



Sun Valley/District 3 Citizens Advisory Board  
Minutes of the regular meeting of the Sun Valley/District 3 Citizens Advisory Board  
held on July 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at Hobeys Casino.

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION QUORUM**

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

Absent: Member Mark Neumann

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Penny Brock stated she was an election observer and expressed frustration that she was not allowed meaningful observation. She said more mail-in ballots were sent out than there were registered voters. She was told she could not vote until she allowed her photo ID to be scanned into the e-polling book, while others could vote without even showing their IDs. She claimed she was discriminated against. She encouraged people to read the handout she prepared about election integrity, saying that election workers' laptops were connected to the internet when they should not have been.

William Bates stated it was onerous to get rid of squatters because the eviction process does not apply to people without rental agreements. He urged residents to contact their representatives to demand change to the eviction process so people can be removed after 24 hours' notice. He listed his frustrations about the legal process, saying that evictions of unknown persons should be valid for a year. Squatters move from property to property when they are removed, which is also a problem.

Jamie Stetson spoke about people trespassing, sign removal, and shooting on her Chimney Drive property. She said the process to change her property's designation from restricted to congested was difficult. The Sheriff's Office, she noted, was unable to enforce on a consistent basis, though they had been doing better lately. She wanted more community members to talk about this and urged people to talk to her later.

Cris Ambriz discussed his upbringing in Minneapolis. He spoke about the definition of noise, stating he presented members of the Citizens Advisory Board with an ordinance from Crystal, Minnesota that defined loud music and included provisions about when it could be played. Given the speed of development in the area, he continued, something needed to be implemented to preserve the sanctity and peacefulness of Sun Valley while allowing for celebrations.

Member Cortes replied that many current laws were not being enforced, and more enforcement resources were needed.

Steve Marlowe thanked the fire department and Code Enforcement for addressing his

concerns about the power company. He expressed frustration about Washoe County Commissioners outvoting the one that represents Sun Valley and about food trucks in the area, which he felt negatively impacted local restaurants. He mentioned potential fire hazards across from the bike park on 7th Avenue and expressed concern about the changes to Sun Valley that occurred over the 56 years he lived there.

**\*6:17 p.m.**    **Member Oritz arrived via Zoom.**

#### **4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF June 1, 2026**

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Member Rider moved to approve the June 1, 2026, Sun Valley/District 3 Citizens Advisory Board minutes as written. Member Esposito seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved on a 6-0 vote with Member Neumann absent.

#### **5. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES**

##### **Washoe County Sheriff's Office**

Lieutenant Nick Tone reviewed statistics related to an increase in driving under the influence (DUI) incidents, pointing out that it was likely due to increased enforcement. Nearly half of the DUI arrests in June were initiated by a two-man DUI enforcement team. He spoke about a fire on Chimney Drive caused by individuals shooting a car. A drone sent to the area identified the vehicles and the shooters, who were then arrested for the offense and the fire was extinguished. He indicated that the three-year average for calls for service in Sun Valley was 3,288 for the first quarter, but 4,119 calls had been received in that same time frame in 2006, a 30 percent increase. Spanish Springs saw a 62 percent increase in first quarter calls, but staffing in both areas has remained flat. He noted that larceny offenses and motor vehicle thefts had both gone down through the first three quarters of the fiscal year.

Responding to questions by Jamie Stetson, Lt. Tone confirmed that drone footage could be used as evidence if the drone pilot was a deputy sheriff; the pilots could testify in court as to what they saw. Drones, however, are mission-specific, so they do not regularly patrol the area. He indicated that drones arrive on scenes before deputies about 70 percent of the time, allowing the Sheriff's Office (SO) to be more efficient with its resources.

Steve Marlowe asked about who was responsible for the enforcement of illegal jake breaks on 7th Avenue. Lt. Tone stated the SO patrols 7th Avenue, but Nevada Highway Patrol is responsible for the main road. He encouraged the speaker to submit a complaint about the jake breaking so he could forward it to the appropriate people. He was unsure what the SO would be able to do with respect to inspecting the trucks.

