



Sun Valley Citizen Advisory Board
Minutes of the regular meeting of the Sun Valley Citizens Advisory Board held on
May 4, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at Hobeys Casino.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION QUORUM

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

Absent: Mark Neumann

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Soper apologized that the last Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) meeting got out of hand and reminded everyone that CAB meetings are business meetings. Every public speaker has the right to speak without interruption and crosstalk, which she asked to stop. Failure to abide by that rule will result in a warning for the first instance and being asked to leave the meeting after a second incident. Because a microphone is used at meetings, she continued, there should be no reason to yell. She directed the audience to the section of the agenda pertaining to public comment.

Cindy Leslie announced that because Sun Valley no longer has a supermarket, Washoe County Senior Services has offered to pick up seniors from the Senior Center one day a month and take them to Walmart or WinCo and back. Tomorrow will be the first day of the program. She noted May was Older Americans Month.

Mac Rossi, member of the Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board, offered booklets promoting Older Americans Month activities and events, most of which were free. He discussed the program taking seniors to stores for groceries. He noted the attendance for this meeting was much greater than at the Verdi CAB meeting.

Tammy Holt-Still stated she was running for the District 5 seat on the Board of County Commissioners. She indicated she had materials available and she promoted her website, adding she would be happy to answer any questions.

John Olivera said he was a part of Wake Up Nevada, supplying Narcan throughout the community. He spoke about his daughter's fentanyl overdose and said drugs were running rampant in the community. The organization makes Narcan available for free, and it also works with the County to clean up abandoned cars. He brought up stopping a robbery at a CVS and said anyone needing Narcan should contact him or Board Member Cortes. He suggested placing roundabouts or speed bumps in certain areas of town to limit speeding and talked about a traffic light that becomes difficult to see when the sun is behind it.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF April 6, 2026

Vice Chair Owens moved to approve the April 6, 2026, Sun Valley Citizens Advisory Board minutes as written. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved on a 5-0 vote with Member Ortiz absent.

5. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

Captain Brad Noble with the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District reviewed the April 2026 report included in the agenda packet for this item, highlighting the incident statistics by type.

Washoe County Sheriff's Office

Lieutenant George Gomez said he planned to attend Sun Valley Citizens Advisory Board meetings monthly or send someone else if he was unable to attend. He reviewed the statistics sheet provided in the agenda packet, including call data. He said the 4,000 plus calls received in Sun Valley during the month was the most in any area, ahead of Spanish Springs who had over 2,500 calls in the same time.

Lt. Gomez stated the Sheriff's Office has two drones as part of its Drone as First Responder program. The Realtime Intelligence Center is active 18 hours a day each day but Sunday, with the ultimate goal to have it open 24 hours a day every day. The Nevada Department of Transportation and private sector businesses work with the Sheriff's Office by providing them with access to their traffic and security cameras. He lauded the use of drones in emergency situations. He said the Homeless Outreach and Proactive Engagement (HOPE) Team patrols Sun Valley regularly and helps Code Enforcement remove abandoned vehicles.

Carol Burns inquired about people parking on rights-of-way. Lt. Gomez responded that the Sheriff's Office uses discretion and does not enforce when the vehicles in question do not impede traffic. However, situations where someone throws a party and vehicles are narrowing a roadway are addressed by officers finding out who is hosting the party and asking people to clear the road to allow emergency vehicles through if necessary. He recognized that there were areas where the soft shoulders between fencelines and the street are too narrow for a vehicle to park without also being on the asphalt. That is fine if traffic can still navigate around it. Speaker Burns reported two abandoned vehicles, and Lt. Gomez indicated he would relay them to the HOPE Team to begin their process.

Another public speaker talked about being confronted by squatters when she had to stop because she was unable to get around their vehicles. Lt. Gomez suggested that anyone in a similar situation who is uncomfortable should leave to a safe location and call non-emergency dispatch to handle it. He believed the property in question was recently purchased by the County, who is actively working to clean the area.

Member Cortes inquired about people selling food from the side of the road without permits, saying that the Health Department directed her to call the Sheriff's Office to have them removed. Lt. Gomez believed that issue should be handled by the Health Department since law enforcement is busy handling other issues.

6. FOSTER, ADOPT, AND MENTOR (FAM) PROGRAM

FAM Recruiter & Trainer Yasmin De Peralta and Welcome & Support Specialist Monica Kirkendall conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: About Us; In Washoe County...; Program Area: Foster Care; Program Area: Adoption;

Program Area: Mentor and Respite; How to Get Involved; and Join Us for our Third Annual FAM Fest.

Trainer De Peralta stated the program works with Reno Rodeo Foundation to supply foster children with clothing, backpacks, and other necessities. Specialist Kirkendall said that, though the mentor program was typically for youth between the ages of 12 and 18, there are occasions when 10 year olds might also need mentors. FAM asks for a one-year commitment to be part of the Mentor or Respite programs. Respite volunteers have the choice of hosting their foster children at the volunteers' homes or at the homes of the foster families. She noted that the movie for FAM Fest has not yet been chosen.

