

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

MAY 20, 2025

PRESENT:

Alexis Hill, Chair
Michael Clark, Commissioner
Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner, via telephone
Clara Andriola, Commissioner

Janis Galassini, County Clerk
Eric Brown, County Manager
Michael Large, Chief Deputy District Attorney

ABSENT:

Jeanne Herman, Vice Chair

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:

25-0305 AGENDA ITEM 3 Public Comment.

Ms. Tracey Thomas displayed and read from a document, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. She expressed concerns for the budget, County funding, Highland Ranch Parkway, and Pyramid Highway. She believed that the Pyramid Highway could be widened to decrease safety hazards. She noted that there were constantly vendors and food trucks at the intersection of Pyramid Highway and speculated that the widening of the road would alleviate frustrations.

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

Ms. Amy Pulver reported that she had recently corresponded with each Commissioner and appreciated those who responded. She noted that she had attended each Library Board of Trustees (LBT) meeting since November and attested to the former Library Director's budget explanations regarding the potential impact the loss of the Expansion Fund would cause. She mentioned that the former Library Director repeatedly responded clearly to board member questions, including possible implications of the loss of the Expansion Fund. She felt that many citizens understood the budget and expressed those feelings at previous Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meetings. She indicated that the Expansion Fund would provide salaries to 23 employees, as well as other resources needed for the library and capital expansion. She was unsure why the LBT did not

understand the budget or why the LBT Chair came before the BCC to request more time to review the budget. She urged the BCC to support the staff recommendation for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 library budget and said that \$12.5 million was the same as last year, with the allocation of the estimated \$3.5 million from the Expansion Fund and an additional \$1.3 million from the General Fund. She asserted that Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Abbe Yacoben reported that the funding made the library's FY2026 budget equal to FY2025. She opined that the library should not be different from other County departments or receive less funding because the LBT failed at their job. She communicated that increasing revenues and making precise expense cuts were necessary. She expressed that singling out one department was unfair.

Volunteers of America (VOA) Regional Vice President Travis Sandefur indicated that he was thankful and proud of the community for facing a generational crisis around homelessness when others had not. He noted that he visited other communities in his role and believed that some had given up, and others had given way to apathy towards homelessness. He explained that the VOA would partner alongside the BCC to address any concerns and keep the clients as the highest priority during the transition if the BCC voted to approve the VOA's contract as the operator of Our Place. He said that the VOA was committed to the journey towards operational excellence because the seriousness of the work demanded it. He commented that the VOA must continue to improve through compassion and love.

Mr. Deandre Burleson displayed a document. No copy was submitted for the public record. He referred to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). He read the Open Meeting Law (OML) public comment requirements previously read by Assistant County Manager (ACM) David Solaro, located on the meeting Agenda. He indicated that he received a phone call from the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) the previous Wednesday and that the RHA said that his file would be completed and forwarded to management. He believed that the file completion was good news and progress. He referred to the documents he displayed regarding correspondence, bills, a case summary, and reminder cards from Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH). He explained that he had an active Reno Municipal Court (RMC) hearing regarding his homelessness and that he had a case manager assigned to his court case. He noted that there was an incident with the NNPH and that he was denied services due to insurance or medical information.

Mr. Patrick Cashell commented that he supported the VOA becoming the new Our Place operator. He noted that he was biased because he was the former VOA Executive Director and knew the quality of work the VOA performed. He mentioned that he did not want to take away from the work that the Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equity (RISE) executed because the foundation RISE created was remarkable and would allow the VOA to be successful. He communicated that he loved the VOA and that they gave him an opportunity 15 years ago that he was unsure anyone else would had. He was proud of the VOA's work and felt that the family shelter was a fantastic part of the community. He recalled that the former VOA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) thought he was crazy for wanting to take 100 children and families to an amusement park. He believed that event

was a special day and was the type of care the VOA provided to its clients. He was looking forward to witnessing the remarkable work the VOA would perform at Our Place.

Ms. Trista Gomez said that the BCC would need to find \$5 million to fund the library budget next year. She indicated that she was a supporter of the library; however, the BCC would not have the Expansion Fund to cover \$5 million. She noted that she had attended every meeting and presentation except for one and believed that the BCC would use the General Fund contingency for the budget because the BCC had raised costs that the County could not afford. She speculated that the County did not have a way to sustain the budget and said that Chair Hill indicated there was an opportunity to raise sales tax. She felt that a raise in sales tax was an increase in revenue and a burden on taxpayers. She believed that Assembly Joint Resolution (AJR) 1 provided more money to jurisdictions and placed a burden on local buyers. She communicated that the BCC would pass the budget, and thought that things were hidden and did not make sense. She asserted that the budget discussion needed to be ongoing because she thought the BCC was hurting locals. She commented that the community was paying for less than one percent of the residents who lived in the area who worked for the County, and that those wages and Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) were raised. She asked the BCC to consider the locals and perform their fiduciary responsibility to take care of the people in the community who voted for the BCC.

Ms. Emily Elyse expressed concern regarding the hostility County Manager Eric Brown facilitated during his time with the County. She indicated that she and a long list of employees felt they were forced out of their positions. She noted that she worked for the Housing and Homeless Services Division (HHS) as a Homeless Services Analyst under Human Services Coordinator Catrina Peters and HHS Division Director Dana Searcy from 2022 to 2024. She mentioned that she led homelessness point and time counts and was responsible for developing much of the Northern Nevada Continuum of Care's (CoC's) operating policies. She explained that she had managed public funding for nonprofit housing providers and workforce development agencies worth several million dollars per year, had a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from San Francisco State University (SF State), and had over a decade of lived experience in community organizing from the Bay Area of California. She speculated that the Commissioners may recall a statement she made last year detailing the bullying and harassment she experienced working under Ms. Peters with the full knowledge of Ms. Searcy, Director of Human Services Ryan Gustafson, and Human Resources (HR). She felt that County staff under Manager Brown's leadership would rather reject qualified talent and keep under-qualified and democracy stifling leaders unaccountable. She asked the BCC to block the HSA's recommendation to replace RISE with VOA as the Our Place operators. She commented that RISE had deep roots in the community and had managed Our Place since its inception in 2020. She communicated that RISE granted lived experience and understood the challenges faced by the homeless population and provided compassionate and effective services to the region. She believed that RISE's dedication to dignity and community engagement set a standard for homelessness services in the region. She felt that the proposal to replace RISE with VOA, with an increased cost of \$1.2 million, raised financial implications during a budget deficit. She asserted that the change would be fiscally irresponsible without evidence of improved

outcomes. She said that the process leading to the recommendation lacked transparency. She felt that Ms. Peters and Ms. Searcy made ongoing efforts to acquire direction over the Our Place campus and expressed personal interest in collecting competitive salaries while lacking appropriate credentials.

Ms. Sieglinde McTigue thanked Commissioner Andriola for her participation in the Spanish Springs Library's 20th anniversary. She recalled that Commissioner Andriola provided an uplifting speech about how the library was an investment in the community. She noted that Commissioner Andriola explained the indigenous influences of the architecture at the Spanish Springs Library. She said that a plaque was unveiled in dedication to writer Sarah Winnemucca, and she appreciated Commissioner Andriola honoring the sacred ancestral lands of the Washoe, Paiute, and Shoshone tribes on which the community was built. She expressed concern about awarding a contract for \$1.2 million during a budget shortfall. She requested clarification regarding the new operators because she said there were other considerations when procuring contracts.

Ms. Lynn Arnone noted that she had spent the last four years volunteering at Our Place once a week on Tuesdays. She said that she was a part of a volunteer community engagement team that regularly organized events for the Our Place guests. She mentioned that she was disheartened to learn that RISE was no longer awarded the contract to oversee Our Place. She explained that previous speakers recalled the lack of transparency involved in the proposals and the \$1.2 million to VOA. She said that she had a positive experience while volunteering for RISE and was impressed by the staff's commitment to the guests. She applauded the staff who utilized their own time to provide events on Saturday nights.

Ms. Carol Cooke mentioned that she supported funding the library and could not imagine a better use of available money. She believed that the libraries were essential and felt that Ms. Pulver provided an excellent explanation of the history and concerns expressed during the LBT meeting. She urged the BCC to support the staff report provided.

County Clerk Jan Galassini advised the Board that she received emailed public comments, which were placed on file.

25-0306 **AGENDA ITEM 4** Announcements/Reports.

Chair Hill indicated that Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Mary Kandaras was retiring, and that the BCC wanted to thank her for her work.

Commissioner Andriola explained that the BCC was fortunate to have CDDA Kandaras and hoped that she enjoyed the gifts presented. She indicated that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) would miss her.

CDDA Kandaras expressed appreciation for the gifts. She felt honored to

serve on the BCC and said that she learned so much working with the Commissioners. She had very fond memories of her career and indicated that she had witnessed growth from Chair Hill and Commissioner Andriola's desire to learn everything she could about the County. She thanked Commissioner Clark for the challenges and appreciated their banter, and his different way of looking at topics. She expressed gratitude towards Clerk Jan Galassini, Chief Deputy Clerk Cathy Smith, Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA) Michael Large, and Assistant County Manager (ACM) David Solaro. She said that there would be a retirement party on June 6 and she would appreciate the BCC's attendance.

10:34 a.m. **The Board recessed.**

10:36 a.m. **The Board reconvened with all members present.**

Commissioner Andriola announced that the Washoe County Checkbook Budget 101 session would take place on July 22. She recognized the staff who organized the event and said that everyone was welcome to attend.

Commissioner Clark reported that he attended continuing education classes over the past week, and one of the topics pertained to preventing lawsuits, legal issues, and financial concerns when sued. He mentioned that the course was focused on residential radon testing and recalled that he had asked many questions regarding radon at County facilities. He indicated that the courthouse was staffed with employees who experienced the radon. He hoped that the County would do the right thing and monitor the radon to ensure it was cleared. He explained that radon was an odorless and tasteless gas that was not obvious if present. He asserted that the judges he spoke to said working at the Courthouse was the equivalent of receiving two hundred chest X-rays. He believed that the County needed to disclose the radon test information to the employees and the public. He speculated that the County needed to have documented radon records in case of a lawsuit. He communicated that he had a difficult time receiving answers to his questions, and the records would need to be produced easily if there were a lawsuit.

Commissioner Clark requested input from ACM David Solaro regarding the County's business plan and asked if an efficiency expert for the library would be sought because he believed the library's efficiencies had not been researched for the past 11 years. ACM Solaro noted that the next Library Board of Trustees (LBT) meeting had an agenda item regarding a possible library operations study to research the best practices and staffing for the library. Commissioner Clark asked if the County had ever performed a library operations study. ACM Solaro indicated that master planning had occurred that provided guidance on facility numbers, general operation understandings, and hours. He explained that the Library Director was the LBT's employee whom they may have advised to perform a similar study in the past. He mentioned that he was not aware of a study taking place, but the County did not currently have a Library Director and thought it may be helpful for the LBT to have third-party assistance. Commissioner Clark asked if ACM Solaro had any personal knowledge of an outside study taking place. ACM Solaro said he did not. Commissioner Clark commented that the study was to determine the library's business plan and to utilize funds available in the most responsible way. He believed LBT Chair Ann

Silver felt the same and wanted an operations study.

Commissioner Clark noted that the County was in a constricted budgetary situation, and the management change of Our Place would impact the budget by \$1.2 million. He speculated that the County would be in a further deficit if the County continued to make budgetary choices that would cost the County more money. He asserted that the County needed to be fiscally responsible. He agreed with Ms. Emily Elyse and said her perspective and career experience should make her a subject matter expert. He explained that the BCC needed to listen to experts trying to enlighten the BCC about concerns.

