained that she only had experience with the lands bill that Nevada Senator Jacky Rosen introduced. She recounted that Senator Rosen's bill involved substantial community outreach conducted with those considered to be stakeholders of the land, such as fishermen, hunters, those who operated dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and tribal partners to gather information on the specific parcels that the bill could impact. She acknowledged Mr. Steninger's earlier mention of the checks and balances in place for the bill proposed by the ECBC, which included the involvement of various wildlife boards and authorities. She asked if there were any other advisory groups or processes the counties would engage in during the progression proposed in the bill.

Mr. Steninger responded that the ECBC had not heard from any other groups that Commissioner Garcia mentioned. He noted that representatives from such groups were welcome to attend ECBC or Elko County Wildlife Advisory Board meetings. He opined that there was plenty of opportunity for involvement. He explained that efforts to include wildlife advisory boards in the sale process outlined in the ECBC's bill had been added to address opposition voiced by sportsmen in response to earlier versions of Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Vice Chair Herman for requesting Mr. Steninger's presentation at the meeting. She guessed that the National Association of Counties (NACo) was aware of the Elko County Common Sense Lands Act. Mr. Steninger explained that in 2014, NACo contributed \$60,000 for a task force report on the subject covered by the ECBC's bill. He noted that the ECBC had not reported back to NACo on the topic as of then, as the ECBC decided to approach other counties with the bill first. He emphasized that NACo had historically supported similar efforts.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Mr. Steninger for his answer. She thought that was likely the case, but wanted to get confirmation. She opined that the goal of Elko County's Common Sense Land Act was important. She suspected that many residents of the local area did not realize how much land was owned by the federal government in various ways. She indicated the importance of the Board acting on any matters that might allow an opportunity to address that ownership. She noted that she had read Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act and remarked that the bill encompassed the land across the entire State, as Mr. Steninger had mentioned. She suggested that including the bill in a future agenda would be an excellent opportunity for the Board to consider garnering support for Elko County's Common Sense Lands Act if the BCC desired to do so. She thanked Mr. Steninger again and wished him safe travels.

Mr. Steninger noted that Commissioner Andriola had mentioned that many individuals were unaware of the situation the counties in Nevada faced. He recounted his experience visiting the District of Columbia (DC) and other areas in the Eastern US. He explained that the residents of those areas had no idea about the situation in Nevada, and they could not imagine a community being landlocked and unable to expand.

Commissioner Clark thanked Mr. Steninger for his visit. He explained that he had seen maps of the US that included the percentage of each area owned or controlled by different elements of the federal government, such as the BLM, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the US Forest Service (USFS). He noted that it was shocking to view Nevada on such a map and to see the percentage of land owned by the federal government compared to other states in the Country. He believed that, comparatively, Texas had only a few acres of land that the state government did not control. He explained that the further east one looked in the US, the less the federal government and agencies like the BLM were involved in the land ownership of those states. He opined that it was a good idea to get some of the land in Nevada owned by the federal government back to where it could contribute to the tax roll and serve a productive use for the State of Nevada and the counties.

Chair Hill thanked Mr. Steninger again and said the BCC would contact him. She noted that the Board appreciated his time and passion for the item. She wished him safe travels home.

## **PROCLAMATIONS**

**25-0279**      **5A3** Proclamation for the month of May as Treatment Court Month. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Hill stated that the Board would return to the proclamations with Agenda Item 5A3 as all those who were to be presented with the proclamation had arrived at the meeting. Commissioner Garcia thanked those present for attending the meeting that day.

Commissioner Garcia read the proclamation in the form of a motion.

Chair Hill noted that a large group of judges and court administrators were present and invited them to approach the dais to introduce themselves, explain what each of them did in the courtrooms, and be presented with the proclamation.

Jeremy Wilson, Assistant Court Administrator of the Reno Justice Court (RJC), introduced himself to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). He noted that he had the pleasure of working alongside judicial officers and representatives of other courts to ensure those facilities were sustainable. He opined that they conducted amazing work within the community. He thanked the BCC and stated that the proclamation was very important to the collective courts in Washoe County.

Emily Ruff, RJC Specialty Court Program Coordinator, introduced herself and expressed that she was appreciative to have worked in over four different specialty courts within the RJC. She explained that she had recently collaborated with Andrew Sherbondy, the Court Program Manager at the Reno Municipal Court (RMC), Brooke Howard, the Specialty Courts Program Manager at the Second Judicial District Court (SJDC), and Jessica Brown, the Assistant Court Administrator at the Sparks Justice Court (SJC). She elaborated that those individuals were based at different courts within the County, and that the collaboration between them was done to create a more cooperative effort that could better meet the needs of the County's population. She noted that being in attendance at the meeting was a pleasure and thanked the Board for their recognition.

Mr. Sherbondy introduced himself to the Board and indicated his intent to keep his speech brief so the Commissioners could hear from the other individuals in attendance. He expressed that those present were thrilled to be involved. He supported Ms. Ruff's earlier comments regarding collaboration and emphasized the importance of those efforts. He opined that the proclamation served as a vital recognition. He thanked the Board for having invited the court representatives and for honoring them through their recognition. He noted that specialty court staff and the court administrators would continue working hard to pursue their goals of putting others in positions to succeed.

Alicia Lerud, Court Administrator and Clerk of Court at the SJDC, introduced herself and expressed her intent not to reiterate what had already been said. She noted that representatives of four different courts were present before the Board. She

stressed that those court representatives worked together in a collaborative effort that truly spanned the entire community. She indicated that all members of the collaborative partnership within the community's courts could not attend the meeting that day, as that partnership was comprised of such a significant number of individuals that the Chambers would be full from one end to another. She emphasized that the effort of the courts to raise those who most needed assistance to higher places was community-wide.

Judge Chris Hazlett-Stevens of the RMC greeted the Board and introduced himself. He explained that for purposes of the proclamation, he also presided over the City of Reno's Community Court, which worked with the local unhoused population to connect them with services. He thanked the Board for the proclamation, as it acknowledged the daily actions of the bench, which helped people target the underlying issues that addressed criminal behavior with the assistance of court administrators and other court professionals. He opined that the rest of his colleagues at the RMC could not be present at the meeting as they were occupied by taking the actions he had mentioned previously. He thanked the Board for their acknowledgement and for the proclamation.

Judge Kendra Bertschy of the RJC introduced herself and noted that she presided over the RJC's Co-Occurring Disorders (COD) Court for the treatment court, otherwise known as the Court Assistance Program (CAP) Court. She explained that she also presided over the Reno Housing Court eviction diversion program, which she hoped would become a treatment court. She acknowledged that the Board had heard her discuss that program previously that year, and noted that she would not go into too much detail about it at that time. She expressed excitement that the day marked the first anniversary of the beginning of collaboration between all the courts represented at the meeting. She noted that those courts met quarterly to ensure that they addressed the community's needs and that everyone was safer while living in the area. She thanked the Board.

Judge Egan Walker of the SJDC introduced himself and joked about the concept of judges talking together and collaborating with one another. He noted that when one individual rose up, so did all others. He opined that the collaboration efforts were a smart form of justice and worked very well for people. He expressed feeling incredibly privileged to be a part of that process.

Judge Erica Flavin of the SJC introduced herself and explained that she was the presiding judge of the Sparks Recovery Court. She thanked the Board for allowing those being recognized to attend the meeting and for presenting them with the proclamation. She opined that the treatment courts were a vital part of the lives of court participants and the community. She noted that as court staff aided the needs of those who participated in the courts, they simultaneously aided the lives of all those within the community. She reiterated her gratitude to the Board for allowing court staff to do so and for supporting them. She stated that their work as judges comprised a small part of the treatment courts, what their stakeholders and partners did, and the heavy burden of the tasks carried by their administrators. She thanked the Board for attending the meeting and for recognizing the effort of the court staff and all those present to receive the proclamation.

Ms. Howard introduced herself and noted her affiliation with the SJDC. She joked that when a judge directed someone to speak, that was what they would do. She echoed everything that had been said that morning. She thanked the BCC for recognizing not only the local courts but also all of the courts across the Nation that performed the difficult tasks associated with assisting the community daily. She indicated that providing such assistance required a collaborative effort. She acknowledged that those present understood that the effort was not just a matter undertaken by one person, but by many. She thanked the Board again and noted that the court representatives would return the following year.

