



North Valleys Citizen Advisory Board

Minutes of the regular meeting of the North Valleys Citizen Advisory Board held on January 12th, 2026, at 6:00 P.M. Reno Stead Airport, 4895 Texas Ave, Reno NV 89506

1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

PRESENT – Scott Finley, Aaron Jennings, Susan VanNess, Shelia Herring

ABSENT – ROGER EDWARDS, KRYSTAL AYERS

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF December 8, 2025

Aaron Rodgers motioned to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2025, North Valleys CAB meeting. Shelia Herring seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

4. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Tammy Holt-Still urged community members to speak in support of Commissioner Jeanne Herman to become Chair of the Washoe County Commission, noting she is being removed as vice chair and that District 5 has not held the chair position in 12 years. She emphasized that the Chair sets the agenda and can better advocate for long-standing community needs. Holt-Still called on residents, including those outside District 5, to attend the meeting or encourage others to speak during public comment to ensure District 5 has a voice, even if only for the next 12 months. She also highlighted Commissioner Herman's focus on fair and proper elections and encouraged spreading the word to build support.

Brian Wadsworth introduced himself and thanked the Regional Citizens Advisory Board and community members for hosting the meeting. He shared that he is a member of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and a candidate for Washoe County Commissioner in District 5. Born and raised in Northern Nevada, Wadsworth grew up on the Pyramid Lake Reservation, previously lived in Stead, and now resides in Nixon. He noted the significant growth in the area since the early 2000s and expressed his interest in learning more about the issues affecting Stead and the broader District 5.

5. CAB MEMBER/ COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/ COMMENTS

There were no announcements

6. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District

Captain Patrick Hughes provided a brief public safety update for the Stead area, highlighting fire

department call activity and seasonal safety reminders. He reported 139 responses in December and 2,142 calls year to date, reflecting an increase of about 290 incidents over the prior year, indicating slightly higher demand for service. He emphasized the importance of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, noting an increase in carbon monoxide-related calls and reminding residents to place detectors in and near sleeping areas, test them monthly, and replace them every 10 years. Captain Hughes also shared flood preparedness tips related to seasonal weather and snowmelt, including clearing debris from gutters and drainage areas, knowing sandbag locations, and avoiding driving through floodwaters. He concluded with a reminder that open burning is permitted through April 30 with daily authorization, available via the fire department's website or phone line, and reaffirmed the department's commitment to serving the community.

A community member asked about the location of sandbags, referencing a possible site near the end of a local road. Captain Hughes responded that sandbag locations are coordinated through Washoe County and that the county would be the best source for current and accurate information. He noted that sandbags are sometimes available at fire stations, but availability can vary, and residents should check directly with the county for confirmation.

A resident asked if they would be doing the Green Waste program again. It was answered they will but are still working out the details.

Shelia Herring asked why her smoke detector keeps beeping even though it is electrically powered. The response explained that many smoke detectors are hardwired into the home's electrical system but still include a battery backup. The beeping typically indicates a low or failing backup battery or that the detector itself needs to be replaced. Residents were advised to replace the battery regularly, such as during time changes, and to replace the detector when it reaches the end of its service life.

Washoe County Sheriff's Office

Lieutenant Nick Tone provided a law enforcement update for the Stead and Spanish Springs areas, noting that recent months have seen relatively few major cases, which he described as a positive trend. He reported a significant increase in illegal dumping and thanked community members for reporting incidents, including a recent case involving more than 40 illegally dumped tires, which was addressed with the responsible party held accountable. Lieutenant Tone also raised concerns about unsafe target shooting in congested areas, explaining that bullets can travel long distances and pose serious risks to people and infrastructure. He encouraged residents to report unsafe shooting so deputies can respond, prioritize education, and take enforcement action if necessary.

He addressed questions about law enforcement drones seen in the area, clarifying they are operated by sworn deputies as part of an investigation into a series of suspected arsons and are used to monitor open areas where fires have been set. Finally, he shared that an upcoming quarterly report card with updated crime and activity statistics will be provided, and noted he will be temporarily away, with a sergeant serving as his replacement during that time.