25-0307 **AGENDA ITEM 11** Public hearing, discussion, and possible action on the Washoe County Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026) pursuant to NRS 354.596-estimated appropriations [\$1,064,408,656], as well as possible changes to the Tentative Budget and adoption of it as the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2026 pursuant to NRS 354.598-estimated appropriations [\$1,075,989,019]. The proposed budget incorporates Board priorities of funding for existing contractual obligations, supplies, utilities, personnel costs, capital improvements and operations, and maintaining the County's assets and infrastructure needs. The proposed budget also includes the following actions: 1) To approve the changes to position control for Fiscal Year 2026 indicated on Attachment A-including the reduction of 10.78 Net Full Time Equivalentents (FTE), Reclassifications/Evaluations/Other Changes impacting up to 43.0 positions/incumbents and Title Only Changes impacting up to 40.0 positions/incumbents. If necessary to accommodate any material changes desired by the Board as identified during the hearing on the Tentative Budget, this item may be continued to May 27, 2025, at 10:00 AM. (All Commission Districts).

Chair Hill opened the public hearing.

Assistant County Manager (ACM) David Solaro informed the Board that the purpose of Agenda Item 11 was to conduct a hearing on the tentative budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 and consider the approval of the final budget for FY 2026, which incorporated changes from the County Manager's recommendation that was presented on April 15. He noted that the County Manager, executive team, and the budget and finance teams appreciated the feedback from the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and had made some good changes based on the Board's direction.

Budget Manager Lori Cooke conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk, and reviewed slides with the following titles: Public Hearing Washoe County Fiscal Year 2026 Tentative & Final Budget; General Information; FY 2026 Budget July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026; Strategic Planning Direction; Highlights; FY 2026 Budget (All Funds); FY 2026 Budget Totals \$1.075 Billion; Estimated Expenditures and Other Uses – Other Governmental Funds (two slides); Proprietary and Non Expendable Trust Funds; Governmental Funds, by Function;

Governmental Funds, by Function & Department (two slides); FY 2026 Budget: Proprietary Funds; Washoe County Authorized FTEs; FY 2026 Budget – General Fund; General Fund Sources; Washoe County FY 2026 General Fund Final Budget; General Funds – Fund Balance (two slides); FY 2026 Recommended General Fund Budget; General Fund FY 2026 Recommended Transfers Out; FY 2026 Budget – Other Funds; FY 2026 Recommended Budget Other Funds; FY 2026 Recommended Budget CIP; FY 2026 Recommended Budget; Questions/Discussions?; Supplemental Information; Financial Structure (two slides); Property Taxes – Overview.

Ms. Cooke introduced herself and noted that her presentation would discuss the tentative budget for FY 2026 for potential adoption by the Board as the County's final budget for FY 2026. She noted that the purpose of holding a public hearing for the County's tentative budget was to remain pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) requirements. She explained that NRS requirements stipulated that certification of compliance by the Nevada Department of Taxation (NDT) was needed for the tentative budget, which she noted the County had already received. She explained that the budget process continued with the discussion and implementation of potential changes recommended for the tentative budget to be reflected in the final budget. She noted that no changes had been recommended and thus included based on the direction and discussion provided during the previous week's BCC meeting. However, additional details were included within the presentation that day.

Ms. Cooke displayed the slide titled *General Information* (page 2) and explained that the slide included a very broad overview of the annual budget process. She stated that the County adopted an annual budget for a period of one year, unlike the State's budget term of two years. She noted that she had researched why the terms for those budgets differed, but she had not found an answer. She explained that the dates for the County's FY followed the same model as the State's FY, despite the different term lengths. She said that the County's FY did not follow the model used by the federal government. She reported that the County's FY model spanned from July 1 to June 30. She explained that all budgets must be prepared and submitted in the manner and on the current year forms prescribed by the NDT. She noted that staff referred to the document formatted and created as specified by the NDT as the *State Doc*, or the budget document. She reiterated that the State Doc was submitted by staff with the categories and functions prescribed by the NDT. She noted that the information included in that document was what the NDT considered when determining its certification of the County's budget. She emphasized that the budget could only be adjusted pursuant to various NRS or administrative code requirements once adopted. She indicated that those requirements had been discussed at a previous BCC meeting by Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Abbe Yacoben through her mention of augmentations, the General Fund contingency, and similar legal changes. She elaborated that the budget could not simply be increased, nor could it be decreased through a process known as de-augmentation. She noted that all of the funds allocated in the budget did not have to be spent, but she reiterated that the budget itself could not be decreased.

Ms. Cooke reviewed the *Strategic Planning Direction* slide (page 4) and noted that the overall budget process began with strategic planning, which was considered

best practice. She explained that as staff moved forward with the budget process by enacting priorities and holding conversations with department heads and elected officials, they operated through the direction and focus outlined in the Board's Strategic Plan. She noted that mental health, senior services, and infrastructure remained the strategic focus areas following the Board's revisitation of the Strategic Plan during the January 28, 2025, BCC workshop meeting.

Ms. Cooke referred to the slide titled *Highlights* (page 5) and described the primary features of all 23 governmental funds and the 6 proprietary funds within the FY 2026 budget. She noted that there were no net new positions in any of the funds, though other changes regarding those roles would be discussed later in the presentation. She explained that position reclassifications with cost increases were not recommended, so staff would work within all departments to find pending offsets that were not already present. She noted that there would be budgeting for General Fund salary savings opportunities across all departments at a rate of approximately 3 percent. She stated that budgeting for salary savings was determined to be best practice, although she was unsure if best practice was 3 percent. She emphasized that many companies utilized salary savings as they went through their various budget processes, and it aligned with what naturally occurred with employee turnover. She explained that budgeting for salary savings was not an unreasonable expectation for the County.

Ms. Cooke noted that the Washoe County Library System (WCLS) budget would be flat and would not experience reductions or receive approval for expansions above the base allocation. She stated that priority would be given first to spending the remaining Library Expansion Fund balance during FY 2026. She noted that staff would have a better financial understanding of what balance was left of the Library Expansion Fund as the year ended, likely in September. She stated that the increased General Fund support was offset by the reallocation of the expiring Library Expansion Fund tax, which she reminded was at a rate of \$0.02. She acknowledged that the Library Board of Trustees (LBT) and the BCC would work together to provide an updated service delivery model and address exact financial needs. She noted that such efforts coincided nicely with what had been previously asked by Commissioner Clark and the study and third-party involvement discussed by ACM Solaro.

Ms. Cooke reported that the FY 2026 budget included a \$1 million increase in the General Fund transfer to Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH). She noted that NNPH was referred to as the *health district* in the prepared financial documents. She remarked on the positions funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). She explained that those positions would be funded with ARPA interest in the General Fund and would continue to exist. She elaborated that the organizational hierarchy of the ARPA positions would be in the General Fund. She acknowledged that the County would continue using ARPA interest to pay for ARPA-funded positions but noted that those factors were moved and reflected in the General Fund.

Ms. Cooke reviewed the *FY 2026 Budget (All Funds)* slide (page 6) and recounted the presentation and discussion held during the May 13, 2025, BCC meeting.

She noted that the Board had discussed a variance of approximately \$11 million, or 1.2 percent, between the tentative recommended budget for FY 2026 and the final recommended budget for FY 2026. She noted that the ARPA-funded positions she had mentioned previously were part of the material changes between those recommended budgets. She remarked on the previous discussion regarding the reallocation of the circulation budget from the library department to the General Fund. She noted that the circulation budget was still in the General Fund but outside the library department budget, and those funds would be accessed, if needed, only upon approval of the LBT. She explained that those changes reflected the process going forward, including ongoing conversations with the LBT. She noted that Special District Funds had increased back to their prior level of \$100,000 per district and that pooled interest had increased based on anticipated cash balances.

Ms. Cooke noted an increase of approximately \$5 million within the Special Revenue Funds. She explained that the increase reflected the impact of transferring the ARPA interest to the General Fund for FY 2026. She noted that there was a net increase of approximately \$4.6 million to the Capital Improvement Fund, which was routine as the year came to an end and staff received more information on the status of different projects, estimates of where the projects might be in the future, and changes such as how the progress of those projects might impact whether funding would need to be rolled into the following years' budget. She elaborated that those changes did not account for budget increases but instead reflected staff accounting for changes after July 1 instead of before.

Ms. Cooke showed the slide titled *FY 2026 Budget Totals \$1.075 Billion* (page 7) and explained that she had conducted some research that morning regarding what comprised the funds within the departments across the County. She noted that a department could have one area, or cost center, where all costs lived, such as the Public Defender's Office. She stated that some departments had multiple places where positions, expenditures, and budgets lived, such as the District Attorney's (DA) Office, due to the numerous divisions within that department. She explained that those departmental divisions were typically reflected in cost centers, with the County having over 1,600 cost centers altogether. She explained that when staff were building the budget with help from the different departments, consideration was given to the accounts within those divisionary cost centers that would eventually be reflected and compiled to reflect the total budget. She elaborated that those accounts listed all the individual line items that would comprise the costs for salaries, wages, or employee benefits when compiled. She emphasized that there was no single line item for each cost type within the accounts. She noted that there were nearly 1,900 accounts of that kind in the budget. She hoped that information would help the Board put the process and budget documentation into perspective when reviewed.

Ms. Cooke explained that staff compiled the information on the cost centers and accounts and submitted it to the NDT as required. She opined that the Washoe County Checkbook would reflect the different general ledger accounts within the various divisions and departments. She explained that the Washoe County Checkbook contained very broad and high-level budgeting information compared to the State Doc, which included more specificity than the website. She noted that the County's internal financial system had the

most discrete tracking and budgeting information for those accounts. She stated that the recommended figure for the total final budget was \$1,075,989,019. She explained that the total appropriations of the final budget included expenditures, the General Fund contingency, and transfers out. She noted that the expenses of the total organizational budget came to a value of approximately \$932 million, though that value did not include transfers out. She referred to the chart on the slide and explained that the General Fund comprised 51 percent of the budget. She emphasized that if all other funds were combined, the General Fund would still represent a larger percentage of the budget. She explained that such percentages had remained consistent since she began working for the County over 20 years prior.

Ms. Cooke referred to the two slides titled *Estimated Expenditures and Other Uses – Other Governmental Funds* (pages 8 and 9). She noted that the governmental funds were part of what comprised the budget's total appropriations. She reiterated that the General Fund was the largest among the governmental funds. She explained that governmental funds included other funds, such as the Health Fund for NNPH. She noted that the tables on pages 8 and 9 had been separated, as the list of funds contained too much information to be included in just one slide. She reported that the tables listed the funds she had mentioned previously, the funds for capital, and eventually the debt funds toward the bottom. She elaborated that, like all funds, the figures for the governmental funds' total appropriations included consideration of contingencies and operating transfers out. She explained that if the expenditures of the governmental funds were considered without those figures, they came to a total of approximately \$793 million.