Chair Hill thanked Ms. Howard. She indicated that those who attended to receive the proclamations made the Board proud. She recounted that when she had attended the National Association of Counties (NACo) annual conference, she found that the County was seen as a model for its specialty court programs. She noted that Washoe County had been recognized in the Stepping Up program among counties across the United States (US). She explained that the recognition was due to the County moving forward to help people escape poverty, address their behavioral health issues, and support their families. She stated that those present to receive the proclamation were part of that solution, and the Board was proud to work for them. She thanked the recipients of the proclamation and encouraged the meeting's attendees to join her in applauding the court representatives for their hard work.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5A3 be adopted.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 7A1 THROUGH 7H1**

- 25-0280**      **7A1** Recommendation to acknowledge receipt of the Truckee Meadows Regional Trails Plan, developed by Truckee Meadows Trails Initiative. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0281**      **7B1** Recommendation to accept a renewed Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant to the District Attorney's Office in the amount of [\$200,417.65; \$66,805.88 in-kind match], from the State of Nevada Attorney General's Office to provide funding for a Deputy District Attorney III retroactive from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, and if approved, direct Finance to reimburse the General Fund through a cross-fund transfer of [\$129,922.50] for personnel expenditures incurred in FY24, to make necessary budget amendments and retroactively authorize the District Attorney or his designees to sign the grant agreement. District Attorney. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0282**      **7B2** Recommendation to accept a renewed Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant to the District Attorney's Office in the amount of [\$231,246; \$79,167 required in-kind match], from the State of Nevada Attorney

General's Office to provide funding for a Deputy District Attorney III retroactive from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025 and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments and retroactively authorize the District Attorney or his designees to sign the grant agreement. District Attorney. (All Commission Districts.)

- 25-0283**      **7C1** Recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to acknowledge a supplemental grant of \$1,790.90 which increases the original award to \$29,215.90 [no County match required], awarded to the Second Judicial District Court from the Supreme Court of Nevada, Administrative Office of the Courts for building a perimeter fence on the north side of the 75 Court Street building and creating a safe outdoor area for employee use; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. District Court. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0284**      **7C2** Recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to retroactively acknowledge a grant of \$3,673.96 [no County match required], awarded to the Second Judicial District Court from the Supreme Court of Nevada, Administrative Office of the Courts to fund a contractor to supplement the court's Information Technology (IT) team in the conversion of the case management system; with a grant period of 3/20/2025 - 12/31/2026; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. District Court. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0285**      **7D1** Recommendation to accept a FY24 Continuum of Care Supportive Services Only Coordinated Entry grant award from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in the amount of [\$31,500.00; \$7,875.00 county match] retroactive for the period May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026 to support the Continuum of Care initiative with coordinated entry matchmaker activities and implementation of specific policies; authorize the Director of the Human Services Agency to execute grant award documents; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0286**      **7E1** Recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, Commission District Special Fund disbursement in the amount of [\$9,800.00] for Fiscal Year 2024-2025; District 3 Commissioner Mariluz Garcia recommends a [\$7,500.00] grant to Domestic Violence Resource Center (DVRC) – a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support the mission of rebuilding safe and hopeful lives for victims of family violence; and a [\$2,300.00] grant to Truckee Meadows Bicycle Alliance (TMBA) - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - for the purposes of covering costs associated with the t-shirt design contest where the winning student has their design printed on the t-shirts for the 3rd annual event; approve Resolutions



necessary for same; and direct the Finance Office to make the necessary disbursements of funds. Manager. (Commission District 3.)

- 25-0287**      **7F1** Recommendation to approve budget amendments totaling an increase of [\$50,466.00; \$6,174.10 in county match] in both revenue and expense to the FY25 PHP BP5 NCE Subaward, retroactive to July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, for the Epidemiology and Public Health Preparedness (EPHP) Division to support demonstration of achievement in the program domains and capabilities according to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program (PHEP) cooperative agreement, and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0288**      **7G1** Recommendation to accept the cost reimbursement agreement dated March 10, 2025 [up to \$21,740.50, no County match required] in overtime reimbursement for deputies assigned full time to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Northern Nevada Safe Streets Task Force (NNSSTF). Washoe County will be reimbursed for overtime and benefit costs directly related to activities in conjunction with the FBI NNSSTF. Funds are available retroactively from Federal Fiscal Year of October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025, and if approved, direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0289**      **7G2** Recommendation to approve a Security Agreement between the Reno Rodeo Association and the County of Washoe on behalf of Washoe County Sheriff's Office to provide uniformed Deputy Sheriffs for security [No fiscal impact to County, estimated \$138,000 Annual Security Costs Reimbursed] during Reno Rodeo events occurring for the period of June 15, 2025, through the last day of the Reno Rodeo 2027 performance. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0290**      **7H1** Recommendation to approve and acknowledge a Fiscal Year 2025 allocation from the Specialty Court Funding and Policy Committee of the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada to the Sparks Justice Court [\$4,000 for FY25, no match required], paid in one installment retroactive to March 6, 2025, grant end date June 30, 2025; and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Sparks Justice Court. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Hill noted that Commissioner Andriola had a disclosure to provide prior to action being taken on the Consent Agenda Items.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Chair Hill. Commissioner Andriola wanted to voice a disclosure related to Agenda Item 7G2 out of an abundance of caution after conferring with the District Attorney's (DA) Office. She disclosed that she formerly served as president of the Reno Rodeo Foundation (RRF), which she noted was an

organization created by the Reno Rodeo Association (RRA). She stated that she held that position for over ten years, but no longer had an active role within the RRA or RRF, apart from proudly volunteering occasionally and being a fan of what the rodeo did for the community. She explained that she had no pecuniary role or commitment in a private capacity with the RRA, other than what was defined within NRS Chapter 281A as a relationship that would materially affect the independence of judgment of a reasonable person, or that would otherwise require her to recuse herself from considering the item. She stated that she would be voting on Agenda Item 7G2.

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

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Vice Chair Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 7A1 through 7H1 be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 7A1 through 7H1 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

#### **BLOCK VOTE – 8 THROUGH 12**

**25-0291**      **AGENDA ITEM 8** Recommendation to approve the use of General Fund Contingency in the amount up to [\$386,650] to increase expenditures for 1) pooled positions [\$181,000] and 2) various operating expenditures [\$205,650] needed to support the Department of Alternative Sentencing in accordance with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 354.598005, which sets forth procedures for augmenting a budget and; if approved, direct Finance to make the necessary budget appropriation transfers [Total fiscal year 2025 impact \$386,650; net fiscal impact \$0]. Alternative Sentencing. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-1 vote, with Commissioner Clark voting no, it was ordered that Agenda Item 8 be approved and directed.

**25-0292**      **AGENDA ITEM 9** Request by the Community Services Department Director, through the Washoe County Clerk, and pursuant to Washoe County Code (WCC) 2.030, to initiate amendments to WCC Chapter 100 (Buildings and Construction) to update the editions of the specialized or uniform codes adopted by reference, pursuant to NRS 244.105, with any changes necessary to make them applicable to conditions within Washoe County. The newer editions include: the 2024 Northern Nevada Amendments; the 2024 versions of the International Building, Residential, Existing Building, Energy Conservation, Fuel Gas, Mechanical, Wildland-Urban Interface, and Swimming Pool and Spa Codes; the 2024 Uniform

Plumbing and Mechanical Codes; the 2023 National Electrical Code; and the 2024 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 54 and 58 Codes. And, direct the County Clerk to submit the request to the District Attorney's Office for preparation of a proposed ordinance in accordance with WCC 2.040. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-1 vote, with Commissioner Clark voting no, it was ordered that Agenda Item 9 be initiated and directed.

**25-0293**      **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to: (1) award a bid and approve the Agreement to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder for the Future of Work Central Conference Remodel Project, PWP-WA-2025-027 [staff recommends Facilities Management, Inc., in the amount of \$471,500.00]; and (2) approve a project contingency fund in the amount of \$25,000.00, for a total project cost not to exceed \$496,500.00. This capital project will remodel the existing central conference area in Building C at the 9th Street Administration Complex into a modern training room and conference center. Community Services. (Commission District 3.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-1 vote, with Commissioner Clark voting no, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be awarded and approved.

**25-0294**      **AGENDA ITEM 11** Recommendation to acknowledge receipt of the Interim Financial Report for Washoe County Governmental Funds for the Nine Months Ended March 31, 2025 recognizing a total funds balance increase of \$87 million year-to-date and \$19 million year over year. This unaudited interim financial report is provided quarterly, in addition to the audited annual comprehensive financial report, to provide information on Washoe County's primary operating fund and accounts and identify significant variances between the years. - Unaudited Comptroller. (All Commission Districts.)