A community member asked whether approximately 40% of law enforcement calls are related to individuals experiencing homelessness. Lieutenant Tone explained that he could not confirm a specific percentage but provided context on how calls for service are categorized. Calls originating from the CARES Campus and other homelessness-related locations are counted within the agency's call totals, even though they are handled by dedicated units and not by

deputies assigned to outlying areas like Stead or Spanish Springs. He noted that these calls can include medical issues, overdoses, thefts, and other incidents, as well as proactive outreach by the Homeless Outreach and Proactive Enforcement teams. Even when deputies initiate contact to offer services such as housing or Medicaid assistance, those interactions are logged as calls for service. As a result, homelessness-related activity represents a notable portion of overall call volume, but it does not reduce patrol coverage in the Stead area.

Aaron Jennings thanked the lieutenant for their capture of the person dumping tires. He then inquired as to where the Lieutenant will be going for a few months. Lieutenant Tone responded that he has been selected to attend an executive-level command and leadership school in Louisville, Kentucky. He described the program as a well-regarded, 13-week leadership course with a long-standing relationship to the agency. Jennings noted that the program's director has prior ties to the organization and expressed optimism that the opportunity could support his professional advancement.

Katie Finley asked whether there are specific safety issues residents should be watching for and reporting, particularly related to unsafe walkways, roadways, and pedestrian safety in the North Valleys, referencing a recent pedestrian-involved incident in Cold Springs. Lieutenant Nick Tone responded that the Cold Springs incident involved specific circumstances and resulted in an arrest for reckless behavior, and that prior reporting would not have changed the outcome. More broadly, he encouraged residents to report concerns such as unsafe walkways, road conditions, snow or drainage issues, abandoned property, parking problems, or traffic hazards through Washoe County 311 or directly via the Sheriff's Office website. He explained that 311 reports are reviewed by staff and routed to the appropriate department, including law enforcement or traffic units as needed. He emphasized that using these reporting tools helps ensure concerns are addressed and directed to the correct agency.

A community member raised concerns about the new intersection at the Lemon Valley off-ramp, noting that drivers are turning right on red from the far-right lane without stopping because there is no clear stop sign, creating a safety issue. Lieutenant Nick Tone responded that, regardless of signage confusion, the intersection still legally operates as a stop before turning right on red. He explained that enforcement in this area is primarily handled through education, especially when drivers are unaware of the rules. Deputies will address violations when they observe them, issuing warnings when education is appropriate and citations when drivers knowingly disregard the law. He confirmed the concern was valid and assured residents the issue will be addressed when observed.

A resident from the north end of Red Rock Road reported seeing a neighbor illegally dumping yard waste on the California side of the border and asked whether video evidence is necessary and whether it is better to confront the neighbor or report it. Lieutenant Nick Tone advised that residents should not confront neighbors if they feel unsafe and may contact law enforcement to handle the issue. He explained that jurisdiction depends on where the dumping occurs, meaning California authorities would be responsible if the activity happens on the California side. In such cases, the reporting resident would likely need to serve as the complainant and may be required to sign a citation and appear in court. Because of this, video or photo evidence is strongly recommended, as it helps support enforcement and ensures the case can move forward.