Ms. Cooke described the table on the slide titled *Proprietary and Non Expendable Trust Funds* (page 10). She noted that the County did not have any non-expendable trust funds that staff budgeted, so all funds listed in the table were proprietary funds. She noted that the largest of the proprietary funds each FY was often the Utilities Fund and the Health Benefits Fund.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *Governmental Funds, by Function* slide (page 11). She noted that all governmental funds were reported in the same way, while proprietary funds reported more like private businesses by including factors such as earnings before interest and taxes, net income, and net positions. She noted that governmental funds were instead reported by staff based on factors related to fund balance, such as opening fund balance, sources and uses, and ending fund balance. She explained that as a result, the functions supported by the governmental funds could be easily identified. She opined that it should be unsurprising that the highest dollar amount and largest percentage of governmental funds within the total FY 2026 budget were associated with the Public Safety Fund. She elaborated that the Public Safety Fund was not exclusively related to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO). However, she acknowledged that a significant portion of that fund was attributed to the WCSO. She explained that the Public Safety Fund also included funding for the Washoe County Regional Medical Examiner's Office (WCRMEO), Juvenile Services, the Department of Alternative Sentencing (DAS), and other additional departments. She added that the Public Safety Fund, the Welfare Fund,

and the Judicial Fund comprised the top three most significant percentages of the governmental funds.

Ms. Cooke referred to the two slides titled *Governmental Funds, by Function & Department* (pages 12 and 13). She explained that the tables further delineated the funds by departments, as they had only been listed by function previously. She read the titles of the tables for the governmental funds functions listed on page 12, including the General Government Fund, the Judicial Fund, and the Public Safety Fund. She noted that those funds were listed in no particular order and were included based on where the tables fit best within the two slides. She listed the funds on page 13 and stated that the funds for the library department, the regional parks, and the Parks Capital Fund were included within the Culture and Recreation Fund. She explained that the slide also included figures for community support and contingency. She noted that the values from each table comprised the \$935 million in total appropriations for the governmental funds.

Ms. Cooke showed the *FY 2026 Budget: Proprietary Funds* slide (page 14) and noted that the Utilities Fund was categorized as one of the enterprise funds within the overall proprietary funds. She explained that the Utilities Fund could have a very large budget in certain years to address ongoing efforts, such as the work conducted over the previous few years on facilities such as the Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility (TMWRF). She elaborated that certain years saw significant capital projects, while others were comparatively not as substantial. She reminded the Board that the internal service funds included the Health Benefits Fund for Washoe County employees and retirees. She clarified that the Health Benefits Fund was not to be confused with the Health Fund associated with NNPH. She remarked on the Risk Management Fund and noted that the Equipment Services Fund was almost exclusively related to the County fleet and securing funds for fleet replacement. She provided additional examples of uses for the Equipment Services Fund, including the WCSO's fleet and departmental vehicles for Child Protective Services (CPS) employees.

Ms. Cooke displayed the slide titled *Washoe County Authorized FTEs* (page 15) and explained the depicted chart. She acknowledged that there had been previous discussions where the County's largest expenditure was found to be personnel. She noted that she had made the charts' bars depict the number of authorized full-time equivalents (FTEs) employed during every other FY, as attempting to show the figures for every FY resulted in the bars being too small and thus difficult to see. She noted that the highest number of total FTEs was 3,179 during FY 2008 prior to the 2008 Great Recession. She compared that figure to the recommended budget for FY 2026, which outlined 3,172 total FTEs. She explained that staff had seen a 25.6 percent increase in the local population, but the number of County employees remained relatively flat, with a reduction of 0.2 percent since FY 2008. She noted that the rate of FTE's per 1,000 individuals in the local population was 7.8 in FY 2008 and had since decreased to 6.2 in FY 2026. She remarked that she enjoyed including in her presentations a statistic that demonstrated the number of residents supported by a single FTE. That statistic had increased from 128.67 residents supported per one FTE in FY 2008 to 161.99 residents in FY 2026. She elaborated that the trends shown by those statistics demonstrated that such changes could simultaneously

coincide with expanded services of various natures, which she opined had been achieved by what the County implemented through innovation, technology, and workflow. She reflected on her previous work in the departments and acknowledged that the staff considered those implementations and the potential to explore, investigate, continue, or optimize them further. She emphasized the importance of not just moving forward with how things had been done. She opined that the chart demonstrated that there was no way services could be maintained and expanded to address such a substantial increase in population with fewer employees unless staff had identified and implemented changes and innovations.

Ms. Cooke referred to the *General Fund Sources* slide (page 17) and noted that the General Fund was the largest of the funds in the budget and appeared the most often in news headlines, though she expressed uncertainty whether such attention was fair. She explained that the chart on the left portion of the slide showed the General Fund sources, including transfers in. She explained that the most notable transfers into the General Fund for FY 2026 were related to the ARPA-funded positions. She explained that property tax comprised 52 percent of the General Fund sources, and consolidated tax (c-tax) was 32 percent of the fund. She reported that staff had received a fairly recent update regarding c-tax related to the financial system change at the NDT. She stated that staff had been given access to taxable sales data within an Excel spreadsheet outlined by individual codes. She noted that she had not yet had the time to analyze the data that staff had received. She expressed excitement about the update since staff had not been given access to that data for a prolonged period of time. She stated that having the data made analysis much faster and more efficient by removing the need to input everything manually. She explained that staff could look at the individual codes within the data to identify what categories, such as retail or dining establishments, were driving changes. She reported that distributions had decreased by approximately three percent compared to the previous year. However, she suggested that the decrease could be attributed to the NDT still working on some outstanding items, though staff were uncertain of the exact reason. She reported that follow-up discussions between her colleagues and the NDT led to anticipation for twelve distributions for the FY ending on June 30, 2025. She was unsure whether the final distribution would reflect an entire month, as the NDT was changing its methodology. She reported that work was ongoing with auditors to identify how those changes should be handled.

Chair Hill asked whether the NDT included zip codes within the data or if the data only provided categories. Ms. Cooke answered that the data was only included by category. She indicated that when vendors in the County submitted their taxable sales information to the State of Nevada, that data would only be considered as having come from Washoe County as a whole. She speculated that including zip codes in the data was a possible enhancement that the NDT would be able to provide in the future. She acknowledged that staff frequently received that question, particularly when discussing communities that often experienced surges in population during the summer or winter seasons, such as Incline Village. She reiterated that data for specific areas was unavailable, and she did not know when it would be. She stated that staff would consider that suggestion while working with the NDT.

Ms. Cooke described the General Fund sources as having a value of \$546.9 million and the General Fund uses as having a value of \$549.3 million. She explained that those figures accounted for the deficit, which she would discuss in further detail on the following slide. She noted that the General Fund uses included categories like employee benefits, salaries and wages, services and supplies, and transfers. She reminded the Board that while examining structural deficit forecasts, they should understand that although the values of the different General Fund uses were considerable, such as services and supplies totaling \$92.5 million, that amount represented a relatively small portion of less than a quarter of the total budget. She suggested that when the Board was identifying what actions or measures might be necessary to address the budget's structural deficits, they needed to consider the context of those figures and determine the potential value or changes those costs could bring.

Ms. Cooke displayed the slide titled *Washoe County FY 2026 General Fund Final Budget* (page 18). She explained that the slide's tables demonstrated the sources and uses within the General Fund budget, with a table listing details for the sources on the left and a corresponding table for uses on the right. She noted that the factors that experienced a material or significant change between the tentative and final budgets were highlighted within the tables. She described the table for General Fund sources on the left of the slide. She noted that the highlighted figures within the *Miscellaneous* row accounted for the change in interest, and the highlighted figure within the *Other sources, transfers in – one-time* row reflected the ARPA transfer. She noted that the highlighted subtotals for the *Salaries and wages* row and the *Employee benefits* row of the table on the right of the slide indicated the offset ARPA positions, with the rest of the values accounting for re-allocations between April and May. She acknowledged that the deficit had reduced from \$8.27 million in the tentative budget for FY 2026 to \$2.46 million in the final budget for FY 2026. She clarified that the resulting offset of the ARPA transfer caused the majority of the deficit reduction.

Ms. Cooke referred to the first of two slides titled *General Funds – Fund Balance* (page 19). She explained that the slide depicted the figures for the updated five-year forecast. She stated that the five-year forecast did not include FY 2031, as staff anticipated there would be issues in FYs 2029 and 2030 that she believed the Board had already been briefed on. She noted that the slide listed an estimate for FY 2025, the use of fund balance for FY 2026 reflecting the final recommended budget, and the forecast for the following years. She explained that the forecasts on the slide did not consider any permanent austerity measures, such as perpetual hiring freezes or reducing the number of expositions per year. She elaborated that the listed estimates did reflect other measures, including 3 percent salary savings annually, information based on collective bargaining agreements that lasted through 2028, and the weighted number of maximum personnel that might go through the merit salary range. She noted that weaknesses or spots within the forecast, like additional personnel or increases above base, were not included. She explained that the slide listed several transfers that were accounted for in the forecast and described those changes in more detail. She stated that the forecast showed what transferring the Library Expansion Fund positions to the General Fund would look like but clarified that decisions had yet to be made on the matter at that time. She mentioned the

inclusion of a 1 percent annual contingency, which she opined was slightly low. She reiterated that the forecast reflected no expansions or potential legislative impacts and added that the increased transfer to NNPH through FY 2028 was incorporated into the listed estimates. She emphasized that the forecast was merely speculative, as the decisions for those changes had not yet been made, but staff were attempting to be realistic. She remarked on the inclusion of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) transfer increase to forecasts through FY 2030. She noted that staff reflected the transfer in the forecast to align it with what was known about the ongoing funding that should be needed to maintain County infrastructure. She explained that the indigent transfer increase was included in the forecast, as it was mandated by statute to be funded by the County at a rate of 4.5 percent annually. She stressed that the inclusions she described were subject to change and would be updated as additional information was available. She explained that those factors represented a consistent use of the fund balance and contributed to how the structural deficit might potentially reflect the unrestricted, unassigned ending fund balance in the forecast's later years.

Ms. Cooke displayed the second slide with the title *General Funds – Fund Balance* (page 20) and stated that the graph provided another way to look at the forecast. She explained that the bars on the graph depicted sources and uses of the General Fund, which she noted were imbalanced with one another. She reiterated that the graph represented the data within the table from the previous slide. Ms. Cooke recounted her curiosity that morning regarding the County's property tax actuals, which she equated to the County's revenue from 2008 through 2024. She stated that, compared to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the revenues shown by property tax actuals had not increased at the same rate as CPI. She noted that the rates for those values were close, but represented a 0.52 percent deficit. She explained that the deficit rose to approximately 2.69 percent when property tax actuals were considered in comparison to the CPI of the West Region in particular, which she noted was occasionally more reflective of the County than the standard CPI. She offered to conduct the same analysis for c-tax if the Board desired, as she did not have the time to do so that morning. She reiterated that she had researched the topic because she was curious about how CPI increases compared to the budgetary changes she had discussed previously. She explained that she had chosen the dates on the graph to include a range that spanned before, during, and after the 2008 Great Recession.

Ms. Cooke showed the *FY 2026 Recommended General Fund Budget* slide (page 21). She noted that Attachment A of the Staff Report contained additional data on the position changes outlined in the slide, including a list of seven-digit Position Control Numbers (PCNs). She reported that there would be a net reduction of 0.78 FTE within the Judicial Fund category due to a reorganization at the Sparks Justice Court, where the court administrator, working with a judge and a chief judge, looked internally at interpreter needs to manage and reschedule things differently. She explained that the chart on the right side of the slide outlined reclassifications, evaluations, and title changes. She reported that out of 73 total incumbent positions, 40 were included due to experiencing changes only to their titles. Those roles would not experience any modifications to their pay grade and were mainly seasonal, with 35 of the 40 positions falling into that seasonal category. She mentioned that additional information regarding the 40 roles with title only changes could

be found in Attachment A of the Staff Report. She clarified that of the 5 other positions with title only changes, 1 was in the Human Resources (HR) department, 3 were based in the Public Defender's department, and 1 was from the Alternate Public Defender's (APD) department. She noted that all other positions listed in the chart were included as reclassifications, though they were not all upward. She explained that the chart also reflected the contingent or pending reclassifications, which she reiterated were outlined further in Attachment A of the Staff Report. She emphasized that she was not intentionally leaving any department out during her presentation. She wanted to highlight the effort of the Community Services Department (CSD), just as she had the Sparks Justice Court. She recounted that both departments had identified ways to reallocate areas without adding positions. She noted that CSD was able to shift aspects of their hydrant management program in such a way that future long-term costs could be reduced to the Roads Fund and attributed to no additional expense in the General Fund. She noted that those reallocations would allow additional services to be added in order for staff to address areas that they knew needed their attention, but were limited in acting on due to the availability of resources. She expressed uncertainty about whether there might be a better way to phrase her previous statement and suggested ACM Solaro might have a more suitable way to do so. She reiterated that the examples of the CSD and Sparks Justice Court were just two highlights of the work achieved with the departments from that year's process.