On the call for public comment, Ms. Trista Gomez greeted the Board and introduced herself. She explained that her printer would not work, so she was not able to print out all of her bell curves, which she opined that the Board loved to see. She stated that the budget's priorities spoke to how the Board treated the community and who they prioritized within the community, which she believed was true for anything. She noted that she had received negative looks for how she had spoken about the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), but indicated that she would keep talking about PERS. She opined that PERS and the public taxpayer-funded employees were taking such a large

portion of the budget that it was causing the middle class to have to pay more. She recounted that she had grown up in the City of Sparks on 14th Street and E Street and attended local schools, including Robert Mitchell Elementary School, Sparks High School, Fred W. Traner Middle School, Sparks Middle School, and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). She noted that she might move back to Sparks, as her kids had graduated and there was no reason for her to live in the Spanish Springs area. She explained that she was uncertain about that decision and would not decide until August. She speculated that she might also move to the Midtown area, as she had children who lived there. She shared that her family belonged to the middle class while she was growing up in Sparks, and she described her family's working-class background. She explained that people with a similar economic background only tried to have upward mobility, and their best course of action to achieve that goal was to have the least amount of barriers and burdens in their lives, as they were not necessarily looking for a program or assistance. She noted that she was the only college graduate in her family. She reiterated that she had grown up within a family that belonged to the demographic of working-class, blue-collar individuals. She noted that the community represented by Commissioner Garcia consisted largely of people in that demographic. She opined those within that demographic wanted opportunity with the fewest barriers and costs involved, and to feel as though there was justice in the administering of the budget. She said that given the lack of such preventative barriers, those individuals would begin to find upward mobility, buy houses, and remain in the community where their families lived. She explained that those goals were very important to the people who belonged to average communities. She asked that when the Board discussed the budget, they prioritize those who just wanted a lack of barriers and burdens in life.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-1 vote, with Commissioner Clark voting no, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be acknowledged.

**25-0295**      **AGENDA ITEM 12** Recommendation to approve Amendment #1 to an Interlocal Contract Between Public Agencies between the State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services Health Care Financing and Policy and Welfare and Supportive Services Divisions and Washoe County to maintain the County Match Program, under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, assistance to individuals in long term care facilities retroactive to July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2027 to increase the total amount not to exceed amount to [\$36,969,249.75 (\$7,755,196.56 for FY24; \$9,984,089.90 for FY25; \$9,406,547.27 for FY26; \$9,823,416.02 for FY27)]; and to approve net-zero budget appropriation transfer [total \$2,873,147] in the Indigent Fund; and if approved, authorize the Director of the Human Services Agency to execute the Amendment; and direct Finance to make the necessary transfer (net impact to County budget is zero). Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 4-1 vote, with Commissioner Clark voting no, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be approved, authorized, and directed.

**25-0296**      **AGENDA ITEM 13**      Update and possible direction to staff regarding preparation of Fiscal Year 2026 budget for consideration by the entire Board at the May 20, 2025 public hearing on the FY2026 budget. Finance. (All Commission Districts.)

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Abbe Yacoben and Budget Manager Lori Cooke conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: FY 2026 Budget Update; Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Discussion and Background: Agenda; Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Discussion and Background: Augmentations – What are they?; Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Discussion and Background: General Fund Contingency; Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Changes Tentative to Final: Changes and Impacts – Guidance Needed; Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Preview of Final Budget; High Level Preview of Final Recommended Budget (two slides); Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Preview of Final Budget: untitled tables; Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Discussion and Background: Next Steps; Thank You & Questions.

Ms. Yacoben displayed the *Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Discussion and Background: Agenda* slide and outlined that she would brief the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on augmentations, contingency funds, and proposed changes between the tentative Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget and the final FY 2026 budget. She expressed her desire for input from the BCC to ensure that any adjustments Board members recommended could be incorporated for the final budget. She informed that, following her presentation, Ms. Cooke would provide a brief preview of the final FY 2026 budget presentation scheduled for the following week. Ms. Yacoben advised that the presentation the following week would be much more thorough.

Ms. Yacoben showed the *Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Discussion and Background: Augmentations – What are they?* slide and explained that augmentations were being utilized for FY 2026 to address vacancy savings and other cost-reduction measures. She said the FY 2026 budget prioritized efficiencies, which introduced more risk and less cushion into the model. She stated the importance of knowing when the County budget could and could not be changed. She reported that Nevada was prescriptive about changes to finalized County budgets, and she referred to the legal definitions shown on her slide. She spoke about how she and the Nevada Department of Taxation (NDT) interpreted the legal definitions. She described that appropriations could be moved between budgetary functions and the BCC could be notified at their next meeting. She said that was done regularly. Ms. Yacoben clarified that any increases that happened after the budget was adopted were called augmentations. She informed that there were four cases in which budget augmentation was allowed, but noted that she did not plan to speak about the case related to capital projects funds. She said that money left over at the end of the year for multi-year capital projects could be carried forward and used for that project in the upcoming year. She described revenues generated from previously unbudgeted sources,

and explained that timing for the receipt of grant funds was not known in advance, but a projected amount was included in revenue and expense items in the budget. She said that exemplified augmentation, was fully legal, and was done routinely in many different departments. She noted that revenues in excess of the budget were not seen often, and staff did not generally recommend including high projections to the Board. She provided the example of Consolidated Tax (c-tax) revenue, which was sometimes higher than projected. She could not imagine a situation where she would advise the Board to spend that money, because if revenues decreased by the end of the year, the augmentation would no longer be legal. She disclosed that the first example included on the *When are they Allowed* list on her slide was the most frequent use of augmentation. She advised that the process was somewhat complicated and there was a delay between steps. She explained that there was sometimes variance between the projected ending fund balance at the time when the County budget was filed with the State and the actual ending fund balance. She revealed that the County was allowed to use any excess for augmentation but could only use the surplus after audited financials were presented to the Board in December. She did not recommend estimating the amount. She advised that it was better to wait for the report from the external auditor after their review of all financial statements. She summarized that no opinions or consensus were required from the BCC that day about augmentations, but as more risk and fiscal frugality were introduced, she wanted to know how to adjust the budget if needed.

Ms. Yacoben showed the *General Fund Contingency* slide and informed the Board that, in order to build contingency into the final FY 2026 budget document, some BCC consensus was needed when she reviewed the next slide. She noted that the BCC policy mirrored what was stipulated in Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), outlined excellent progressive budget strategies, and was included in the back of the budget book for Board members to refer to as they prepared for the Budget 101 session. She said NRS permitted the Board to budget the General Fund contingency up to the maximum rate stipulated within the language of the statute. She said that when her team made a recommendation to the BCC, they considered what was predicted for future years based on known risks and projections about other uncertainties. She recalled that 3 percent was budgeted for contingency in FY 2025, and she proposed 1.5 percent for FY 2026. She explained that collective bargaining had concluded and revenues were flattening. She said that because those factors were known, they were not seen as risks per se. She mentioned the County was still receiving Requests for Proposals (RFPs) with bids that were higher than expected, and she noted that unpredictable things occurred in an organization as large and complicated as the County. She reported that the County had 24 different lines of business, and it was impossible to anticipate everything. She proposed budgeting 1.5 percent for contingency, which was \$6.8 million. She recalled hearing a comment about budgeting 1 percent for contingency, which she offered was approximately \$4.5 million, and was also possible. She believed that amount was slightly too low for an organization as complex as the County, but she noted the decision belonged to the BCC. She summarized that BCC consensus was needed about what percentage to include for contingency in the FY 2026 budget.