7. RENO STEAD AIRPORT MASTER PLAN

Jed Hammer an airport planner with the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority, provided an update on the Reno Stead Airport Master Plan, outlining the airport's role, history, and the current planning effort underway. He explained that the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority operates both Reno-Tahoe International Airport and Reno Stead Airport as a connected system balancing general aviation, military, and commercial needs, and that the authority is a self-sustaining, quasi-municipal agency governed by a nine-member board. Reno Stead Airport is designated by the FAA as a general aviation reliever airport, with more than 200 based aircraft, roughly 50,000 to 60,000 annual operations, two runways, and more than 5,000 acres of land, much of it developable. Hammer reviewed Stead's history as a former military training base, its transition to civilian use, its long association with the Reno Air Races, and its current mix of aviation, military, public safety, and community uses. He noted that the last master plan was completed in 2010 and that significant changes since then, including the departure of the air races, redevelopment of National Guard facilities, increased unmanned aircraft activity, hangar shortages, and development pressures in the surrounding area, make an updated plan necessary. He described the FAA-required master planning process, which examines existing conditions, forecasts future aviation demand, evaluates facility needs and alternatives, and results in a phased development plan covering five-, 10-, and 20-year horizons, all with FAA review and approval at key stages. Hammer said the project is currently in the inventory and aviation forecast phase, with draft materials expected to be posted online as they are completed and approved, and final documents anticipated in early 2027. He emphasized the importance of public and stakeholder involvement through a project website, public meetings, pop-up events, tenant interviews, and a Master Plan Working Group made up of airport users, agencies, and community representatives, noting that while the group provides input, final decisions rest with the Airport Authority.

A community member asked whether the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority had any updates or involvement related to the previously proposed sulfur lithium battery plant. Jed Hammer responded that he did not have specific information on the status of that proposal and deferred to Lissa Butterfield for clarification. Butterfield explained that the Airport Authority does not have a lease with the sulfur battery company and does not expect lease negotiations to resume anytime soon, noting that the company has undergone significant business changes and is now primarily focused on operations in Europe.

Tammy Holt-Still asked what is driving the current Reno Stead Airport master plan beyond the fact that the last plan was completed in 2010, and whether the effort was connected to interest in converting Stead into a commercial or cargo airport. Lissa Butterfield responded that, at a basic level, the FAA expects airport master plans to be updated every 10 to 15 years because they only project conditions about 20 years into the future and rarely anticipate emerging issues. She explained that many current factors affecting Stead, including newer aviation uses and operational changes, were not contemplated in the 2010 plan and now need to be formally evaluated. Holt-Still then raised concerns about rumors suggesting the plan was being driven by interest in commercial cargo operations, such as a potential UPS relocation. Jed Hammer acknowledged that such ideas are among the rumors circulating but said they are not a predetermined driver of the master plan. He explained that the purpose of the plan is to objectively analyze how the airport functions and what infrastructure would be required if certain uses were ever proposed. Using cargo operations as an example, Hammer noted that Stead currently lacks the runway capacity, taxiway design, and 24-hour snow removal needed for large cargo aircraft, and that addressing those gaps would require extensive analysis, investment, and decision-making well beyond the current horizon. He emphasized that the master plan does not

assume cargo service will or will not occur but instead provides a framework to realistically evaluate such possibilities and their implications, with many steps and uncertainties standing between current conditions and any future scenario.

A resident asked if due to the batter plant not being put it, would the Stead Airport see the return of the Air Races. Jed Hammer answered that he was not the correct person to answer that question. Lisa Butterfield recommended talking to Eddie Larkin.

A community member asked why SCCA autocross events that were previously held at Reno-Stead Airport could not be brought back, noting that similar events have been hosted at airports and that Stead may have been used for them in the 1990s or early 2000s. Airport representatives said they were not familiar with the specific events or their past locations but explained that if there is interest in holding such activities, organizers would need to contact the Stead Airport manager and work with the Airport Authority's leasing staff on short-term use arrangements. They added that while several groups have inquired about hosting auto-related events at Stead since the departure of the air races, none of those inquiries have yet developed into a serious proposal, though the possibility remains open.

A community member asked for clarification about the roughly 3,000 acres of potentially developable land at Reno Stead Airport and raised concerns about whether future industrial development would worsen traffic and infrastructure problems in the North Valleys, given past experiences where growth occurred without corresponding infrastructure improvements. Airport representatives explained that the Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority owns more than 5,000 acres at Stead, with about 3,000 acres theoretically developable far into the future, but that the land would be retained rather than sold. Jed Hammer noted that any development scenarios being discussed are long-term and speculative, and that the Airport Authority itself does not have permitting authority. Any development would have to be approved by the appropriate local jurisdictions, including the City of Reno, Washoe County, and the Regional Transportation Commission, which would determine infrastructure requirements such as roads and traffic capacity. Lissa Butterfield added that the Airport Authority functions as a private landowner for permitting purposes and does not control land use or invest in off-airport infrastructure unless directed by local governments. She explained that most facilities at Stead are owned by private parties underground leases and that development has historically been very limited, with only a few new buildings constructed over the past two decades. Butterfield emphasized that the purpose of involving agencies such as RTC, the city, and the county in the master plan working group is to ensure long-term coordination so infrastructure needs can be identified well in advance, rather than reacting after growth occurs.