Ms. Cooke referred to the slide titled *General Fund FY 2026 Recommended Transfers Out* (page 22) and noted that the listed values were in descending order from largest denomination to smallest. She explained that the amounts transferred out during FYs 2025 and 2026 were included in the table beside one another to provide additional context to the figures and allow for comparison of the values between the two years. She remarked on the listed transfer increase of the Indigent Services Fund, which she stated was conducted per the previously mentioned statutory requirement. She reported that the transfer for the Homelessness Fund was mainly flat compared to FY 2025, but was slightly reduced for FY 2026. She noted that the Capital Improvement Fund transfer had increased from FY 2025 based on the recommendations staff received for FY 2026 and future years. She remarked on the transfer increase to the Health Fund for the NNPH and the Roads Fund, which she noted had been discussed frequently. She acknowledged a reduction in the transfer of the Debt Service Fund compared to the transfer in FY 2025. She clarified that such a decrease was a natural occurrence for the debt service schedule. She explained that as the County's amortization changed, staff would not transfer more than was needed. She opined that the difference between transfers for the Debt Service Fund from FY 2025 to FY 2026 marked a significant reduction. She noted that the transfer for the Senior Services Fund was flat. She described the transfer for the new Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) Records Management System (RMS), Hexagon, which required General Fund support. She listed the total General Fund transfer out for FY 2026 as \$85.76 million and compared that figure to the FY 2025 transfer out of \$78.36 million.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *FY 2026 Recommended Budget Other Funds* slide (page 24) and explained that the table on the left of the slide depicted the recommended net new positions for FTEs. She noted that those new positions reflected reductions within several departments for alternatively funded positions that were not filled or were

otherwise vacant. She explained that despite the roles being within departments, they were funded through other sources. She elaborated that the unfilled position from the Human Services Agency (HSA) was supported through Restricted Revenue Funds or Special Revenue Funds, the six vacant roles from the Public Defender's Office were funded by ARPA, and the WCSO positions included on the table were unfilled grant-funded positions. She emphasized that the values in the table were not indicative of people being removed from their jobs, but rather represented vacant positions that were delimited or abolished without the support of their alternative funding sources. She described the table on the right side of the slide and explained that the listed positions were all included as recommended reclassifications. She clarified that none of those ten positions were title-only changes. She noted that staff were working with the departments regardless of the fund involved to increase sustainability and find offsets if any changes resulted in an increase.

Ms. Cooke introduced the slide titled *FY 2026 Recommended Budget CIP* (page 25) and prefaced that she would go into further detail about the information on the slide during her next presentation. She described the charts included on the slide and noted that they represented the County's CIP appropriations. She noted that the chart on the left side of the slide depicted the different capital funds. She explained that the Capital Improvement Fund was the largest of the capital funds. She noted that the chart also included the Capital Facilities Tax Fund and the Parks Capital Fund. She reported that staff were changing how they approached the budget process to increase accuracy, and she reminded the Board that there would be something called carryforward or reappropriation involved in the capital funds. She clarified that the potential reappropriation of the capital funds was valued at \$83 million, which was not reflected in the slide. She described the chart on the right and explained that the categories depicted the other funds within the capital budget. She acknowledged that the numbers on the slide for Agenda Item 11 did not match what was outlined within the materials for Agenda Item 12, due to the difference between capital expenditures and capital projects.

Ms. Cooke displayed the *FY 2026 Recommended Budget* slide (page 26). She explained that the adopted budget was comprised of legally approved appropriations. She acknowledged that while there were certain things staff could do to change such appropriations, those changes were conditional and of a limited quantity. She noted that the adopted budget served as a financial plan and operations guide. She informed the Board that the next step was to submit the final budget for FY 2026 to the State of Nevada. She acknowledged that the County's CIP was set to be seen by the Board during Agenda Item 12. She reported that the County's debt management policy and statement of indebtedness would come before the BCC prior to being forwarded to the NDT and the Debt Management Commission (DMC).

Ms. Cooke showed the *Questions/Discussion?* slide (page 27) and informed the Board that her presentation included additional supplemental information. She offered to provide an overview of those slides if desired and opined that they included good information for those who did not frequently work with matters of governmental budgeting.

Chair Hill thanked Ms. Cooke and opened the discussion to the Board.

Commissioner Andriola thanked everyone for their work on the process thus far. She acknowledged that there had been many changes and developments since the budget was initially proposed. She appreciated Ms. Cooke's recommendations and time spent working with the Commissioners to ensure everything was being done so the County could be frugal. She remarked on her appreciation of the detail Ms. Cooke included in the slide titled *Washoe County Authorized FTEs* (page 15), which shared statistics of services provided by FTEs from FY 2008 through the projections for FY 2026. She noted that the slide demonstrated that more people were served for less, though she acknowledged that additional costs had been incurred. She noted that everyone had seen the results of such costs. She expressed the importance of the examples Ms. Cooke included within her presentation, such as having a flat budget, considering contingency, implementing efficiencies to achieve more with less, and leveraging technology. She stated that such actions were great for FY 2026.

Commissioner Andriola wanted to offer comments regarding the process moving forward, but hoped to stay on task by remaining on the primary topic of discussion. She opined that having the ongoing positions within the Public Defender's Office was the very core of the identity of the County and knowing that those roles were secured for the following five years with ARPA interest created a constitutional balance for the representation of everyone in the community. She emphasized the importance of the responsibility of having those positions, as there could not be inequality on either side of judicial representation. She stated that the ARPA interest was implemented in a very frugal way and maximized what the County could do with the available funding. She opined that it was very responsible to create equity for those who needed to go through the judicial system. She noted that she would save her comments regarding the ARPA positions after the five years of available funding for another discussion. She opined that it was difficult not to discuss the topic at that time but noted that the timing for such a conversation was not appropriate. She acknowledged that times were difficult for everyone and agreed with Ms. Cooke's previous statements that there was a need to start thinking about how to do things differently. Commissioner Andriola suggested that just because an individual did something one way did not mean that particular methodology would always work going forward. She noted that there were many opportunities to begin considering such changes.

Commissioner Andriola reiterated the importance of Ms. Cooke's work on ARPA interest and savings to ensure the essential positions for the Public Defender's Office without implementing a hiring freeze and keeping costs at net zero through reclassifications despite increased labor costs. She noted that the highest cost of any organization or business was always labor, which she emphasized was not exclusive to the government or Washoe County. She commended staff for not imposing additional taxes on the taxpayers, trying to keep the budget as flat as possible, and placing the County in a better position moving forward. She opined that the hard work and patience that the staff had demonstrated to take the original recommendations for the budget and implement them as they were presented were admirable, a testament to how the staff were listening, and showed consideration towards suggestions to make the budget fiscally responsible. She

appreciated the efforts of those on the team who worked on the budget process but were not in attendance at that meeting. She acknowledged that there were many members of the staff who worked diligently to put the budget together and submit it on time despite various unknown factors and complications with the State of Nevada's new technological updates that posed difficulties getting critical information to all jurisdictions. She expressed interest in Ms. Cooke providing the Board with an analysis of the information from the State of Nevada. Commissioner Andriola reiterated her appreciation for Ms. Cooke's in-depth presentation and for taking the time to meet with the Board prior to the meeting to provide complete transparency of what they would be voting on that day.

Commissioner Clark noted that he had several comments. He referred to the first of the two slides titled *General Fund – Fund Balance* (page 19) and mentioned the projected deficits listed on the slide's table. He noted the deficits starting from FY 2026 at a value of \$2.6 million and asked if the other figures, including \$17.9 million, \$28.5 million, \$32.9 million, and \$38.5 million, reflected the projected deficits for future years. Ms. Cooke affirmed that he was correct. He stated that those projected figures demonstrated that the County was progressing in a way nobody would have wanted. He opined that the projected deficits were serious, and the way to begin fixing them was by immediately addressing the issue, investigating solutions, and halting action that could further worsen the problem. He recounted having previously mentioned that the County had more money than it had ever possessed in its history since its establishment in 1861. He reported that based on information he had received from the Treasurer and the Assessor, more new properties were expected in the County. He explained that when a new property was established, it contributed to construction being present in almost every neighborhood, which he opined everyone could attest to. He noted that those new properties came onto the tax rolls at 100 percent of what the land and new construction were worth. He emphasized that the amount of money associated with those properties was significant. He reported that the Treasurer had said that he invested money in different places and that the County was making more than ever.

Commissioner Clark stated that Washoe County had some of the highest gas taxes in the State, if not the entire Nation. He said that gas taxes were designed to fix roads, yet the County still had a deficit in that area. He asked how it was possible for the County not to have money when it had some of the highest sales taxes in the State and received significant funding over the previous few years from the COVID-19 (C19) pandemic. He recounted having previously asked County Manager Eric Brown the same question. Commissioner Clark noted that Manager Brown was not present at the meeting and reported that after Manager Brown pondered his question for a moment, he answered that the County lacked money because it was spending more than it was making. Commissioner Clark opined that if more money was spent than was taken in, the result would be the situation the County found itself in at that time. He explained that if the deficits listed on the first *General Fund – Fund Balance* (page 19) slide were added, they indicated the County would reach a deficit exceeding \$100 million over the goal throughout the following years. He asked how that problem could be fixed. He recounted the discussion of the reclassification of a single position heard during the Board of Fire Commissioners (BOFC) meeting that morning. He reported that the position would get an

additional \$15,000 annually from the BOFC, equating to an 18 percent pay raise. He noted that when the \$8,000 cost associated with hiring that employee was factored into the total cost of that suggested raise, one position could have potentially cost the County \$23,000. He emphasized that the problem could be seen when that single employee's cost was multiplied by the 4,000 staff members of the County. He stressed that nearly 80 percent of the County's budget was associated with payroll, but the topic could not be talked about. He asked that others imagine that percentage concerning a personal issue, such as 80 percent of your personal, family, or business budget spent on hotel rooms, fuel, entertainment, gambling, or other expenses. He asked how anyone would fix the problem that 80 percent of every dollar they had was already allocated to something.