Ms. Yacoben showed the *Changes and Impacts – Guidance Needed* slide and clarified that although consensus was not needed immediately, it was necessary before the meeting concluded. She advised that it was possible to revisit the current slide after Ms. Cooke presented. She directed attention to her slide, which outlined areas where guidance was needed. She spoke about funding for the Washoe County Library System (WCLS), and stated that the proposal was to keep the WCLS budget flat, like other departments. She explained that WCLS funding overall could be preserved at a level similar to prior years by allocating the difference between what remained in the Library Expansion Fund, which was projected to be \$3.5 million on June 30, 2025, and could only be used for WCLS expansion purposes, and adding up to \$1.3 million of General Fund support if needed. She said it would be budgeted centrally, and the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) could vote to use those funds after the Library Expansion Funds were exhausted, which would trigger Ms. Yacoben's team to transfer funds into the appropriate departmental budget. She reiterated the need for consensus from the Board on that proposal. She revealed that three departments had recently experienced serious struggles with recruitment for positions funded by remaining American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) monies. She surmised that people did not want to work for County departments experiencing uncertainty about funding sources. She directed attention to her slide, where eight affected positions were listed. The positions totaled approximately \$1.2 million, and Ms. Yacoben sought the opinion of Board members on whether to build that \$1.2 million into the General Fund for FY 2026. She disclosed that the County anticipated \$6 million of interest revenue from ARPA monies, which she communicated could fund the listed positions for almost five years. She requested BCC consensus on that strategy and regarding what percentage to build into the FY 2026 budget for contingency. She highlighted a change between the tentative and final budgets, and specified that the estimated revenue for interest income would be increased from \$5 million to \$7 million based on investment performance. She stated that she was comfortable with getting consensus at that time or waiting until the end of the presentation, and asked Chair Hill how she preferred to proceed. Chair Hill asked if the presentation was the same as the budget presentation that the BCC would be given on May 20, 2025. Ms. Yacoben advised that the presentation would initially be very high-level, and she did not have final details in a PowerPoint yet. Chair Hill was comfortable discussing it since the slide was already visible on the presentation screen. She offered that the discussion could continue after the presentation.

Chair Hill invited Commissioners to share their thoughts on the recommendation.

Commissioner Garcia expressed her support for everything that had been proposed that day.

Chair Hill stated her support for everything that had been presented. She was curious about the ARPA-funded positions and asked if Ms. Yacoben recommended keeping them despite the recruitment challenges.

Ms. Yacoben said that because of the recruiting difficulties reported by departments, she recommended adding security by moving the positions into the General

Fund. She acknowledged that no new positions would be granted for FY 2026, but she noted that the positions being considered were not new. She said only the funding source would be new, and she proposed paying for the positions with ARPA interest.

Chair Hill asked if the interest would be put into the General Fund to pay for those positions. Ms. Yacoben affirmed that the interest would pay for the positions for the next five years. Chair Hill stated her support of the proposals Ms. Yacoben presented.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Ms. Yacoben, Ms. Cooke, and everyone who worked on the FY 2026 budget. She acknowledged that some financial uncertainty remained, particularly with c-tax and the possibility of unfunded mandates from the 2025 Legislative Session. She appreciated that Ms. Yacoben took the time to go to the LBT and communicate about the use of remaining Library Expansion Funds. She clarified that the Library Expansion Fund was unrelated to the North Valleys WCLS branch, and understood that those funds would primarily be used for books. She affirmed the importance of the ARPA-funded positions Ms. Yacoben outlined, and supported the use of ARPA interest to fund those positions for the next five years. She opined that those positions were needed and asked for, and she thought they contributed to balance and fairness in the County judicial system. She expressed her agreement with Ms. Yacoben's recommendations.

Ms. Yacoben thanked Commissioner Andriola and conveyed that preparing the budget was a massive team effort.

Chair Hill noted that Ms. Yacoben's team was seated behind her at the meeting. She expressed her appreciation to them.

Commissioner Clark thanked Ms. Yacoben for her presentation the prior week. He thought she did a great job and added that her attendance at the LBT meeting diffused a lot of hard feelings on both sides regarding WCLS funding uncertainties. He theorized that her comprehensive explanation of the issues was especially helpful because she had not previously been involved with the LBT. He noticed on the news the prior night that the City of Sparks was experiencing budget challenges. He disclosed that the city would pause hiring and release some current employees to address a budget shortfall. He asked if any evaluation of the County Manager's staff had been undertaken to ensure reductions were proportional to what was being asked of other department heads in the County. He communicated that some department heads and elected County officials believed the Office of the County Manager (OCM) had grown more than other departments over the past few years. He felt that reducing budgetary needs in that department would demonstrate leadership.

Ms. Yacoben responded that the OCM would be included if departments were asked to make cuts. She noted that an efficiency and optimization study was underway, and staff would strive to implement its recommendations, though she had not yet seen a final draft of the study. She asserted that the OCM would be treated in the exact same way as any other department.



Commissioner Clark said it would be nice to have the efficiency report before the budget approval deadline, but observed that did not seem likely.

Ms. Yacoben affirmed Commissioner Clark's observation.

Commissioner Clark spoke about his preference to have information before making a decision and remarked that he had frequently made that point at the dais over the past several years. He did not like being rushed to a decision with only the intimation that study results could be read when they were received at some later time.

Ms. Yacoben offered that departments did not have to spend the entirety of their budget allocation and could make changes to incorporate money-saving best practices found from the optimization study.

Commissioner Clark observed that Ms. Yacoben was more optimistic than he was about that, and Ms. Yacoben agreed. Commissioner Clark did not think it was likely that departments would spend less than they were allocated.

Chair Hill stated that the BCC did not want to see layoffs. She indicated that they wanted departments to find efficiencies and cost savings and return money to the General Fund. She advised that she spoke to the same people as Commissioner Clark, and she acknowledged that it was new for Commissioners to ask departments to find opportunities for savings in salaries and elsewhere. She thought it was up to the BCC to fully understand all costs so they could optimize future budget decisions. She said departments were informed that they could return to the BCC if there were issues or a need for funding to pay for a contract or program formerly paid for through salary savings. She perceived that departments might feel concerned about returning to the BCC with requests to use fund balances, but she communicated that she had not seen a denial of a funding request of that kind during her tenure on the Board. She reported that when people approached the BCC with a request to use a fund balance, nobody was admonished at the dais. She added that requests of that type were typically placed in the Consent Agenda or as part of a Block Vote because Commissioners wanted to ensure necessary services were funded. She restated that the BCC asked leaders to look carefully at their budget to ensure all spending aligned with what taxpayers wanted. She applauded the work that Ms. Yacoben did with Commissioner Andriola and the State of Nevada on the Washoe County Checkbook. She liked that all departments would be accountable for their expenditures, and she observed that the Washoe County Checkbook provided an opportunity for departments to show that they were putting the funding the BCC gave them to the highest and best use. She thought a lot of progress had been made as a County, and she did not think that any department wanted to see that progress diminish. She said library hours were increased, the number of Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) deputies increased, vulnerable people were supported at the Cares Campus, and deaths on the street were prevented. She summarized that incredible work had been done, and she did not want to go backwards. She thought there was an opportunity for austerity and to make potentially hard decisions or find additional revenues to support what was needed in FY 2026.

Commissioner Clark clarified that he was not suggesting that the County should lay people off, but he felt that the possibility needed to be considered. He divulged that multiple elected department heads expressed concern to him about how to reduce costs when 90 percent of their departmental budget was payroll. He questioned how the budget could be balanced if 90 percent was considered untouchable. He reasoned that if cutbacks were necessary, it might not be possible to sustain positions created using ARPA funds. He remarked that nobody wanted to go backwards, and he suggested that the County go forwards with a good fiscal plan rather than continue on the same path. He said he voted against the conference room remodel proposed in Agenda Item 10. He did not think it was prudent to undertake projects of that type amidst the financial difficulties the County was experiencing. He suggested that the County needed to take action to show taxpayers that Commissioners were aware of the problems and were working to address them. Without action, he predicted a continuous spiral of overspending and debt. He advocated for fiscal responsibility and noted the universality of budget constraints. He was struck by the financial problems being faced by the County, the Cities of Reno and Sparks, the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD), and the Washoe County School District (WCSD). He emphasized that the County had more money than ever due to high c-tax and new construction with no tax cap or depreciation. He said the County had some of the highest sales taxes in the State and some of the highest gas taxes in the United States. He mentioned money received by the County in response to COVID-19 (C19) and questioned why the County had more money than ever but was still operating with a deficit.

Chair Hill said that Nevada had the lowest tax in the Country, and she remarked that the growth of population and industry experienced in the State was not sufficiently offset by tax revenues. She explained that the State had to enable the County to enact taxes, and she noted the problem of depreciating property taxes at both the County and State levels. She recalled a recent economic forum for the State of Nevada that revealed that the State was in trouble and the Governor's budget did not balance. She thought the Board needed to consider ways to increase revenues, and she offered that there were two ways to do that. She wanted to take care of the community and said that was what County taxpayers asked the BCC to do. She did not want to cut positions or programs in the next FY, but she admitted that the financial future of the County was uncertain unless revenues were increased. She could not promise the sustainability of any departments, especially because one quarter of economic growth decline had already been seen at the national level. She said only one more quarter was needed to designate the Country entering a recession. She thought the Board needed to be realistic about that, and she did not expect the State to save the County.