In response to Board Member Cortes's query, Trainer De Peralta confirmed that the Take-a-Heart program rebranded to FAM, and they are both the same program.

7. NORTHERN NEVADA PUBLIC HEALTH (NNPH) - GRAB HEALTHY INITIATIVE

Health Educator II Amanda Santos with NNPH conducted a slideshow presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Program Overview; Program Goals; How the program works; Program Success; Shelf talkers/signage; Display equipment...; Storefront Revamp; Food Supply Partnerships; Roles; Why this matters in Sun Valley; Short term solution; Community Survey; Key Survey Findings; How far do you usually travel...; Where do you usually buy...; How often do you shop...; Which stores in Sun Valley...; What healthy items...; Top barrier to buying healthy food; If your local corner store...; Summary of Findings; Current Sun Valley Healthy Options; Innovative Ideas for Sun Valley; and What next.

Educator Santos stated the program has been running since 2021. She explained that storefront revamps help facilitate the promotion of healthy foods. The program receives fresh produce from Reno Food Systems, and she delivers and organizes it at no cost to the stores. Some stores have done well while others have not sold any produce, which helps the program evaluate the return on investment for each store.

Educator Santos said the NNPH approached eleven stores in Sun Valley to see if customers were interested in taking the survey. She spoke about getting people to take the survey at recent Food Bank of Northern Nevada Mobile Harvest events. People who selected "other" for where they buy groceries were split between large and small stores and the Food Bank. She noted that people do not all have the knowledge or means to prepare certain types of food, so the program attempts to better educate them. The quantity and variety of healthy food options in many of the stores they visited were very limited.

Royce Solberg spoke about his time working at Scolari's, Sak 'N Save, and Sam's Club. He mentioned talking to a manager at the Dollar General about increasing the loads that come to the store, and the manager was in the process of talking to corporate headquarters about that. He wondered whether any of the major grocers expressed a willingness to take over and develop the old store site. In response, Educator Santos said she was not aware of any efforts. Chair Soper added that Commissioner Garcia put Grocery Outlet in touch with the owners, but everyone is waiting for something to happen. Speaker Solberg thought one brother was willing to sell but the other was not. He stressed the need for a grocery store because Dollar General cannot handle the traffic.

6:51 p.m. Board Member Cortes left the meeting.

Katherine Yriarte wondered whether there was a pattern of which stores did well selling produce and which did not. Educator Santos indicated that Reno Food and Discount Liquor did not move any product, but their population was mostly transient individuals without the means to prepare food. Stores in residential areas did well. She noted that 7-11 just onboarded onto the program, and because it is a corporate chain, people tend to feel more comfortable going there. She said the program offers incentives to customers; if they bring in a flyer, they can receive a water bottle, a salad shaker, or a lunch container.

Member Ortiz loved the idea of a class where people are taught how to grow food in this area. Educator Santos said the program partners with Reno Food Systems, and she hoped to be able to collaborate with them to host teaching events. Pam Edwards expressed concern about the high price of water. Educator Santos encouraged anyone with further questions to reach out to her.

8. NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB & OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Community Outreach Coordinator Alexandra Wilson indicated there were three vacant seats on the Board of Equalization. The application period for the Library Board of Trustees position has closed, she noted, and the Citizens Advisory Board should be informed of the results in May or June. She described the purpose of the Board of Equalization and encouraged anyone interested to apply. She promoted two upcoming meetings where the Heat Mitigation Plan will be discussed, an in-person meeting on May 6 and a virtual meeting on May 11, providing opportunities for community engagement. She said descriptions of the items will be posted online.

Katherine Yriarte noted there was a survey posted in relation to the Heat Mitigation Plan that addresses both urban and rural heat. It was designed to better inform possible amendments to the Master Plan. The survey covers the entire community, she said.

9. CAB MEMBER/COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS

Commissioner Mariluz Garcia thanked the presenters from the Human Services Agency and spoke about her experience as a foster parent. While she recognized the challenges associated with fostering, she felt the area needed people to step up, even if only in a mentoring capacity.

Commissioner Garcia spoke about a cleanup event where tires and e-waste were collected. She said she worked with the Sun Valley General Improvement District to help out constituents with more events. She described the event as successful, and many neighbors showed up to help out their neighbors. She said she was out of discretionary funds, having spent them on an economic development study for Sun Valley and sponsoring a food truck series, and she will not be able to spend next year's allocation until after the election if she wins. She discussed a pilot program where vouchers are given out to allow people one free dump load, and she suggested that interested parties speak with her after the meeting.

Commissioner Garcia spoke about a piece of property on Carnes Drive recently purchased by the County, adding that an item will come before the Board of County Commissioners on May 12 that will allow them to lawfully eject the squatters and abate the property. Regarding a property on 5th Avenue, she indicated the Homeless Outreach and Proactive Engagement

Team intercepted and arrested someone for illegal dumping. That property will come before the BCC this month as a public nuisance, after which the squatters will be ejected and the property abated. She mentioned one individual was arrested, and abandoned cars on Slope Drive were removed. The remaining trash will be cleaned up by Washoe County work crews in the next day or two. She added that Quartz Lane will be an area of focus for enforcement.

