



# WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service  
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## STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: March 10, 2026

**DATE:** February 18, 2026  
**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**FROM:** Sally Johnston, Program Assistant, Office of the County Manager, (775) 737-1855, [sjohnston@washoecounty.gov](mailto:sjohnston@washoecounty.gov)  
**THROUGH:** Kate Thomas, County Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, a replacement grant recipient from Indigenous on Biocolonialism to Healing Waters Institute c/o Honor the Earth - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to cover the expenses for artist Autumn Harry to paint a mural at the Sparks Library; approve Resolution necessary for same; and direct Finance to make the necessary disbursement of funds. Manager's Office. (Commission District 3). FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

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### SUMMARY

Staff requests the Board of County Commissioners approve the recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, a replacement grant recipient from Indigenous on Biocolonialism to Healing Waters Institute c/o Honor the Earth - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to cover the expenses for artist Autumn Harry to paint a mural at the Sparks Library; approve Resolution necessary for same; and direct Finance to make the necessary disbursement of funds. This report seeks Board approval to update the designated grant recipient for a previously authorized public art project at the Sparks Library, ensuring compliance with NRS 244.1505, which authorizes the Board to allocate funds to nonprofit organizations for purposes that provide substantial benefit to county residents.

### **Washoe County Strategic Objectives supported by this item:**

1. Economic Impacts: Meet the Needs of Our Growing Community, Support a Thriving Community
2. Innovative Services: Strengthening Our Culture of Service

### PREVIOUS ACTION

On February 10, 2026, the Board of County Commissioners approved a grant in the amount of \$5,000 to the Indigenous Peoples Council on Biocolonialism (IPCB), a nonprofit organization, to cover expenses for artist Autumn Harry to paint a mural at the Sparks Library, pursuant to NRS 244.1505. This action included approval of the necessary

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resolution and direction to Finance for disbursement of funds. The grant was intended to support a public art project at the Sparks Library and was recommended by the District 3 Commissioner.

Previously, on June 24, 2025, the Board had approved a \$5,000 grant to the Be the Change Project for the Wedekind Road Art Project; however, those funds were returned to the County on January 8, 2026, as the project could not be completed within the required timeframe. The returned funds were subsequently reallocated to the IPCB for the Sparks Library mural project.

### **BACKGROUND**

The authority for the Board of County Commissioners to allocate public funds to nonprofit organizations is established under NRS 244.1505, which permits grants to entities created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes when such expenditures provide a substantial benefit to county residents. This statutory framework guides the administration of Commission District Special Funds, which were formalized through the adoption of specific guidelines and a resolution on February 10, 2015. Each fiscal year, the Board approves a budget that allocates a set amount of special district funds to each Commission District, with the express intent of supporting initiatives that address the diverse needs of Washoe County's population. The use of these funds is subject to strict requirements: recipients must be qualified nonprofit organizations or government entities, and expenditures must not result in personal or private benefit to commissioners, support campaign activities, violate ethics laws, or be used for the purchase of event tickets. All funds must be expended for the approved purpose within a defined timeframe, and compliance with these provisions is monitored to ensure alignment with both legal mandates and the County's strategic objectives.

Within this context, the process for designating or replacing grant recipients is designed to maintain continuity of public benefit and uphold the original intent of the Board's action. When a change in recipient is necessary - such as the proposed replacement of the original grant recipient for the Sparks Library mural project - the Board's approval is required to ensure that the new recipient meets all statutory and policy criteria. This approach supports the County's broader goals of community enrichment, cultural engagement, and effective stewardship of public resources, while providing flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances in project implementation.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The proposed replacement of the grant recipient for the Sparks Library mural project does not alter the total amount previously authorized for this initiative. The funding for this action will be drawn from the Commission District 3 Special Fund, which is established and governed under NRS 244.1505 and is allocated annually as part of the County's adopted budget for each district. The specific account utilized for this disbursement is the District 3 Constituents cost center (C100103), under Payments to Other Agencies (710400), which is designated for grants to eligible nonprofit organizations or government entities in accordance with statutory requirements

This action represents a reallocation of funds within the existing fiscal year budget authority for District 3 and does not require any additional appropriation or adjustment to the overall County budget. The transfer of grant recipient is an administrative measure to ensure project continuity and compliance with legal and policy standards, and it does not impact the availability of funds for other district priorities. The financial strategy for Commission District Special Funds is designed to maintain flexibility for community

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, a replacement grant recipient from Indigenous on Biocolonialism to Healing Waters Institute c/o Honor the Earth - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to cover the expenses for artist Autumn Harry to paint a mural at the Sparks Library; approve Resolution necessary for same; and direct Finance to make the necessary disbursement of funds. Manager's Office (Commission District 3).

### **POSSIBLE MOTION**

*Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to approve the recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, a replacement grant recipient from Indigenous on Biocolonialism to Healing Waters Institute c/o Honor the Earth - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to cover the expenses for artist Autumn Harry to paint a mural at the Sparks Library; approve Resolution necessary for same; and direct Finance to make the necessary disbursement of funds."*