Commissioner Clark restated his position that the County had more money than ever, and he challenged Chair Hill's assertion that the County needed even more money. He questioned how much more she thought the County needed. Commissioner Clark stated his desire to know the percentage of the budget that went to payroll throughout the County. He said he did not want anybody to get fired, but he warned that there would be a time when payroll expenses had to be scrutinized. Ms. Yacoben advised that payroll accounted for between 79 percent and 80 percent of the General Fund budget in FY 2025. Commissioner Clark opined that a budget share that large needed to be investigated to

identify ways to save money. He recounted a conversation in which he asked County Manager Eric Brown what was wrong with the budget, and Manager Brown responded that the County was simply spending more money than it was taking in. Commissioner Clark expressed frustration about the potential impact of higher taxes on people who were already struggling in the current economic landscape. He concluded that the County could not continue to spend money like they had it, because they did not have it.

Commissioner Andriola acknowledged the opportunity for an in-depth discussion, but preferred to focus on the specifics of the FY 2026 budget. She summarized that after working through different options, the Board was presented with a flat budget that did not favor one department over another. She noted that there was an upcoming statutory deadline that was not negotiable. She thought that after the Board approved the FY 2026 budget, they should immediately start planning for future years. She was sure that Ms. Yacoben and her team already had frameworks in place for FY 2027. She surmised that every department head understood the need for frugality. She saw the fiscal projections as opportunities and opined that when things were going well, there was a degree of comfort that could dampen innovation. She clarified that she was not suggesting anyone was not working hard, but she noted there was a chance to consider how more could be done with less. She found it interesting to compare the County to other jurisdictions and speculated that the County was unique in planning immediately for FY 2027. She advocated for allowing Ms. Cooke to present her updated information about the recommended FY 2026 budget, if Chair Hill felt so inclined.

Commissioner Garcia thanked Ms. Yacoben for her briefing and for providing the PowerPoint slides in advance. She stated her appreciation for continuing education on topics that Commissioners were potentially unfamiliar with, like contingency and augmentation. She said information and communication were helpful to the Commissioners as they made decisions. She recalled the progression from considerations of a hiring freeze to vacancy savings, and wondered what communication was envisioned to help the County forecast the vacancy savings Ms. Yacoben projected for FY 2027.

Ms. Yacoben thanked Commissioner Garcia for her question. She said she originally proposed monthly communications but offered to communicate as frequently and in as much detail as Commissioners wished. She said the Finance team was there to communicate with the Board, and they wanted to go into the FY 2027 budget with full awareness and with solutions.

Chair Hill shared that the Board envisioned hearing from Ms. Yacoben and two departments each month as part of the regular communication. She said that because there were 24 departments in the County, having two present each month would help Board members develop and maintain a good understanding of the needs, concerns, and operations of each department. She wanted the Board to keep those considerations in mind as they built the FY 2027 budget.

Ms. Yacoben cautioned that in the first couple of months of each new FY, specifically July and August, reports for the prior FY were not yet finalized. She added that

there was not enough revenue at that point to begin to forecast effectively. She expected that briefings from her department would likely not have much information at that time of year and suggested that more substantive briefings from other departments be scheduled for those months, in addition to a lighter finance briefing if that was the pleasure of the Board.

Chair Hill said that was understandable. She recalled hearing that the County had not received the c-tax amount they were owed from the State, and she asked for more information about that.

Ms. Yacoben responded that approximately eight minutes before her team went into the meeting that morning, they received notice from the State about a distribution, which Ms. Yacoben had not yet looked at. She explained that the State was modernizing its software, which was good overall, but resulted in the County missing itemized classifications and a piece of their November distribution. She described that her team was previously able to analyze c-tax revenues monthly to see decreases and increases by category, which they contextualized alongside news about national, local, and regional economies to improve financial forecasts for the County. She revealed that the absence of those data reduced her confidence in the forecasts. She projected receiving 0 percent of tax revenue through the end of FY 2025 and 2 percent for FY 2026, which she acknowledged was an area of revenue vulnerability and might not be attained. She said the projection could be revised as needed. She conveyed that the State had communicated with the County Finance team regularly during the software modernization process.

Ms. Cooke displayed the first of her two *High Level Preview of Final Recommended Budget* slides. She explained that the slide provided a high-level overview of the total budget appropriations. She noted that the Fiscal Year 2025 column showed the final FY 2025 budget, and the Fiscal Year 2026 Tentative column showed figures from an earlier version of the FY 2026 budget. The Fiscal Year 2026 Final column contained the current FY 2026 recommendations, which she indicated could still be adjusted to accommodate new direction from the Board on appropriations. She described that the term *flat* meant that no new positions would be added, and programs would not be added or expanded. She clarified that a flat budget for the County meant increased appropriations in most cases, because, even with the same staff, the potential for promotions or merit increases remained. She noted that a department or a division might have a lower base budget or lower personnel expenses due to turnover, and she mentioned that new staff salaries would be lower than those of retiring staff. She did not want Commissioners to be confused by increases from FY 2025 to FY 2026. She said the 5 percent increase was normal and could also be seen in the service and supplies budgets. She provided a NaphCare contract as an example and said the contract was for medical services at the detention facility, which the County had to provide. She described that when those costs increased, the County had to cover the increases. She said if the cost increases were not known in advance, they would be brought to the BCC at a later time. She said all fund transfer requests had to be approved by the BCC and there could not, by law, be any expenditures out of contingency. If a request was approved, funds were transferred from the General Fund contingency to the appropriate department to cover the expenditures. She

spoke about the new *carryforward* process for capital projects funds, which meant that rather than trying to estimate project costs in advance, any remaining balance allocated to a project could be carried forward into the next FY. She advised that was the largest variance Commissioners would see between FY 2025 and FY 2026, and other adjustments could be made to reflect direction received from the Board. She noted adjustments could include moving personnel expenses for ARPA-funded positions to the General Fund, which would result in an increase to General Fund appropriations that would be offset in a different fund. She said almost 100 percent of the variance was due to changes in ARPA-funded positions.

Ms. Cooke showed the second of her two *High Level Preview of Final Recommended Budget* slides and described what had changed. She said the contingency estimate was updated to reflect what the Board had already approved, what was transferred, and what was pending. She advised that she was preparing a contingency item to present to the Board that would address unbudgeted impacts of collective bargaining agreements that were approved after the FY 2025 budget was adopted. She added that there was an update to the pooled interest estimate for FY 2025. She clarified that the final FY 2026 budget recommendation included expenses and offsetting revenues for ARPA-funded positions being moved to the General Fund. She explained it was a one-time reallocation to prefund the positions and minimize negative cash flow impacts. Regarding the WCLS reallocation, she informed that the funding would be available, but it would be in the General Fund instead of in a separate WCLS budget. She said funds would be moved to the WCLS budget as needed. She mentioned that special district funds were increased back to their prior level, and pooled interest increased based on anticipated cash balances. She stated that lower interest income was a natural outcome of a lower fund balance.

Ms. Cooke reviewed the *Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Preview of Final Budget* slide and described that it showed the General Fund, which was approximately 52 percent of total appropriations. She said it was the County's largest fund by far. She revealed that the sum of all other funds combined was still not as large as the General Fund. Ms. Cooke pointed out the difference between the tentative and final figures in the net change in fund balance line, which were \$8.3 million and \$2.5 million respectively. She explained that the most significant difference was a one-time transfer for a number of ARPA-funded positions. She noted there were corresponding changes to the personnel and benefits budgets. She returned to the first of her *High Level Preview of Final Recommended Budget* slides for comparison. She indicated that the \$11 million variance for total appropriations of all funds line between the tentative and final FY 2026 budgets was approximately 1.2 percent.

Ms. Cooke returned to her *Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Preview of Final Budget* slide and said Commissioners might notice that the beginning fund balance estimate was increased from the tentative FY 2026 budget to the final. She advised that the new estimate was more accurate and was only \$13 million lower than FY 2025, as opposed to the \$18 million difference projected in the earlier, tentative iteration of the FY 2026 budget. She said any fund balance that was not used by the end of the year stayed in the fund

balance, and the final number would not be known until closer to the time when the audit was conducted, which would be in the fall.