Commissioner Garcia believed that there was a misperception that the County does not care about enforcement, but she encouraged anyone with questions about specific properties to contact her. She noted eight vehicles were reported and towed from Gerdes Avenue, but she recognized that the issue was overwhelming. She said the issues with Gerdes Avenue stemmed from a deceased property owner. She invited residents to come to the BCC meetings to testify in support of those items.

Commissioner Garcia said she met with head of real estate from Grocery Outlet, who expressed interest in building a store in the location of the old supermarket. The property owner confirmed there were many showings, but the Commissioner was unsure what would happen. There was only so much the County could do since it is private property. She spoke about BCC Chair Clara Andriola's focus on agritourism, which would allow the County to create an ordinance to make it easier to have farmstands, gardening, and beekeeping. It may be prioritized beneath dark sky initiatives and housing matters, but the BCC is still making it an area of focus. She talked about abandoned vehicles that were reported and removed throughout the area, as well as others in the process of being removed. She felt Assembly Bill 415 helped expedite the cleanup of abandoned vehicles and encouraged people to use 311 and CC her on any complaints about abandoned vehicles.

Responding to questions from members of the public, Commission Garcia clarified that the BCC would hear items about lawfully ejecting the squatters on the Carnes Drive property and declaring public nuisances on three other roads, though she was unsure when exactly those items would be heard. She provided her contact information.

Board Member Rider announced that the emergency which caused Board Member Cortes to leave the meeting was fake, and the matter has been referred to the police.

Chair Soper stated that of all the items suggested at the Citizens Advisory Board's (CAB's) January meeting, the CAB has discussed all but two. She encouraged anyone with suggestions for future items to include them on the list. There was a separate list for anyone wanting to volunteer to help plan the Sun Valley 80th Birthday Party event. She expected meetings for that to begin in August. She promoted a third sign-up sheet for people interested in the Neighborhood Watch program.

Chair Soper promoted the next food truck events scheduled for June 11, 18, and 25. She announced that the next CAB meeting was set for June 1 and would feature a presentation about crimes against children.

10. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Abby Badolato, a supervisor with Washoe County Human Services spoke about Older Americans Month and encouraged people to take booklets about some of the activities. Spanish-language books were also available. She promoted a free senior breakfast event on May 8 and a stuff-a-bus event on May 15. Anyone needing hygiene items or adult diapers, or those who know people who do, should contact her. She talked about a Sock Hop event at

the Washoe County Senior Center on May 29. She stated there was a new Activities Coordinator, Lisa O'Grady, who has helped facilitate monthly field trips from the Senior Center to the McKinley Arts & Culture Center. She reviewed some of the literature that was available for distribution, and she offered to provide a future presentation about the Senior Services program.

Rob Pierce mentioned he was running for the District 5 seat on the Board of County Commissioners and spoke about his time in the military and his work as a staff chaplain at the Sheriff's Office. He mentioned some of his goals if elected: to stand with first responders, fight wasteful spending, develop a shared vision, and keep the community strong. He asked for the voters' support and provided dates for early voting and the election itself. He encouraged people to listen to the Washoe Live podcast episode about future planning for Washoe County and the Cities of Sparks and Reno. He believed the County's horse code would soon be updated, and he spoke about his role in promoting the dark skies initiative. He said he was currently on five County boards and two airport boards.

Nevada State Representative Heather Goulding indicated there was much discussion about which bills to possibly carry in the next legislative session. She spoke about the implementation of Assembly Bill 415 and said there would be a public meeting on May 8 to discuss how that bill would be regulated and implemented. The purpose of the bill was to streamline the process for removing abandoned vehicles by identifying four criteria that, if met, would result in tow trucks being able to remove them without going through the title search process. Before, those vehicles would have to go to an impound lot first. She reviewed the four criteria used to identify junker vehicles. She hoped the process would be even better streamlined once the Department of Motor Vehicles executed some of its elements. One other piece of legislation resulted in the General Improvement District now being able to increase compensation. She hoped residents would communicate their desires for potential bills to her or Commissioner Garcia. She stressed the importance of addressing cross-jurisdictional issues.

Carol Burns wondered how the Washoe County gas tax could be lowered. The cost of the gas tax is \$.57 cents per gallon, and she thought it was a complex issue involving multiple government entities and requiring the contemplation of many legal limitations. She thought people should request that the tax be reduced, and she compared the cost of local gas to gas in Carson City. She said the tax has resulted in an accumulation of \$850 million since it was implemented, but some roads were still in very poor condition.

Mike Revty said the Sun Valley General Improvement District collects e-waste in April. He was informed that they did not offer vouchers year-round. Board Member Rider confirmed that workers at the facility would help people get rid of their e-waste.

Board Member Ortiz spoke about the poor condition of Highland Ranch Road near her home and encouraged people in that neighborhood to lodge complaints with Washoe 311 to fix the divots. Chair Soper asked Board Member Ortiz to fill out a suggestion card.

Cindy Leslie mentioned that Prominence Health offers free fall-down buttons for older residents, devices that typically cost \$400. Most smartwatches have fall-down detection as well.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Rider moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Esposito seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

DRAFT