Commissioner Clark emphasized the need to consider all potential options if there was to be a serious discussion about budgets. He noted that he had an uncle who lived in southern California, was in his late 90s, and had worked as a firefighter for the Los Angeles Fire Department for 30 years. He noted that his uncle had been retired for 45 years, was in the hospital, and had received medical and retirement benefits since his retirement. He stated that such matters needed to be considered every time the County hired an employee, as there were no actual tables or knowledge of how long employees would live. He stressed that events had to be envisioned in the long term before operations continued as they had. He opined that Mr. Bob Conrad of *This is Reno* had recently written a six-part story about budgets, and he urged everybody to read it. He noted that the Cities of Reno and Sparks and the County were mentioned in that story and opined that they were all experiencing the same situation. He stated that the Washoe County School District (WCSD) Board of Trustees, the BOFC, the Cities of Reno and Sparks, and the County were all in trouble despite property values being higher than ever. He opined that people wanted to blame the issue on property taxes but noted that the 3 percent cap on those taxes was only for owner-occupied properties. He stated that owner-occupied properties likely comprised 60 percent or less of single-family residences, and the property taxes for everybody else were at a rate of 8 percent every year. He stated that hotels, casinos, strip malls, restaurants, gas stations, and department stores were experiencing higher rates. He reiterated his belief that the County had lots of money, but was spending those funds improperly, which he opined nobody wanted to hear or admit.

Commissioner Clark emphasized the need to closely examine what was taking place. He noted that property values were increasing, and recounted having heard a report that the average sales price in the area was \$565,000, though the value was likely half that five years prior. He stated that if the average price was \$565,000, the builders were not constructing those properties for less than that, though he noted that he understood property tax was not valued that way. He explained that builders were creating brand new houses at full value. He stated that other events occurring in the community also impacted things. He noted that there were no longer air races generating money locally, and events such as Street Vibrations were not the same as they used to be. He opined that when those events were lost, those who visited the community from other areas would not spend money, stay in hotel rooms, or purchase food, services, and entertainment. He emphasized the need to consider the entire situation rather than just passing the budget for the sake of doing so. He expressed that it made no sense to pass the budget when the most substantial

portion of it could not be discussed. He stressed that the budget was out of balance, as 80 percent was attributed to a single category. He noted that the private sector did not receive the same benefits as County employees and believed that a better way to manage the County's funds needed to be investigated. He expressed that it was unfortunate that the County was in that position and apologized for that being the case.

Chair Hill asked if Commissioner Clark was implying that he would not vote to approve the budget that day. She asked if he was offering suggestions or if he could clarify his intention with his previous comments.

Commissioner Clark responded that he did not believe the County could tax its way out of the problem. He opined that Mr. William Mantle wrote an excellent opinion editorial piece for the newspaper recently that explained how the proposed sales tax and vehicle registration increases were regressive and hurt members of the working class and those who were poor more than anybody else. He emphasized that there was a need to investigate other ways to economize. He suggested that the Board implement an audit by an efficiency expert for specific County departments to identify ways to economize, as was proposed for the LBT. He opined that having experts come to investigate would be a prudent thing to do. Chair Hill remarked that such action was the job of Manager Brown and opined that the Board could certainly task him to do so.

On the call for public comment, Mr. Alan Munson introduced himself as a resident of Washoe County. He appreciated the presentation and wanted to speak as a retired individual. He stated that he had a son and daughter-in-law who worked in the County and urged the Board to monitor the budget deficit and expenditures. He acknowledged that he was not an expert on budgets and only received information on the topic the night prior. He expressed that he was shocked to learn that the County Manager earned a salary of over \$300,000 and was given an additional \$100,000. He opined that such earnings were too high and might contribute to personnel salaries in the budget. He referred to Commissioner Clark's earlier statement that salaries comprised 80 percent of the budget. He stated that many people were struggling financially at that time, and raising their taxes would hurt them, including his son and daughter-in-law. He opined that as a retired person, he had to watch from a distance and pull back from the situation. He recommended that the Board investigate the Cares Campus expenditures. He noted that the Cares Campus' costs were \$21,680,000, with a further suggestion to raise that value by a couple of hundred thousand dollars. He reported that others had explained that the Cares Campus program was not efficiently operated. He acknowledged that those claims could be disputed but opined that an increase in such a program did not make sense. He suggested that the Board look at County salaries and specific programs. He hoped the Board would think about his recommendations and act carefully. He appreciated the job done by the Board and remarked that he was just a regular citizen. He reiterated his hopes for the Board and wanted them to hold back on spending to prevent residents from getting overburdened, as they were already struggling enough. He thanked the Board for hearing what he had to say and for all they did.

Ms. Trista Gomez introduced herself and opined that while the County Manager was responsible for everything discussed, the BCC was accountable for the County Manager. She referred to the graph of revenue and cost included on the second *General Fund – Fund Balance* slide (page 20). She noted that the graph demonstrated areas where the County had more revenue and fewer costs, but over time, such occurrences whittled away until costs increased alongside revenue, and there was no longer enough money to remain within the budget. She thanked Commissioner Clark for talking about the deficit. She expressed disbelief upon initially seeing the value of the deficit. She noted that she was previously a social worker. She stated that she could talk to a woman who also worked for the same organization about her issues in that department. She noted that she had many friends who were social workers and knew many other people in the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) who sometimes complained about the amount of money they made. She explained that her response to those comments was telling them that she owned a business, and she and her husband had not received raises in five years. She noted that she and her husband would not receive guaranteed taxpayer retirement benefits after they retired. She stated that she had friends retiring at the ages of 49 and 53 who would live for 30 years on retirement salaries better than she would get from a non-retirement salary that required her to work all the time, sometimes through multiple jobs. She opined that there was a discrepancy that was initially okay before the deficit became an injustice. She agreed that personnel costs were a high portion of any company's expenses. She emphasized that other companies were considering ways to figure out whether they could automate and implement efficiencies. She stated that those companies were not giving raises that their organizations could not pay for, because they could not source money out of nowhere. She noted that others did not receive guaranteed PERS retirements or other benefits. She expressed that things were beginning to look unbalanced and feel unjust when she heard that some of her friends did not like her because she continued to talk about PERS and mention that others did not get the same benefits as County employees. She opined that Commissioner Clark was right when he said that there was a need to investigate salaries and PERS, as there was no other way.

Mr. Fred Myer introduced himself and noted that he was late in commenting on the matter as he had only recently arrived back in the area. He agreed with Commissioner Clark and stated that something needed to be done rather than letting the issue pass after saying everyone had done a great job. He disagreed that a great job was done addressing the issue and opined that what had been done was a disservice to himself and those who supported his assertion and similarly lived in Washoe Valley. He acknowledged that the Board's job was tough but noted that it was what they were being paid to do. He noted that Ms. Cooke was also being paid to do the difficult job of presenting the information he thought was unpleasant to listen to. He emphasized the need to do things differently. He opined that the Board had heard the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) acronym and speculated they were tired of hearing it. He noted that the rest of the Country was practicing austerity, and there was a need to make necessary changes to prevent continuing on the trajectory at that time. He compared the occurrences of the County to what was happening in the rest of the Nation. He noted that one could argue that continuing the County's path at that time would be akin to financial death. He stated that the voters told the library they could not receive the extra money from a previously

instituted tax, and speculated that the Board would know which tax he was referring to. He stated that the library was trying to find ways to work around the voters' decision to source the money necessary to keep employees. He opined that the voters had spoken and expected what they voted for to be honored. He explained that voters did not want to be moved aside so the library could be given the opportunity to keep its employees. He stated that the library should get rid of some of its employees. He opined that it was fortunate that the former Library Director was no longer in that position, and thanked those who contributed to that change. He suggested that the culture of the library needed to change, which might be helped by reducing the library's workforce. He thanked Commissioner Clark and appreciated the truth he brought to the situation.

Mr. George Lee introduced himself. He indicated that there were signs that warned of an imminent and tumultuous event. He opined that somebody needed to actively alert others to the situation, as the solution could not be bought out of by raising prices. He recounted his experience having lived in California 40 years prior and opined that the state had a problem regarding the university system. He noted that there were individuals retired from the University of California, Davis (UC Davis) who had been retired for 40 years. He reiterated that such retirement programs, among other things, had driven California's economic system into decline. He opined that California was a failing state and remarked that one could only rely on the sentiment that a state was beautiful for so long before people started to recognize that there was a problem. He noted a substantial number of three-story buildings being constructed in the North Valleys region near Oddie Boulevard and El Rancho Drive and throughout the Spanish Springs region. He likened the prevalence of the construction in those areas to seeds being thrown and rapidly sprouting up. He acknowledged that the Board was not able to answer his question regarding the construction at that time due to the setting but asked the Board whether the buildings would be charged a 3 percent or 8 percent tax rate if they were purchased as condominiums. He opined that the situation represented a clever way to avoid paying higher tax rates, though he was uncertain exactly how that worked. He explained that there were many new similar cases of three- and four-story buildings sold as condominiums close to where he lived, near North McCarran Boulevard and United States (US) Route 395. He reiterated that his question was about the tax structure of those construction projects. He opined that the Board needed to do something to cut costs. He noted that if 80 percent of the County's cost structure was attributed to employment, that was a factor the Board would need to think harder about. He indicated that unpleasant efforts might be required to address that issue.

Chair Hill inquired if the Board wanted to provide any additional comments on the item.

Commissioner Clark expressed his intent to include in the public record that the members of the Board inherited the issues surrounding the budget. He noted that three members of the BCC had served in their positions for just over two years at that time. He compared the budget situation to a train that could not be stopped long before the events of the meeting that day. He emphasized the need for the Board to ensure that something would be done to prevent future BCC members from being put in the same position. He explained that he had quickly added the projected deficits and remarked that unless

something were to change, the total would equate to approximately \$117.8 million. He opined that if the Board did not do something to address that deficit, the County's citizenry and those who would come to serve on the BCC in the future would be forced to deal with the problem long after the terms of the current Commissioners had ended. He reiterated the need to work proactively to ensure that the situation would not continue in the future. He emphasized that more money could not be spent than was earned.

Chair Hill noted that the Board understood Commissioner Clark's position, asked what he wanted to do that day, and requested that he share his proposal. Commissioner Clark suggested that a vote be held on the budget. He reiterated that his goal was to have his thoughts reflected on the public record and requested that Chair Hill not interrupt him. Chair Hill opined that the Board had sufficiently heard the theme of his comments and understood what his discussion implied. Commissioner Clark explained that he wanted his comments included in the public record so that those in the future who might wonder how the County came to be in such a position or might ask why nobody had said something could know that he had spoken out on the matter.

Chair Hill moved that the final budget for FY 2026 be adopted and certified pursuant to NRS as outlined in the Staff Report, and that the changes detailed in the Staff Report be approved. She asked if the Board had any questions regarding the motion and noted that she had not seen any indication that they did. Chair Hill requested that the vote be taken through a roll call to account for Commissioner Garcia voting on the item via telephone.

County Clerk Jan Galassini performed a roll call vote at Chair Hill's request. Commissioner Andriola indicated that she voted in the affirmative due to the budget being flat and not including taxes or increases.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 3-1 vote with Commissioner Clark voting no and Vice Chair Herman absent, it was ordered that the final budget for Fiscal Year 2026 be adopted and certified pursuant to NRS 354.598 for estimated appropriations of \$1,075,989,019. It was further ordered that the changes to position control for Fiscal Year 2026 including the reduction of 10.78 Net Full Time Equivalents (FTE), Reclassifications/Evaluations/Other Changes impacting up to 43.0 positions/incumbents, and Title Only Changes impacting up to 40.0 positions/incumbents as indicated on Attachment A be approved.

25-0308 **AGENDA ITEM 12** Discussion and possible action on the County Manager's recommended Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Fiscal Years 2026-2030 and direct the County Manager to submit the CIP to the State of Nevada and others by August 1, 2025 as required by NRS 354.5945 [FY 2026 total appropriations of \$126,453,351] which requires all local governments annually to prepare a five-year capital improvement plan to be submitted to the State Department of Taxation and County Debt Management Commission by August 1st of each year. The CIP is a five-year plan for the County's capital improvements for park facilities,

including trails, open space, and regional parks; libraries; roads under purview of the County; purchase of light and heavy fleet equipment; utilities infrastructure; capital outlay for major equipment; and County buildings and other facilities. The CIP is limited to capital projects with an estimated cost of \$100,000 or more for assets that have a life-span of more than one year, as part of the reporting requirements of the State and under Board of County Commissioner (BCC) policies. Finance. (All Commission Districts.)