Chair Hill asked about the \$12 million net change in fund balance from the FY 2025 estimated budget, and wanted to confirm that the amount was not pulled from the General Fund contingency. Ms. Cooke said the figure shown in contingency for the FY 2025 estimated budget reflected actions already approved by the BCC for FY 2025. She added that some funds had already been transferred to departments, after which they were shown as expenditures in those departments. She said that specific uses of funds that remained in contingency were already determined, and she gave the example of an item on the agenda that day regarding personnel costs that were affected by collective bargaining. She stated that the amount shown in that column represented what her team estimated was needed through the end of FY 2025. She clarified that if less was used, the fund balance would increase accordingly.

Chair Hill asked if the \$10 million contingency line item reduced the balance of the \$12 million net change in fund balance line item, and Ms. Cooke affirmed that the budget she presented assumed the full \$10 million would be spent. It was reflected in the numbers shown, but she restated that if less was ultimately spent, the fund balance would be affected. Ms. Cooke added that the General Fund balance was recorded at the end of the FY and stayed within the General Fund. Chair Hill summarized that the \$10 million was effectively \$0, and Ms. Cooke responded that using anything less than \$10 million would increase the fund balance, which would positively impact the overall budget.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *Next Steps* slide and shared that a public hearing would be held the next week. She reminded the Board that, in accordance with State requirements, the public hearing would be held on the FY 2026 tentative budget, which had been submitted to the NDT. She reported that the County received certification that the FY 2026 tentative budget met legal requirements. She outlined that the BCC was required by NRS to hold the public hearing between the third Monday in May and May 31. She added that the budget had to be submitted by June 1, after which the Board could adopt the final budget. She said the public hearing was on the tentative budget, and the Board also needed to take action to approve the final budget. She noted that NRS required the Board to hear a tax levy item. Ms. Cooke reminded the Commissioners of the upcoming Budget 101 session, which she mentioned her team was working on scheduling. She explained that in addition to adopting a one-year budget, the Board needed to approve a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and a debt management policy. She informed that the five-year CIP was scheduled to follow the budget item on the May 20, 2025, BCC meeting. She said that following the meeting, she would use any direction from the Board to update materials and prepare a staff report for Commissioners.

Chair Hill summarized that the budget needed to be passed on May 20, 2025. She asked that the Commissioners voice any additional questions or changes they wanted to see. She understood from Ms. Yacoben that Board consensus was important to move forward, and she wanted to ensure that the budget could be passed. She recalled that if a budget was not approved for FY 2026, the budget from FY 2025 would automatically

be adopted. Chair Hill asked if any action was required on Agenda Item 13, and she was advised that it was not.

There was no action or public comment on this item.

**25-0297**      **AGENDA ITEM 14** Discussion and direction to staff regarding legislation or legislative issues proposed by legislators, by Washoe County, or by other entities permitted by the Nevada State Legislature to submit bill draft requests, or such legislative issues as may be deemed by the Chair or the Board to be of critical significance to Washoe County. Pending legislative bills can be located here: <<<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/83rd2025/Bills/List>>>. Current bills the County is tracking that may be reported on or discussed are listed under Government Affairs at <<https://www.washoecounty.gov/mgrsoff/divisions/government-affairs/index.php>>. Due to time constraints inherent in the legislative process, a list of specific bills that staff will seek direction from the Commission on during this item will be posted on the web site under Government Affairs at <<https://www.washoecounty.gov/mgrsoff/divisions/government-affairs/index.php>> by 6:00 p.m. the Friday before the meeting. Due to the rapid pace of the legislative session, additional bills upon which comment may be sought from the Board of County Commissioners will be posted as soon as known. Manager. (All Commission Districts.)

Assistant County Manager (ACM) Kate Thomas acknowledged that the Board was likely aware that Government Affairs Liaison Cadence Matijevich was occupied with work regarding Week 15 of the 83rd Session of the Nevada Legislature. She noted that only three weeks remained in the legislative session. She reported that 1,110 bills and resolutions had been introduced at that time. She noted that the County was tracking approximately 515 of those measures in addition to some bill draft requests (BDRs) that excluded bills that had not passed through the necessary means. She reported that the County had completed 228 fiscal notes. She explained that Friday, May 16, 2025, was the Committee Passage deadline, and the following Friday, May 23, 2025, marked the Second House Passage deadline. She remarked that those dates included some of the County's milestones throughout the legislative session. She mentioned that Senate Bill 319 (SB319), which included the fire consolidation study, was heard that morning, passed out of Committee, and would be headed to the floor. She described Assembly Bill 333 (AB333) as the Washoe County Fairgrounds Lease Amendment. She noted that the Board adopted a position of support for AB333 during the March 11, 2025, Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting. She reported that AB333 was expected to be heard by the Senate Government Affairs Committee the following day. She indicated that she had no further updates and offered to attempt to answer questions from the Board or gather information regarding other pieces of legislation.

Chair Hill asked if the Board had any comments or questions on Agenda Item 14 and noted that she had seen no indication that they did. She stated that the Board was waiting to see how the legislative session turned out and hoped any changes would not coincide with an impact that was too significant on the County's budget. She thanked ACM Thomas.

There was no public comment or action on this item.

**25-0298**      **AGENDA ITEM 15**    Introduction and first reading of an ordinance amending Washoe County Code Chapter 5 (Administration and Personnel) by amending provisions related to citizens advisory boards (CABs). These updates include amending various sections: to clarify that the purpose of the CABs are to advise the county commissioner in whose district the CAB is located, as well as the county commission, on matters of concern within Washoe County's governmental jurisdiction; to require that the geographical boundaries of the CABs fall within a single commissioner district; to update provisions related to board membership, such as allowing persons residing within one mile of the geographical boundaries of the CABs to serve as board members, requiring applications to be kept on file for one year rather than 3.5 years, and requiring the terms for alternates to align with the terms of board members; to remove a prohibition on CAB members from concurrently serving on the County's planning commission and/or board of adjustment; to amend various provisions to comply with current Nevada open meeting law requirements and remove provisions duplicative of state law; to update provisions related to enactment of bylaws; 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 June 17, 2025. Manager. (All Commission Districts.)

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for Bill No. 1927.

Deputy District Attorney (DDA) Jennifer Gustafson noted that she was present to provide a brief overview of the proposed Washoe County Code (WCC) amendments. She explained that she would then turn the discussion over to a member of the Commissioner Support staff, Media and Communications Program Manager Candee Ramos, who would give background regarding the public input process that contributed to the Code amendments.

DDA Gustafson conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: CAB Ordinance; Overview; Overview of proposed Code changes (two slides); Public Input; Thank you.

DDA Gustafson referred to the slide titled *Overview* and stated that the Board was at the first step of a process with multiple phases to update documents pertaining to the Citizen Advisory Boards (CABs). She explained that the document her presentation



would focus on was Chapter 5 of the WCC. She noted that she and the Board had discussed in previous meetings that the Code was a document that captured a broad overview and provided a general framework, which authorized the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to create the CABs. She acknowledged other documents that pertained to the CABs. She elaborated that resolutions created the individual CABs and specified their purposes and duties, bylaws prescribed the standard operating procedure for CABs, and the CAB Handbook served as a training manual for CAB members. She reiterated that the presentation would focus on the WCC, specifically the first reading of proposed Code amendments. She explained that if the Board requested changes to the proposed ordinance at the end of their discussion on Agenda Item 15, they might need to reconvene another time for an additional first reading. Otherwise, depending on the requested changes, the Board might proceed to the second reading for possible adoption of the ordinance. She noted that the second reading and possible adoption of the ordinance was contemplated to take place on June 17, 2025.

DDA Gustafson referred to the slide titled *Overview of proposed Code changes* and noted that the Board might remember that staff had initially proposed renaming the CABs at the BCC meeting held on March 18, 2025. She stated that several options were offered and considered at that meeting. She noted that the ordinance before the Board ultimately retained *Citizen Advisory Board* as the name for the CABs, as the public overwhelmingly supported the retention of that name.

DDA Gustafson explained that the first proposed amendment was for the General Purpose section of the Code, which would update the terminology to read as *Advise and collaborate with the County Commissioner in whose district the CAB is located*. That amendment would also reinforce that advice and recommendations given by the CABs to the Commissioners, and thus to the BCC, were limited to matters within Washoe County's governmental jurisdiction. In other words, the amendment reinforced that any action taken by the CAB would be on matters the County could do something about. For example, it would not be appropriate for CABs to make a recommendation on classroom sizes in elementary schools, as that was not within the County's governmental jurisdiction. Those matters were overseen by the Washoe County School District (WCSD) Board of Trustees and thus not under the County's purview. She noted that the corollary to that reinforcement was the idea that the CAB should not be speaking on behalf of the County or be making recommendations to non-County agencies. She reiterated that the focus of the amendment was on CABs advising their Commissioner and the BCC. She opined that the amendment would not change anything and essentially only served as clarification.