Mark Enwald inquired about the Homeless Outreach Proactive Engagement (HOPE) Team. Lt. Tone said the SO's HOPE Team has consolidated with the corresponding teams from the Cities of Reno and Sparks to increase all their resources. When they receive a call about a homeless encampment, he indicated, the Team makes contact with the goal of offering resources to get unhoused individuals into housing. They also host many cleanup events. Speaker Enwald wished there were more HOPE Teams as they did great work.

Responding to an additional query, Lt. Tone stressed that any call for service that warrants a

response will get one, and supervisors will contact the involved parties if they expect there to be a delay in response. Another speaker mentioned an incident where six adults threatened the life of another person but the SO refused to respond to the call. Eventually, an unqualified deputy from the jail was sent out. Lt. Tone said he could not speak to a specific event that occurred six years ago and offered to speak to the gentleman after the meeting.

In response to Charlie Stockford's query about the fire referenced earlier, Lt. Tone confirmed that shooting is not legal in the area where it happened, another reason why the shooters were arrested. The area where shooting is allowed is much further back.

Responding to additional questions from members of the public, Lt. Tone responded that drones were used constantly on the 4th of July, but he would have to research how many citations were issued. He noted that calls about illegal fireworks on that day were numerous, and the SO tried to manage them as best they could. Citations were given in appropriate situations. The SO utilizes the six pillars of law enforcement as one of its models, though other models are also used. Regarding the education component of that model, he brought up an incident where an individual was on a trailhead after hours and deputies had discretion whether to give them a warning, issue a citation, or arrest the individual.

A member of the public expressed frustration at the response from both the SO and the fire department about people on her property due to a zoning issue. Lt. Tone did not want to speak on behalf of the dispatch center, but all first responder agencies are expected to move to a unified system within the next 12 to 18 months. That system has features which can be used to address the speaker's concerns.

Member Cortes asked why trash was removed from a property while squatters were allowed to stay. Lt. Tone did not know the specifics, but he speculated that trash cleanup could be organized by several different organizations; the people element would need to be addressed through an enforcement action. He offered to investigate the matter.

#### **Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District**

No one from the Fire Protection District was available to make a presentation.

### **6. NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE (NDOW)**

Tru Hubbard, Urban Wildlife Education Coordinator with NDOW, described the nature of some of her responsibilities with the agency. She conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Urban Wildlife Management; Urban wildlife management is...; Biggest Threat; Nevada's Land Use; So Why Does This Matter??; It's happening everywhere; Monitoring Conflict; How can we mitigate urban conflict?; and More.

Coordinator Hubbard explained that humans use about 48 percent of all livable land on Earth, and though very little of that is comprised of dwellings and infrastructure, that portion is growing significantly. Nevada's urbanized land use is considerably smaller than most other states, she continued, but in 2024 Nevada was ranked as the 6th fastest growing state. She indicated that the expansion of U.S. 395 could cause issues with deer migration, particularly farther north.

Coordinator Hubbard clarified that each dot on the Monitoring Conflict map represented a phone call in 2025 about a species of animal. 46 calls were received about coyotes and 23

about geese, and injured wildlife was the top reason for all animal-related calls. She mentioned that NDOW will not do anything in response to animals simply being sighted in neighborhoods. 13 dead wildlife calls were received, and other reasons for calls included nuisance, pet and livestock attacks, and property damage. Data about each phone call is tracked and published annually, and it is used to identify issues, such as rising boldness in coyotes in certain areas which could lead to aggressive behavior.

Coordinator Hubbard recognized that Nevada does not currently have any animal crossing bridges, but they are successful in other states. Manmade water sources are beneficial to wildlife though they sometimes come with elements that some people may not like. Another area that can create human/wildlife conflict is large trees, which provide nesting grounds for birds but also create safety issues because those birds are territorial. She cautioned people who wanted free-range chickens to anticipate losing some because they attract predators. It is chicken owners' responsibility to protect their chickens; NDOW will not respond to calls asking for help with coyotes. She added that NDOW does not deal with pigeons, house sparrows, or European starlings because they are invasive species not protected by the Migratory Bird Act. Other birds should not be disturbed in any way.