Budget Manager Lori Cooke conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Washoe County Fiscal Year 2026-2030 County Manager Recommended Capital Improvement Plan; Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan; Infrastructure Scorecard; Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan; FY 2026 Capital Improvements Fund (2 slides); FY 2026 Parks Capital Fund; FY 2026 Utilities Fund; FY2026 Roads/Equipment Services/Other Funds; FY 2026 Capital Facilities Tax; Capital Improvement Program; Questions/Discussion.

Ms. Cooke clarified that Agenda Item 12 was a normal action item and a follow-up that had to come after the public hearing on Agenda Item 11. She informed that the County was required by Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) to submit a five-year CIP. She noted that County budgets were approved in one-year increments, which meant the outyears were not approved from a budgetary perspective. She noted that because the CIP was a plan, the County was required to submit it to the State. She read the list of items that the capital projects mainly consisted of. She explained that the capital request process paralleled the annual budget process. She stated that the operating departments submitted requests to the CIP Committee. She said the committee had criteria that included assessment of need, strategic planning goals, project life cycle, implications of project deferral, economic impact, and environmental impact. She clarified that the implications of project deferral referred to things that were high risk or had material risk if not done.

Ms. Cooke informed that there was a common theme, similar to prior years, where departments did not submit individual CIP requests, which caused there to be many pending projects, many of which were funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). She believed the County needed to use the ARPA obligations and meet the spending deadlines so the funding would not be returned and the funds would be maximized to the fullest extent. She explained that requests related to technology and infrastructure were reviewed, and sometimes, departments would work with the Community Services Department (CSD) on infrastructure requests. She pointed out the total five-year amount on the slide of over \$367 million and noted the County did not have that amount in its budget. She reminded that future year budgets could not be adopted.

Ms. Cooke referred to the slide titled *Infrastructure Scorecard*, which she said showed where the County stood. She said her understanding was that the Infrastructure Scorecard was updated at the end of every Fiscal Year (FY). She noted the baseline for maintenance and repairs capital infrastructure was approximately \$18 million annually and would need to be reviewed for escalations. The \$18 million was a General Fund transfer to

infrastructure projects. She clarified that the amount only included infrastructure, and if Technology Services (TS) and other areas were included, the \$18 million would grow. She said the County did not have a long-term plan for technology replacement or technology infrastructure in the outyears. She believed the \$18 million was on the low end. She recalled that the approval of the budget in Agenda Item 11 reflected that the goal was to increase the General Fund transfer to get to the baseline of \$1 billion of assets. She noted the County did not want to see assets decline.

Ms. Cooke read off the list of committee members on the slide titled *Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan*. She explained that the committee met throughout the year to discuss ongoing projects and new developments with those projects. She noted that recently, the committee saw significant cost escalations related to labor and materials. She said changes were occurring on a federal level, and it was unclear how that would impact local pricing.

Ms. Cooke reviewed the slide titled *FY 2026 Capital Improvements Fund* and explained that the projects listed on the slide were the recommended projects that were part of the budget in Agenda Item 11. She said staff wanted to highlight the new projects as much as possible. She explained that the Registrar of Voters (ROV) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) project was per a settlement agreement approved by the BCC. She noted that the project was the first of multiple ADA projects that were expected to come through the CIP. She commented that the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) upgrade referred to the County's System Analysis Program (SAP) system and would use previously earmarked funding. She explained that the SAP system handled general ledger and financial activities as well as Human Resources (HR) activities and believed the upgrade would be a significant initiative. She noted that the SAP system launched in late 2003. She said the technology projects listed on the slide were funded with one-time monies. She referred to the existing projects carryover and noted it was from prior years and needed to be carried forward. She said that the undesignated budget section was by functional projects and explained that if a project bid came in higher than expected, staff needed to have some leeway and flexibility. She explained that if a project was outside of the parameters of either the budget or the scope, the project went to the CIP Committee. She reviewed the slide titled *FY 2026 Capital Improvements Fund* and explained that it delineated how the \$33 million funding was allotted. She said the \$33 million was expected to increase with reappropriations.

Ms. Cooke referred to the slide titled *FY 2026 Parks Capital Fund* and explained that the Parks Capital Fund did not receive General Fund support. She noted there could potentially be parks' projects in the CIP Fund, but the Parks Capital Fund was funded with residential construction tax (RCT), bonds, and grants. She reviewed the slide titled *FY 2026 Utilities Fund* and said the South Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility (STMWRF) project was ongoing. She explained that the Utilities Enterprise Fund was funded by ratepayers, connection fees, and bonds. The County had State Revolving Funds (SRF) for the STMWRF expansion and the Pleasant Valley Interceptor (PVI), which meant the County received below-market interest rates, the State issued the bonds, and the County paid back the debt. She noted that the process was mutually beneficial because the

State had funds they needed to allocate and used the repayments to keep the program going. She opined that the process was interesting and could fund a lot of good work within the water projects.

Ms. Cooke reviewed the slide titled *FY 2026 Roads/Equipment Services/Other Funds* and pointed out that equipment services were typically expensive. She noted the County had done several things over the years to extend the life of the vehicles, such as public safety, share of fleet, and fleet replacement. She explained that there needed to be a balance between maintenance and replacement to ensure the County was not spending more on maintenance than it would cost to purchase a new vehicle. She mentioned that Equipment Services Superintendent, David Gonzales, worked closely with the Finance Department to find that balance.

Regarding the *FY 2026 Capital Facilities Tax* slide, Ms. Cooke said the capital facilities tax was an ad valorem five-cent property tax. Of the capital facilities tax, 60 percent was passed back to the State Highway Fund and 11.25 percent was passed back to the Cities of Reno and Sparks, which equaled a total revenue of \$11.1 million in the Capital Projects Fund. She referred to the transfers to the Roads Special Revenue Fund and explained it as a transfer for capital projects. She noted the Capital Projects Fund did not have much activity and was a requirement per NRS.

Ms. Cooke said the CIP was separated by fund, beginning with the Capital Improvements Fund. She added that the CIP provided an overview that outlined specific projects but not the underlying details. She explained that the CIP included projects that the BCC identified as important from an infrastructure perspective, which included the projects listed on the slide titled *Capital Improvement Program*. She believed that the outstanding debt for those items was over \$400 million. Chair Hill clarified that additional revenues could be used for debt financing. Ms. Cooke stated that alternative funding sources would be a potential option, depending on the source of revenue and if it could be pledged for debt. Regarding reappropriation, she noted the CIP showed anticipated total expenditures of \$83.9 million for the Capital Improvements Fund and \$4.14 million for the Parks Capital Fund. She concluded that it was anticipated that those budgets would increase due to reappropriation.

Commissioner Andriola thought it would be helpful to clarify the reason for discussing the CIP and asked Michael Large, Chief Deputy District Attorney (CDDA), for an explanation. She believed the presentation did not reflect an increase in the budget.

CDDA Large said that Ms. Cooke previously pointed out in the presentation that the CIP was required by NRS 354.5945. He stated that each local government should file a copy of the CIP with the State that incorporated not only the current year, which must match what was in the budget, but also the five-year forecasting required by NRS. He added that the CIP was part of the process and needed to be completed by August 1st of each year. Chair Hill said the CIP was connected to the budget.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, County Clerk Jan Galassini performed a roll call vote upon Chair Hill's request, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Herman absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be directed.

BLOCK VOTE – 8 AND 9

25-0309 **AGENDA ITEM 8** Recommendation to award a contract resulting from Request For Proposal (RFP) 3266-24 for CrossRoads Operator to the most responsive and responsible bidder, The Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equality (RISE). CrossRoads is a tiered, supportive, alcohol and drug-free housing approach with targeted and intensive case management services focused on life skills development, workforce readiness, community linkage, and physical and behavioral health. Under this contract, RISE will provide staffing, program management and administrative oversight for the various CrossRoads locations, including Men's CrossRoads, Women's CrossRoads and Women and Children's CrossRoads. The contract will be awarded for the initial term of twenty-four (24) months commencing July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027 in an amount not to exceed [\$1,938,186] for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 and [\$2,006,023] for the period of July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027, with the provision for up to three (3), one (1) year renewals; and if approved, authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the Agreement. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, County Clerk Jan Galassini performed a roll call vote upon Chair Hill's request, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Herman absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 8 be awarded, approved, and authorized.

25-0310 **AGENDA ITEM 9** Recommendation to award a contract resulting from Request For Proposal (RFP) 3265-24 for Our Place Operator to the most responsive and responsible bidder, Volunteers of America, Northern California and Northern Nevada (VOA). Our Place is an outcome-based shelter providing case management and peer lead wrap around services focused on long-term housing solutions for families and women who are experiencing homelessness. Under this contract, VOA will provide staffing, program management and administrative oversight for the Our Place campus. The contract will be awarded for a transitional term of two weeks in an amount not to exceed [\$75,000] for the period of June 16, 2025 to June 30, 2025 and an initial term of twenty-four (24) months in an amount not to exceed [\$3,987,879] for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 and [\$4,127,455] for the period of July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027, with the provision for up to three (3), one (1) year renewals; and if approved,

authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute the Agreement. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, County Clerk Jan Galassini performed a roll call vote upon Chair Hill's request, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Vice Chair Herman absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 9 be awarded, approved, and authorized.

12:09 p.m. **The Board recessed.**

12:20 p.m. **The Board reconvened with Commissioner Garcia absent.**

25-0311 **AGENDA ITEM 5A1** Presentation by Ryan Gustafson, Director of Washoe County Human Services Agency, a general overview of the Department, including programs, staffing, and data. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

Director of Washoe County Human Services Agency (HSA) Ryan Gustafson conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Washoe County Human Services Overview; Our Mission; Children's Services; Reports; Removals; Foster Care; Family Engagement Center; Reunifications; Adoptions; Clinical Services; Adult Services; CrossRoads; Senior Services; Nutrition; Housing & Homeless Services; Nevada Cares Campus; Nevada Cares Campus Safe Camp; Our Place Women Program; Our Place Family Program; Tenancy Support; Questions.

Mr. Gustafson noted that it had been a long time since HSA presented to the Board on its activities and said there were new actions HSA was taking. He informed that he had been with the County for many years and received his bachelor's and master's degrees in the area. He had the opportunity to work for the Washoe County School District (WCSD), the university, private practice, private hospitals, the State, and the County. He stated he was humbled and honored to be able to work under the leadership of the Office of the County Manager (OCM) and the Board of County Commissioners (BCC).

Mr. Gustafson explained that HSA included 472 staff members and recalled that the last time the HSA presented to the Board, they were closer to 372 people. He noted that the significant jumps in staffing mirrored the needs of the community and the population growth. He was proud to say HSA served the community as best as it could, especially the most vulnerable populations. He reviewed the slide titled *Our Mission* and read off the divisions within HSA, which included the entire age spectrum of the community. There were six HSA directors overseeing various programs.

Mr. Gustafson commented that the Children's Services Division provided services such as investigations, intake, children aging out of the system and shifting into adulthood, and adoption. He noted that additional services were provided to prevent

children from staying in the system for an extended period of time. He directed the Board to the slide titled *Reports*, which listed statistics for reports and investigations. He explained that HSA had a large amount of data, but he would share just a few pieces of it for the presentation. He said he would happily share the additional data if the Board desired. He said the information he would review was some of HSA's most crucial data, which was mandated by the federal government and the State.