Veronica Cortes, a Sun Valley resident, said she previously enjoyed watching air shows and the air races from O'Brien's Pass and asked whether any air shows still take place at Reno-Stead Airport. She then expressed interest in the possibility of using the airport as a venue for community events, noting that residents in the North Valleys have limited options for large event spaces. Cortes said there is strong interest from local groups seeking venues and suggested that hosting community events at Stead could provide opportunities for community gathering and potentially generate revenue for the area.

Rob Pierce asked whether the Airport Authority is considering or in discussions with data center companies. Airport representatives responded that they are not aware of any such proposals or discussions at this time.

Lissa Butterfield said the Airport Authority is willing to return for future community meetings and intends to provide updates at key milestones in the master planning process. She explained that the next major milestone will be the facility requirements phase, which follows completion of the existing conditions inventory and aviation forecast. At that stage, the team will reassess whether current facilities can support projected operations and said it would be an appropriate point to seek additional community feedback.

8. NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB & OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Casey McDonald, speaking for the record, noted that a District 5 development or neighborhood meeting is scheduled for the 20th and that it will be held as a virtual meeting only.

9. CAB MEMBER/ COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS/COMMENTS

Susan VanNess asked that a representative from the Washoe County Registrar of Voters attend a future meeting to address election-related questions she said have not been fully answered during commission meetings. She stated that several community members have been actively involved in election issues since 2020 and expressed concern about limited communication from the current Registrar's office ahead of the upcoming election. VanNess also encouraged residents to keep and document any election-related postcards they receive in the mail so they can be discussed collectively. She said her goal is to bring community members together to share information, discuss concerns, and better understand how ballots are processed and counted, emphasizing the importance of elections and voter confidence.

10. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Rob Pierce introduced himself as a Navy veteran and longtime Reno resident and announced his intention to run for Washoe County Commission District 5. He described moving to an unincorporated area for its rural character, open space, and quality of life, which he said has since been diminished by development. Rather than simply oppose growth, Pierce said he chose to get involved by serving on multiple Washoe County and regional boards and commissions, including planning, airport, and transportation bodies, to better understand and influence decision-making. He expressed frustration that local boards are often overridden by the County Commission and said the North Valleys have consistently received less attention and investment. Pierce said his experience has shown him both the challenges residents face and the limits of board service, which motivated him to seek elected office. He asked for community support, saying he would advocate for smart growth, infrastructure improvements, and greater recognition and resources for District 5 and the North Valleys.

Veronica Cortes described her opposition to a development proposal discussed at a November Planning Commission meeting that would significantly increase housing density in Sun Valley. She explained that the proposal sought to change existing zoning from low-density residential or manufactured home use to allow up to 14 units, despite longstanding infrastructure constraints. Cortes said CAB members, residents, and some commissioners raised strong concerns about traffic impacts, lack of services such as grocery stores and banks, and reliance on traffic studies she described as inaccurate because they were conducted during COVID or in locations that did not reflect Sun Valley conditions. She recounted that several commissioners voted against the project, citing traffic congestion and cumulative development impacts, but the

proposal ultimately passed on a 4–3 vote. Cortes expressed frustration that CAB input and public testimony calling for infrastructure improvements before additional development were not heeded, and she criticized statements minimizing traffic problems or suggesting walking and cycling as alternatives despite documented safety issues. She concluded by urging residents to pay attention to how decision-makers voted and to hold them accountable in upcoming elections, emphasizing that Sun Valley’s infrastructure and safety challenges remain unresolved.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 P.M.

DRAFT