William Bates inquired about ground squirrels. Coordinator Hubbard responded that NDOW does not do anything about them because they are also an unprotected species. She suggested people employ deterrents or contact pest control experts, noting that it is illegal to relocate them. NDOW's health lab tests for diseases in animals that would affect animal populations, while the Department of Agriculture tests for diseases that could impact humans as well as for poisons used to kill unprotected species. There was a Department of Agriculture location in Sparks, but she was unsure whether they performed testing there.

Jamie Stetson asked questions about migratory birds, noting that conservation was one of the reasons she purchased her home. Coordinator Hubbard responded that development requires approval by NDOW biologists who perform site visits. NDOW does not do anything if, for example, marmots are relocated after excavation because they as a species are unprotected. She believed that since the Migratory Bird Act is federal, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be involved in the approval process as well. Speaker Stetson expressed frustration about her inability to successfully contact any federal agency. Coordinator Hubbard offered to research the matter and provide information to Community Outreach Coordinator Alexandra Wilson.

A brief discussion ensued regarding bighorn sheep and a proposal to install fencing around Washoe Lake. Coordinator Hubbard confirmed that NDOW does not do anything with horses; the Bureau of Land Management does, because horses are not considered a native species.

Chris Ambriz pointed out that there are three or four wildlife overpasses on I-80 between Salt Lake City and Reno. He asked about mountain lions. Coordinator Hubbard confirmed there were no recorded mountain lion issues in the North Valleys, and people often misidentify other animals as mountain lions. Mountain lion sightings are more common in areas like Gardnerville and Southeast Reno, and most of the time they do not create any issues. She had heard of sightings in areas near Red Rock Road, but mountain lions were not commonly seen in urban spaces.

Monty Turner spoke about an increase in rats in the area and mentioned that barn owls were no longer present to help mitigate that population. Coordinator Hubbard noted an outbreak of

Norway rats in the Sparks area, but NDOW does not manage them because they are also not a native species. Legitimate pest control companies use certain poisons that are not passed along to secondary species, she remarked. NDOW does not recommend the use of poisons because some of them can cause impacts along the food chain, raising concerns for pets.

One commenter said mountain lions see people long before people see them. Member Esposito suggested people use Repels-All to keep squirrels away from their properties. Coordinator Hubbard encouraged people to try deterrents before removal because removal always ends in euthanasia.

## **7. NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB & OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Community Outreach Coordinator Alexandra Wilson indicated there were no updates on the Neighborhood Development Hub. She announced a vacancy on the Parks Commission, with applications being accepted until July 15, and anyone from unincorporated Washoe County can apply. She expected that to be considered at August's meeting, adding that she did not believe the position was a paid position.

## **8. ELECTION OF CAB OFFICERS**

There was no public comment on this item.

Member Rider moved that Heidi Soper remain as Chair of the Sun Valley/District 3 Citizens Advisory Board, and that Amy Owens remain as Vice Chair of the Sun Valley/District 3 Citizens Advisory Board. Member Esposito seconded the motion, which carried on a 6-0 vote with Member Neumann absent.

## **9. BOARD MEMBER/COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS/DISCUSSION AND REPORTS BACK ON ANSWERED REQUESTS**

Commissioner Mariluz Garcia stated she was one of the only elected officials with constituents in all three jurisdictions. She introduced Government Affairs Officer Paul Nelson from the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). She noted there has never been a modernized stormwater drainage system on Sun Valley Boulevard. She mentioned discussions she had with the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), saying that if NDOT agreed to improve their portion of the road, it could then be transferred to Washoe County for future maintenance and oversight. This would help with enforcement, snow removal, and safety. After two failures, the RTC was able to write a grant that was approved. She pointed out that NDOT's \$1 billion budget was for the entire state, and they deemed Sun Valley's issues to be significant enough to address.