DDA Gustafson noted that the second proposed amendment required the geographical boundaries of the CABs to fall within a single Commissioner's district, rather than CABs having boundaries that spanned districts of multiple Commissioners. She explained that the idea behind that amendment was to simplify things and provide additional autonomy for members of the BCC. She noted that the amendment would align more closely with one of the purposes of the CABs, which she described as the CAB providing feedback to the Commissioner in whose district the CAB was located. She acknowledged that some concerns were raised regarding adjusting the CAB boundaries,

particularly related to the Sun Valley CAB. She stated that there was a proposed amendment to help alleviate some of those concerns, allowing those residing within the CAB boundaries, as well as those located within one mile of the boundaries, to serve as CAB members. She elaborated that the amendment would allow for the incorporation of applicants who lived adjacent to the boundaries of a CAB to become members of that CAB. She opined that those individuals were part of that community regardless of which Commissioner's district they lived in.

DDA Gustafson referred to the second slide titled *Overview of proposed Code changes*. She explained that one amendment was to retain applications to serve on CABs for 1 year, rather than the 3.5 years outlined in the Code at that time. She noted that another of the amendments was to remove a provision within the Code that allowed County Commissioners to select CAB officers, rather than members of the CAB itself choosing their officers. She described the next proposed amendment as aligning the terms for alternates with those for regular CAB members. She noted that a subsequent amendment was included to remove the prohibition on CAB members from serving concurrently on the County's Planning Commission or the Board of Adjustment (BOA).

DDA Gustafson explained that there were updates to the Code related to Nevada Open Meeting Law (OML) requirements, which ensured agreement with OML provisions for removing CAB members. She noted that the update also made certain that the Code was not merely duplicative of State law, as there was no need to repeat OML requirements within other sections of the WCC. She stated that the final proposed amendment was to update provisions related to the CAB bylaws. She explained that the current Code would potentially allow the CABs to have different bylaws from one another, rather than a standard set of operational procedures across all CABs. She reiterated that the bylaws were the operating procedures for the CABs. She asked the Board to remember that the bylaws could be flexible in and of themselves, but the proposed update served a related provision.

DDA Gustafson stated that those updates concluded the overview she would provide that day. She directed Ms. Ramos to continue the presentation by providing the Board with information about the public input staff had received. DDA Gustafson indicated she was available for questions about the proposed Code amendments.

Ms. Ramos reviewed the slides titled *Public Input* and *Thank you*. She greeted the Board and built upon DDA Gustafson's earlier mention of the public input session staff conducted on the proposed CAB amendments. She explained that the session took place on April 29, 2025, in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administrative Complex. She recounted that 28 people had attended the session in person, 6 individuals attended virtually, and additional written input was received from 2 others. She noted that all but one CAB was represented during the input session. She explained that the transcript and recording of that meeting were provided with the agenda and made available at [WashoeCounty.gov/CAB](http://WashoeCounty.gov/CAB), where additional information was included. She noted that, as DDA Gustafson shared previously, the major input staff received was to maintain what the acronym *CAB* stood for. She added that another significant piece of input

was to reflect the change referred to by DDA Gustafson with the Sun Valley CAB in particular, to allow for appointees to the CAB to reside within one mile of the district boundary. She reiterated that those were the main inputs staff received for the ordinance. She asked whether the Board had any questions related to the input that was given.

Chair Hill speculated that the Board would have a complete discussion and would call Ms. Ramos to the dais for any questions. She invited Ms. Ramos to continue her presentation. Ms. Ramos noted that she had reached the end of the presentation and reiterated that she and DDA Gustafson were available to answer any questions.

Chair Hill thanked DDA Gustafson and Ms. Ramos and acknowledged that the Board had been working with staff to ensure the right changes were implemented. She recognized they had both worked hard and stated that the Board appreciated their effort.

Commissioner Andriola echoed Chair Hill's thanks and opined that much work was involved. She remarked on her upbringing and experience attending a Catholic school. She noted that she always felt that it was necessary to disclose that the need for the proposed amendments was revealed after an individual applied for a District 4 CAB position, where it was discovered that she was ineligible due to the written form of the CAB documents not having been looked at since 2013. She explained that some things needed to be calibrated to represent the district to which the CAB and the Commissioner were focused. She noted that as of that morning, she had continued to receive questions on whether the CABs would be going away. She stated that she had previously voiced her personal belief to everyone that the CABs were the closest a Commissioner could get to collaborating and offering opportunities to the residents and constituents they served. She noted that she had not heard that the CABs would be going away, and stated that as far as she knew, they would not. She reiterated that she wanted to say that, due to the many inquiries she received from others wondering why such discussions were happening. She noted that those inquiries began as a result of the first action taken by the Board on the matter, which was to vote on opening the ordinance. She acknowledged that the Board was considering the ordinance at a broader level at the time of that initial action.

Commissioner Andriola commended DDA Gustafson for her hard work and for aligning everything to represent what most CABs were already doing. She appreciated that the CAB bylaws and other future steps outlined by DDA Gustafson would be included in subsequent discussions, allowing additional opportunities to receive feedback from the public. Commissioner Andriola stated that the policy discussed by the Board only consisted of broad proposals at the time. She recounted that some of what had been shared during public comment that day included mention of the more detailed factors of the topic, such as meeting minutes, which she opined belonged in other places. She commended DDA Gustafson for looking into ensuring compliance with the policy that was in place at the time and for letting everyone know there was more to come. She wanted to ensure that Ms. Ramos, DDA Gustafson, and the public were acknowledged for their efforts to ensure that the Board represented the districts they served. She thanked them again and reiterated her acknowledgement of their hard work.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Pat Davison displayed a document, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. Ms. Davison introduced herself and noted that she lived in District 5. She stated that her experience in government affairs was the basis of her belief that an advisory committee could be a key player in solving problems confronting government. She compared advisory committees to a workhorse and opined that advisory committees could assist the Board with challenging issues. She acknowledged that advisory committees took more time than traditional decision-making. Despite that, she observed that the best policy and program results occurred when citizens and decision makers solved significant problems together. She asked the Board to give the CABs a meaningful reason to exist and to watch what would happen as a result. She noted that the CABs were there because the membership wanted to be involved and help the County address challenges. She stated that a prime example was Ms. Bonnie Billings, who had spoken earlier at that meeting. She recounted having read the Staff Report for Agenda Item 15 the week prior and subsequently emailed questions for staff to answer in preparation for the meeting that day. She noted that her email was attached to the documents she submitted. She stated that the staff could not answer her questions, and hoped someone could provide some information before the second reading of the ordinance in June to inform the public record. She noted that she had asked those questions because she wanted to know how the new language would be implemented as fully as possible. She opined that people could not look at words on paper and assume what staff had in mind when the documents were drafted. She noted that what she could share with the Board was that she supported adding the verbs *advise* and *collaborate* to describe the purpose of the CABs. She thought those additions meant that each Commissioner would ask the chairs of their CABs to agendaize some of the major topics before decisions were made, so CABs could be informed and fulfill their purpose to advise or make recommendations to the BCC. She looked forward to seeing that change implemented. She thanked DDA Gustafson for clarifying what the new language meant regarding something within the County's governmental jurisdiction, and opined that her explanation was great. She voiced support for each CAB selecting its own officers and appreciated the Staff Report's explanation of the recusal for the prohibition on CAB members being appointed to other boards. She remarked on the proposed amendment for the removal of a CAB member. She supported direct notice for removal by certified mail or other means as a courtesy toward the CAB member who was being publicly removed from the CAB and to provide confidence that a good-faith effort was made to reach them. She acknowledged that those efforts might go above and beyond what was legally required, but noted that the County took such action for other matters, such as physically posting meeting agendas. She supported a standard set of CAB bylaws that would be mandatory for each CAB, so long as the Board would then allow each CAB to embrace its diversity and make additions. She thanked Commissioner Andriola for asking for the review. She noted that she was glad DDA Gustafson would be involved throughout the entire process as a stable source of information and reference.