Mr. Gustafson commented that the intake team was robust and took 6,029 calls in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, which had remained relatively consistent with slight changes over the five years. He said HSA took thousands of calls specific to reports regarding various concerns of abuse or neglect. The WCSD was the number one referral source, followed by law enforcement and then hospitals. He informed that the rest of the referrals came from the community. Occasionally, investigations led to HSA needing to remove children, which staff hoped was only for a short period of time. He reviewed the slide titled *Removals* and said 2024 had increased slightly from 2023 but was lower compared to prior years. He noted that the numbers detailed on the slide were reported to the State. He explained that the idea was to remove as few children as possible and added that children should not be removed without having measures in place. He stated that HSA implemented a significant amount of evidence-based practice to keep children in their homes, when possible, but that could not be done all the time.

Mr. Gustafson reviewed the slide titled *Foster Care* and said that for the past three years, the number of children in foster care and in the legal care of HSA remained at about 600. He indicated that the number fluctuated, and in 2017, that number was over a thousand. He explained that HSA did a good job of getting children back in their homes. He stated their success was due to having a safety plan and provisions in place so there would not be a need to remove children. He added that the data showed the trauma that removing children from their homes had in the long term, so they tried not to remove children, but occasionally needed to.

Mr. Gustafson reviewed the slide titled *Family Engagement Center* and expressed his pride about being one of the first in the Nation to set up a visitation center in October of 2017. He added that many states visited the facility to try to replicate the program. He said data showed that the more families saw their children and visited with them in a home-like setting, the faster the children could go home, and the more engaged the parents would be. He mentioned that HSA averaged about 600 visits a month. He stated that COVID-19 (C19) impacted those numbers, but they were able to get back on track.

Mr. Gustafson reviewed the slide titled *Reunifications* and said the numbers were down, but that was a direct reflection of the removal number. He explained that the fewer children being removed, the less they sent home. He noted that the federal government, the Children's Bureau, and the State focused on reunification numbers.

Mr. Gustafson reviewed the slide titled *Adoptions* and explained that several years ago, adoptions were backlogged, but had since been cleared. He mentioned that during C19, some of the courts closed for a period, which caused adoption numbers to

decrease slightly.

Mr. Gustafson reviewed the slide titled *Clinical Services* and commended the agency for taking over the State Mobile Crisis Response program in July of 2024. Since taking over the program, the number of children and families has tripled. He said that the program was very successful. He mentioned that 18 new staff members were funded by the State and would continue to be funded each year.

Mr. Gustafson said the programs listed on the *Adult Services* slide were tied to Senior Services. He stated there would be a ribbon cutting on May 23, 2025, for the new CrossRoads Families program. He spoke about the numbers on the slide titled *CrossRoads*, and explained that the data showed the clients served by the various programs. He said the Families' program would begin soon. He added that data for FY 2025 would be available at the end of the FY.

Mr. Gustafson expressed appreciation for the leadership team at Senior Services. He mentioned that they had a fantastic grand opening of the Senior Center and ribbon cutting for On-Med. He added that Senior Services received positive feedback from the seniors regarding the upgraded facility. He said there was a large turnout for breakfast, and it was exciting to serve that population. He referenced the services provided on the slide titled *Senior Services* and explained that there were centers in multiple locations throughout the County. He noted the goal was to get seniors out, active, socializing, and involved in the community.

Mr. Gustafson reviewed the slide titled *Nutrition* and said the numbers showed a snapshot of meals served. He explained that during C19 there was a significant increase in home-delivered meals. He indicated that since C19 the numbers had shifted back to a better split between home delivery and congregate meals. He noted that the number of congregate meals started to increase, which was exciting.

Mr. Gustafson said Housing and Homeless Services (HHS) were integrated into HSA in mid-2023 and consisted of approximately 70 staff members. He reviewed the slide titled *Housing & Homeless Services* and mentioned the various programs and support services.

Mr. Gustafson expressed his appreciation for the Our Place family program leadership team. He explained they were close to opening the permanent supportive housing building, which was in its final stages. He said that the building was going to be fantastic and would offer additional programs.

Mr. Gustafson reviewed the slide titled *Tenancy Support* and said HHS served 59 total clients in 2024 and would monitor that number. Chair Hill asked if those funds came from a grant. He confirmed they did and explained HHS wanted to house individuals and provide opportunities for them. He stated that the goal was to create sustainability and provide resources so individuals could move on from those programs. He added that the intent was to put case management in place to help those individuals get

into the community, find employment, and have services in place. He said that assistance often required tenancy, mental health support, various subsidies, and the ability to work with other entities in the community. He added that Washoe County had fantastic community partners. He explained that Washoe County was small enough to get all the people who needed to make crucial decisions in one room, but big enough to make significant changes for half a million people. He said he was proud to be a small part of that.

Commissioner Andriola appreciated the presentation and said she thought Mr. Gustafson's point about Washoe County being small enough to get everybody in the room, but large enough to serve half a million people, was important. She thought it would be interesting to look at how he, as the head of HSA, could do more with less moving forward. She felt that other members of the HSA team could contribute and added that the unsung heroes who were not at the meeting were also important. She could not imagine the impact those individuals had when dealing with vulnerable populations. She recognized there was an emotional impact because it was human nature. She believed it was not a job but was instead an avocation, and staff needed to believe in what they were doing. She felt that the HSA team should be commended for their work. She spoke about the foster care numbers and the impact of not needing to be removed from a home, which changed several years ago, and was the first course of action. She noted that HSA served a broad scope of individuals. She added that there was vulnerability and uniqueness in each instance. She appreciated the numbers provided throughout the presentation and hoped they continued to decrease. Although she realized each of the categories targeted different individuals, she wondered what some of the proactive measures were.

Mr. Gustafson said that housing was needed in the area. He explained that after examining what the need was, HSA could look at it not only as community-based housing needs, but also as housing needs for those requiring ongoing assistance. He indicated that was a primary reason to have permanent supportive housing in place. He said there could be more involvement to keep people in place, safe, and continuing in the right direction. He mentioned that as staff prepared to start a new CrossRoads program, the team felt that being able to work with families had been inconsistent for some time. He explained that the feedback that had been received was that it was unclear where families fit in. He noted that there were programs for mothers, children, and men, but the family unit program was missing. He felt that the program would serve, perhaps a small but certainly not unimportant, vital niche in the community. He mentioned that the women's program was being rehabilitated. He said there was significant work being done on the buildings, much like what was done at the Senior Center.

Mr. Gustafson stated that the Mobile Crisis Response program started in 2014 and noted that the goal was hospital diversion. He explained that two psychiatric hospitals were closed in 2021. He said that the County purchased the West Hills Hospital with the intention of renovating the facility to provide mental health services. He added that, secondarily, they did not want children in mental health crises waiting in primary care hospital emergency rooms. He explained that sitting in bed was not treatment and often led to delayed, ongoing issues. He said that staff worked with the State to take over the Mobile

Crisis Response program because of the unique knowledge of the variables, needs, and relationships with the WCSD and other referral sources. He stated it was a tremendous success. He noted that the hospital diversion rate was 96 percent. He added that of the children and families that were seen, 96 percent of them avoided hospitalization and remained in their homes. He said there was intensive clinical work being done. He thought those were successful examples.

Mr. Gustafson added that they continued to look for evidence-based practices and would work with any jurisdiction or State that did things that were cutting edge, whether it was good or bad. He said many jurisdictions looked to Washoe County for cutting-edge ideas when it came to federal funding and how to maximize reimbursement. He said that the vacancy rate during his time at the State was about 20 to 30 percent. He added that maintaining welfare and mental health was difficult. He applauded Washoe County's agency for having a vacancy rate of about 2.9 percent. He believed the staff was passionate about their work and thought that was a testament to the leadership of the County and the OCM.

Commissioner Andriola thought it would be helpful to review the success models. She understood HSA looked at the number of clients served, but she believed that success could be measured differently. She felt that there might also be success stories with families and individuals from the other programs as well. She believed it would be helpful to hear about the successes regarding the leading innovative methods used by HSA, which were being looked at by other jurisdictions and organizations. She said, even though Mr. Gustafson knew what those successes were, that the information would be helpful for the Board.

Mr. Gustafson agreed and thought reviewing certain variables, measurables, and recidivism rates was important. He noted that an advantage of merging with HHS was that a child from HSA would not age out and could move into the HHS system. He said HSA had been at the forefront of extended foster care, which looked like it was going to pass through the Legislature. He believed that would create additional efficiencies with the program. He stated that much of that was determined over time, such as when and what to retouch in the system.

Commissioner Andriola understood the complexity but thought it would be helpful to understand the expected outcomes. She believed there could potentially be legally driven outcomes that needed to be reported. She felt that would be an essential component to add and share with the Board and the community.

Chair Hill expressed her appreciation to Mr. Gustafson and his team. She said the entire HSA team helped with the difficult work, the overlooked parts of the community, and gave people a second chance. She added that she heard incredible success stories, which included the work with foster care, adoptions, senior services, and the HHS programs. She commended the team and offered the Board's help for continued support.

25-0312 **AGENDA ITEM 5B1** Dr. Chad Kingsley to Present on the Reduction of treatment to prevent mosquitos for the 2025 Season. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)

District Health Officer Dr. Chad Kingsley conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: 2025 Season- Mosquito Abatement; Mosquito Abatement 2025; Confirmed & Probable Cases, Washoe County; What will remain if large area abatement is reduced?; Surveillance; Response to Complaints – 311; Community Outreach/Education; Questions?; Northern Nevada Public Health. He referred to the *Mosquito Abatement 2025* slide and explained that mosquito abatement was one of the largest areas of cost with minimal staff impact that Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH) determined could reduce expenditures. NNPH decided to suspend the 2025 large area treatment with the approval of the District Board of Health (DBOH). The services would not stop completely, but helicopter services would be suspended for the 2025 season. He noted that the cost of abatement products and helicopter services had increased since 2021, with no budget increases. He speculated the services could potentially be impacted by tariffs and mentioned that the NNPH would be able to provide one or two more years of full service before four flights per season would not be financially feasible.

Dr. Kingsley read from the *Confirmed & Probable Cases, Washoe County* slide, and said that there had been one locally acquired West Nile Neuroinvasive case within the past five years. He explained that other diseases were transmitted; however, those individuals had travelled outside of the County. He noted that the species that carried dengue fever and malaria were not currently in the area. He speculated that mosquito abatement was the lowest-impacted service to suspend compared to the other services provided by the NNPH.

Dr. Kingsley referred to the remaining services provided through abatement on the *What will remain if large area abatement is reduced?* slide. He indicated that other recently reported vector-borne services, such as rabies or the Hantavirus Hemorrhagic Fever with Renal Syndrome (HFRS), would continue. He referred and read from the *Surveillance* slide that contained targeted areas from the previous year. He reported that the mosquito traps had a fan with carbon dioxide and were tracked for 24 hours before being collected to be weighed, identified, and sent to the State lab for further virus testing. He explained that water would be treated with larvicide if it tested positive for mosquito larvae by field staff.

Dr. Kingsley recited the *Response to Complaints – 311* and *Community Outreach/Education* slides and indicated that addresses and contact information were collected for additional data when complaints were provided to Washoe 311. He noted that the NNPH still provided media and community outreach and offered information and guidance regarding mosquito bite prevention and personal protection during the helicopter suspension.