Ms. Trista Gomez opined that the previous speaker had beautifully articulated what she believed were many citizens' feelings on the matter and thanked her. She noted that she had little time to figure out what exactly she wanted to say. She voiced that she would love to see the agendas for the CAB meetings agendaized by the citizens,

though she did not know the details of how that might work. She stated that she had a property in the North Valleys area and lived in Spanish Springs. She noted that the huge issues in those areas, which impacted the residents' properties and lives multiple times a day, were development, traffic, safety, flooding, and sewer. She hoped that agenda items for CAB meetings would be included specifically by those who experienced the issues in their district. She did not know whether such factors had been included in the amendments, as she had not read through the documents entirely, but indicated that it seemed to her that they were. She hoped that was the case and stated that she would be happy to receive clarification on whether it was.

Commissioner Andriola asked DDA Gustafson for clarification on the practice for providing notice if there was removal of a CAB member. DDA Gustafson noted that under the OML, there were a couple of ways to provide notice if a CAB member were to be removed. She stated that when the situation was impacted by the character provision in the OML, she had seen the County use personal service for such notices. She opined that Commissioner Andriola would be familiar with that OML provision. She explained that an individual could be personally served with the notice, which was recommended to allow for an opportunity to talk with and explain to the individual what the notice was. She noted that another process to provide notice included under the OML was for certified mailing of the notice. She explained that the only provision in the WCC at that time was for certified mailing of the notice. She noted that removing that provision from the WCC would essentially say that the County would follow the procedure offered under the OML, thus allowing both options of giving notice. Commissioner Andriola expressed her appreciation for the clarification.

Bill No. 1927 was introduced by Commissioner Andriola, and legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

**12:36 p.m.**      **Commissioner Garcia left the meeting.**

**25-0299**      **AGENDA ITEM 16**      Public hearing: To approve an Outdoor Festival Business License (pursuant to Washoe County Code Chapter 25 and related provisions) and associated license conditions for an application submitted by Red White and Tahoe Blue II, to hold a fireworks show on July 4, 2025, at the Incline Village Beach (APN: 127-280-01) on a barge in Lake Tahoe off the beach area. This permit is for spectator viewing of the show only. Set-up for traffic control will begin at 5:00 a.m. on July 4, 2025, and the fireworks show will occur from 9:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Event take-down and cleanup will begin immediately following the fireworks show. A community clean-up day is scheduled for July 5th. Event organizers estimate 6,000 spectators. If approved, authorize the Director of the Planning and Building Division, Community Services Department to issue the license when all pre-event conditions have been met. Virtual Public Comment Eligible. Community Services. (Commission District 1.)

Chair Hill opened the public hearing.

Chair Hill looked to the Board to inquire whether a presentation was needed for Agenda Item 16. She acknowledged that the Board had seen that permit for spectator viewing many times every year. She expressed the Board's appreciation for the hard work done by staff.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Herman, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Garcia absent, it was ordered that an Outdoor Festival Business License application be approved, subject to the license conditions included as Attachment B of the staff report, for Red White and Tahoe Blue II, Inc. to hold the Incline Village Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration event on July 4, 2025 at the Incline Beach (APN: 127-280-01) in Incline Village; and the Director of the Planning & Building Division, Community Services Department, be authorized to issue the license when all pre-event conditions have been met.

**12:40 p.m.**     **Commissioner Garcia returned to the meeting.**

**25-0300**     **AGENDA ITEM 17** Public Hearing and possible action to hold the first reading of an ordinance: (1) amending Ordinance No. 1000 to change the boundaries of District No. 24 (Groundwater Remediation); (2) providing for a notice of a public hearing and other matters relating thereto; and (3) setting the public hearing for the second reading and possible adoption on June 10, 2025; AND, hold the first reading of an ordinance: (1) imposing a fee on the parcels of land in Washoe County, Nevada District No. 24 (Groundwater Remediation) to pay the costs of developing and carrying out a remediation plan; (2) providing for a notice of a public hearing and other matters relating thereto; and (3) setting the public hearing for the second reading and possible adoption on June 10, 2025. The Remediation Program manages and remediates existing tetrachloroethene (PCE) contamination of groundwater in the central Truckee Meadows area, which requires the Program Boundaries to be updated annually. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for an ordinance amending the boundaries of District No. 24 (Groundwater Remediation) and indicated it would be Bill No. 1928.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Bill No. 1928 was introduced by Commissioner Andriola, and legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

County Clerk Jan Galassini read the title for an ordinance levying a fee for District No. 24 (Groundwater Remediation) and indicated it would be Bill No. 1929.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Bill No. 1929 was introduced by Commissioner Andriola, and legal notice for final action of adoption was directed.

**25-0301      AGENDA ITEM 18 Public Comment.**

Ms. Trista Gomez noted that she tried to talk about pertinent topics when she spoke during public comment, but wanted to instead provide a personal comment at that time. She explained that she had lived locally her entire life. She stated that she was a fourth-generation resident of the community, and her kids marked the fifth generation. She recounted her childhood in the city of Sparks, reflecting that when she was younger, she visited the Scoopers Drive-in restaurant for milkshakes if her family could find the money to do so. She explained that during that time, the community was very livable, nice, and something she had enjoyed. She stated that she had been unaware that people did not like that community, and she was happy that they felt that way, as nobody came. She expressed that she was deeply offended that there was an idea that revenue could be raised from the majority of the people who lived in the County to pay for the other one percent of those with special benefits and higher salaries than average community members. She also voiced feeling offended by the idea that the County could have record revenue, with the only thing needed to solve all of the County's problems being just to have more. She opined that the burden of that idea fell solely and directly on the community's residents, such as those who belonged to the middle class or simply wanted to have enough room to move within the local area. She recounted going abroad and talking to someone in a different country who had been incredibly aware of the city of Reno due to the development, mining, and other activities happening in the area. She was uncertain if she had been aware of those things before that point. She noted that she would investigate those topics further and possibly provide a public comment on them later. She hoped that the Board of County Commissioners' (BCCs) focus was not to prioritize the one percent with special privileges, which she stated she loved, as she had family members who were in the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). She noted that she had also been in PERS at one point. She hoped that the Board's focus was not on ensuring that the County had a lot of money to boost services that she did not know the outcomes of. She indicated that she was trying to find which study or model the Cares Campus was based on. She voiced interest in learning the outcomes the Board expected for that project. She stated that the burdens associated with such projects were taken on by the majority of taxpayers, some of whom needed less strain and more mobility. She opined that the Board's discussion of increased revenue would have the opposite impact on those individuals.

**25-0302      AGENDA ITEM 19 Announcements/Reports.**

Vice Chair Herman stated that she was looking towards the Board's future responsibilities and addressing what the Board had been responsible for doing in the past. She referred to an individual from Lemmon Valley who had spoken previously during the meeting and opined that their comment had demonstrated apparent irresponsibility in that area. She noted that the word *abatement* had been mentioned several times throughout the

meeting. She hoped that the Board could discuss how to fix the issues with abatement, whether that problem was unchangeable, and whether that discussion would interfere with too many people. She stated such a discussion was necessary, as the County was not caring for its infrastructure.

Vice Chair Herman referred to previous statements from Chair Hill regarding the financial stability of development efforts. She opined that such financial issues with development were the cause of the County progressively getting into a worse problem every year. She noted that funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) had bailed the County out before, but if taxes were not generated and received from new development, the issue would further worsen as the County would not be able to afford anything. She explained that by avoiding that problem, the Board was approaching a situation similar to half of an individual's income being taken, leaving them without enough funds to provide for their children or pay for groceries or dental care. She speculated that perhaps somebody needed to be sued, but noted that she did not know exactly what needed to be done. She emphasized that the Board had to be responsible so the County could have infrastructure capable of taking care of development.

Chair Hill asked Vice Chair Herman if she would like a presentation on tax abatements to be conducted. She opined that Clark County had a great presentation on that topic. Vice Chair Herman indicated that she would like that, and Chair Hill agreed that she would as well. Chair Hill noted that the presentation would be included on a future agenda and asked if Vice Chair Herman had anything else to add. Vice Chair Herman stated that she would like to see a way to get further developments, but acknowledged that she did not know how to fix the issue, as the County had become so deeply engrossed in the problem. She opined that the Board should consider the Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) members and be fair by potentially giving them those developments. She stated that CAB members felt they had a purpose before, and wanted to have that responsibility and knowledge of what was coming.

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**12:48 p.m.** There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.



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**ALEXIS HILL**, Chair  
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared by:*  
*Brooke Koerner, Deputy County Clerk*  
*Lizzie Tietjen, Deputy County Clerk*  
*Heather Gage, Deputy County Clerk*

Pending Board Approval