Chair Hill thanked Dr. Kingsley and appreciated the update. She indicated

that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the NNPH budget transfer from the General Fund for the next Fiscal Year (FY) and that the DBOH reviewed the NNPH's budget. She asked what the NNPH's ongoing needs and expenses were. Dr. Kingsley explained that mosquito abatement was an example of impact because it was an unmandated essential service. He said that the NNPH was preparing for potential budgetary cuts to services pertaining to the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), obesity, public health preparedness, and staff. He indicated that the NNPH was researching to identify nonessential services. He noted that the budget was presented monthly to the DBOH, that NNPH was working closely with the County, and that a third-party assessment of the NNPH budget would be performed. He wanted a better-balanced budget and resilience for services that were necessary for the community. Chair Hill requested that Dr. Kingsley involve the BCC in new information or additional support needs.

Commissioner Andriola recalled that the DBOH had many questions during the mosquito abatement suspension discussion. She thought that it was clear to the DBOH that supporting the recommendation was important because the service was not cancelled long-term. She noted that every department was researching what services could be paused during uncertain budgetary times. She wanted to support Dr. Kingsley's recommendation because the DBOH's discussion was robust and not taken lightly. She thanked and recognized the mosquito abatement team for doing more with less material. She explained that individuals in the field had a lot of responsibility to address concerns while the treatment was suspended. Chair Hill asserted that it was important for the community to be aware of their own open bodies of water and to monitor mosquito precautions. Commissioner Andriola wanted to ensure the residents knew their mosquito responsibilities.

Commissioner Clark thanked Dr. Kingsley for the presentation. Chair Hill indicated that she looked forward to future updates and other ways the County could support the NNPH's efforts.

DONATIONS

25-0313 **6A1** Recommendation to: (1) accept various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$2,797.83]; and (2) accept monetary donations to Washoe County Human Services Agency Child Protective Services Fund to support welfare activities in the amount of [\$25,769.75], from multiple donors as described in this staff report, retroactive for the period January 1, 2025 through March 31, 2025; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. The item donors are: (1) Albright & Associates (5 boxes of clothing), (2) Buffy Co (new comforter), (3) Debbie C. dba Chaos (misc. new and used teen clothing), (4) Jennifer D. (games, books, socks, shoes for children), (5) Lynn Ca. (pajamas and makeup), (6) Manufactures Exchange (8 boxes of toys), (7) Northern Nevada Dental Society (new toys and books), (8) Paul A. (kids toys and clothes), (9) Post (cereal), (10) Rhonda W. (cookie ingredients for baking and new hair combs), (11) Robert B. (5 suitcases), (12) Robin R. (pajamas), (13) Safe Embrace (39 bags of

clothing, kids toys, household goods), (14) Terry S. (10 bags of bears). The monetary donors are: (1) Lennar Foundation (\$20,000), (2) Christopher Ciarlo (\$1,000), (3) Washoe Lodge No 35 (\$400), (4) Valerie Cook (\$100), (5) Unknown (\$55). Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

25-0314 **6A2** Recommendation to accept various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$6,476.00], from multiple donors as described in this staff report, to support Cares Campus, Our Place, CrossRoads and other homeless services retroactive for the period of January 1, 2025 through March 31, 2025. The donors are: (1) Renaissance Hotel (100 hotel pillows), (2) Denise Kolten (2, 32" used TVs), (3) Kendra DeSoto-Silva (kitchen supplies for outreach), (4) Pearsons Reno (200 first aid kits and supplies), (5) Cindy Dawson (socks), (6) Susan Buchwald (dress shirts, shoes, jackets, suits), (7) Jesse Hendrick (20 shirts). Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

25-0315 **6A3** Recommendation to accept monetary donations to the Human Services Agency Senior Services Fund used to support seniors in our community in the amount of [\$1,084.00], from multiple donors as described in this staff report, retroactive for the period January 1, 2025 through March 31, 2025; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. The donors are: (1) Robert and Camille Bundte Trust (\$1,000), (2) Sheila Betor (\$54), (3) Sylvia Arzonian (\$30). Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Chair Hill, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 3-0 vote with Vice Chair Herman and Commissioner Garcia absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 6A1 through 6A3 be accepted.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 7A1 THROUGH 7F1

25-0316 **7A1** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' concurrent meeting of February 6, 2025. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

25-0317 **7A2** Acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Clerk on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, including the following categories: Communications, Monthly Statements/Reports, and Annual Statements/Reports. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

25-0318 **7A3** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' regular meeting of April 8, 2025. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

25-0319 **7B1** Recommendation to approve Amendment #1 to the Interlocal Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement between City of Reno and Washoe County to extend the termination date from June 30, 2025, to June 30, 2030, with

an option for further extension to June 30, 2035, upon written request by either party. The annual “not to exceed” contract value will increase [\$60,000.00] from \$70,000.00 to \$130,000.00. A new provision will be added allowing the City to invoice the County separately for emergency repair work which will be excluded from the annual contract cap and processed through the Washoe County. Additionally, the Agreement will be amended to remove and replace three exhibits: Exhibit B will be replaced with Exhibit B-1 (Washoe County Traffic Signals), Exhibit C will be replaced with Exhibit C-1 (Fee Schedule for FY 2026), and Exhibit D will be replaced with Exhibit D-1 (Activity Guidelines for Traffic Signal Maintenance Services). These changes and the increase to the contract value reflect current operational needs, increase flexibility for emergency response and financial planning, and recognize that there has been an increase to the number of traffic signals with additional signals currently being designed which will also be added to Washoe County’s inventory. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

25-0320 **7B2** Recommendation to approve a Cooperative Agreement between the Truckee River Flood Management Authority (TRFMA) and Washoe County for the Replacement of the Wadsworth Pedestrian Bridge (Agreement), which grants TRFMA and its contractors access to demolish the existing County-owned pedestrian bridge and construct a replacement pedestrian bridge, and to perform all other work necessary to complete the Wadsworth Pedestrian Bridge Replacement Project (Project), with no Project costs borne by Washoe County. The new pedestrian bridge will provide for safe movement of pedestrians across the Truckee River and will also reduce flood impacts along the Truckee River corridor in the Wadsworth area. Community Services. (Commission District 5.)

25-0321 **7C1** Recommendation to (1) approve a classification title change from DA Investigator III to DA Investigator Supervisor in Article 2 (Recognition) of the collective bargaining agreement between Washoe County and the Supervisory Employees Negotiating Unit of the Washoe County District Attorney Investigator’s Association (WCDAIA); and (2) approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Washoe County and the Non-Supervisory and Supervisory Employees Negotiating Units of the WCDAIA, modifying provisions related to Article 14 (Salaries and Retirement) and Appendix A (Salary Schedules) of the WCDAIA collective bargaining agreements for the four (4) year period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2028. The Memorandum of Understanding stemmed from an increase in the Public Employees’ Retirement System of Nevada (PERS) contribution rate and includes the following agreements: the County will absorb 2% of the 4.375% PERS contribution rate increase that WCDAIA members would otherwise be responsible for per NRS 286.421 effective July 14, 2025; negotiations will be reopened to determine the parties’ respective contributions if there is an additional change to the PERS

contribution rate for the Employer Pay Contribution Plan for July 14, 2025; and negotiations will be reopened to determine the parties' respective contributions if the PERS contribution rate for Police/Fire increases by more than 4.875% in subsequent years during the term of the collective bargaining agreements. [Total estimated fiscal impact for all years is \$65,954; FY 25/26 = \$21,251, FY 26/27 = \$21,994; FY 27/28 = \$22,709]. Human Resources. (All Commission Districts.)

- 25-0322** **7D1** Recommendation to approve budget amendments totaling an increase of [\$59,815.17; no county match] in both revenue and expense to the FY25 ELC Enhancing Detection Expansion FY25 Subaward, retroactive to January 1, 2024, through March 24, 2025, for the Epidemiology and Public Health Preparedness (EPHP) Division; these funds were used to complete epidemiological surveillance and investigation activities in Washoe County, and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Northern Nevada Public Health. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0323** **7E1** Recommendation to accept the project change request for the FY 2025 Office of Traffic Safety School Zone Grant award from the State of Nevada Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety [amount not to exceed \$5,000.00, 25% In-Kind county match required] as administered through the State of Nevada Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety, to cover overtime costs related to school zone traffic enforcement, for the grant term which will begin upon receipt of the Authorization to Proceed notification through September 30, 2025 and if approved, direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments and authorize Sheriff Balaam to execute grant award documents. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0324** **7F1** Recommendation to approve the acceptance of the Secretary of State's budget appropriation to Washoe County in the amount of [\$160,531.00] to reimburse the county for voting equipment licensing and support fees for fiscal year 2025. No match required. The award period is retroactive from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. If approved, direct Finance to make the appropriate budget amendments. Voters. (All Commission Districts.)

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

On motion by Commissioner Andriola, seconded by Chair Hill, which motion duly carried on a 3-0 vote with Vice Chair Herman and Commissioner Garcia absent, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 7A1 through 7F1 be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 7A1 through 7F1 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

25-0325

AGENDA ITEM 10 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.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Assistant County Manager (ACM) David Solaro shared updates from Government Affairs Liaison Cadence Matijevich, who remained busy with the 2025 Legislative Session in Carson City. He reported that the 17-week legislative session was in its final two weeks. He informed that 1,181 bills and resolutions were introduced, and the County was still tracking 527 of them. He advised that 237 fiscal notes had been completed to date, and he mentioned that Friday, May 22, 2025, was the House passage deadline. He divulged his hope that some bills and resolutions would disappear from the list that the County was tracking by that time. He explained that Senate Bill (SB) 319, the fire consolidation study, passed out of the Assembly Government Affairs Committee on Thursday, May 15, and was on the general file in the Assembly awaiting a House vote. He reminded the Board that on May 11, 2025, they adopted a position to support Assembly Bill (AB) 333. He noted that AB333 was the Washoe County Fairgrounds lease amendment. He summarized that the bill passed out of the Senate Government Affairs Committee on May 16, 2025, was reported out of Committee on May 19, 2025, and was awaiting a second reading in the Senate. Given the upcoming deadline, he said that he was sure that Ms. Matijevich would have a report for the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) the following week.

Chair Hill thanked ACM Solaro for his summary.

There was no action or public comment on this item.

25-0326

AGENDA ITEM 13 Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

25-0327 **AGENDA ITEM 14** Announcements/Reports.

Assistant County Manager (ACM) David Solaro shared that County Manager Eric Brown and ACM Kate Thomas eagerly awaited discussions with Commissioners regarding the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget. He stated his appreciation for the work Commissioners did on the FY 2026 budget and noted there would be some work going into FY 2027. He added his appreciation for the work done by other elected County officials and department heads to communicate their vision. He said, as mentioned in some notifications and at the last few Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meetings, that there would be many more budget meetings and discussions to come. He explained that was a change from how things were done previously, and he wanted to ensure that everyone, including the public, was aware that budget discussions would be ongoing and were being taken seriously by Commissioners and County management.

Commissioner Andriola expressed that she also looked forward to ongoing budget discussions and welcomed the opportunity to start as soon as possible. She knew it was not an agenda item for the meeting that day, but she suggested that it be agenda item as soon as a plan was in place. She wanted a transparent discussion to take place to enable everyone to understand how the County planned to move forward for 2027 and future years. She pointed out the responsibility Commissioners had to approve budgets and stay within the guidelines. She welcomed the opportunity to think about things differently.

Chair Hill thanked everyone for a great meeting.

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1:01 p.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

ALEXIS HILL, Chair
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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

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