Members of the public inquired about the landscaping included in the plan. Commissioner Garcia responded that the County would have discussions with the RTC and the Sun Valley General Improvement District (SVGID). The project is 60 percent designed, but Officer Nelson could relay to NDOT any concerns about overgrown landscaping and visibility.

Steve Malone and Monty Turner expressed concern about the County's ability to maintain the road. Jamie Stetson wondered why roundabouts were not included in the plan since they helped curb speeding and address driver inattentiveness. Officer Nelson concurred that roundabouts increased safety, but they did not work for all intersections. He thought that the engineering team likely determined there were not enough intersections that warranted them.

He suggested that Speaker Stetson submit a public records request to the RTC to obtain the research about that topic. He assured the public that the County would take better care of the road than NDOT did because NDOT did not have the capacity to do so. He expected the project to go out for bid in the summer of 2027, with construction to begin that fall or early in 2028.

Cris Ambriz expressed concern about this project being undertaken at the same time as other major projects like the U.S. 395 project, creating immense traffic. Officer Nelson noted the Sparks Boulevard project did not begin until work on Pyramid Highway was complete. He believed phase 1b of the 395 project was expected to finish in the fall, reducing the number of vehicles that cut through Sun Valley, before work began on Sun Valley Boulevard.

Brian Wadsworth wondered whether the traffic study contemplated the cumulative impacts of traffic on Sun Valley Boulevard. Officer Nelson replied that the study did not measure traffic coming from other valleys, only daily traffic along the boulevard. The study also considered safety, environmental impacts, and drainage issues.

Member Rider inquired about who would ultimately be responsible once ownership of the road was transferred. Officer Nelson clarified that RTC does not own any roads. Commissioner Garcia assured him that the memorandum of understanding would transfer the road to the County, and though roads in Sun Valley look different than those elsewhere in the county, all concerns should be reported to Washoe311.

Speaker Leslie expressed support for bus turnouts, without which Sun Valley Boulevard would still be impeded. Officer Nelson mentioned that many residents expressed similar concerns at a recent meeting. He was unsure whether that would be implemented in the design. He pointed out that the RTC needed to acquire rights-of-way from 60 parcels to complete the project, which will include not only road improvements but sidewalks, shared-use paths, and bike lanes. Commissioner Garcia opined that doing nothing was not an option, and it would be a disservice to oppose the entire project because it did not contain one thing. She offered to connect people who had suggestions to the traffic engineers involved in the project, which she described as a win for the community. She praised the Sun Valley/District 3 Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) for writing letters of support for the project three times.

Member Cortes wondered whether the \$50,000 traffic study would be incorporated into the design. Commissioner Garcia said she believed that study was an economic development study. Member Cortes did not believe anything had happened after a \$488,000 grant was received for a Sun Valley bike project. She hoped this project would make the community feel safer.

Chair Soper thanked the SVGID for their work on the Dive Into Summer event. She promoted the Food Bank Summer Lunch Program, for which flyers were available. This was the last meeting sign-ups would be available to help plan Sun Valley's birthday event; 10 people already signed up. She encouraged people to contact her or Community Outreach Coordinator Alexandra Wilson to suggest items for future meetings. Future agenda topics included: a Code Enforcement presentation at the CAB's August meeting, an RTC presentation regarding the noise ordinance in August, and community input regarding the noise ordinance in September.

Chair Soper remarked that the Board of County Commissioners identified properties on Quartz Lane, Slope Drive, Gerdes Avenue, and Carnes Drive as nuisances at its June 16

meeting, and legal proceedings are ongoing. She spoke at the meeting, as did Vice Chair Owens and Member Cortes.

Chair Soper announced that the fire hazard on Tanberg Drive and Vanilla Court was already investigated, and the fire department spoke to the property owners prior to Speaker Malone bringing the matter up at the last meeting. The next CAB meeting is scheduled for August 3.

Vice Chair Owens thanked the community for supporting and attending the food truck events.

Member Rider stated that Sun Valley has tried to get the Sun Valley Boulevard project approved for more than 25 years. He knew people who had been struck by vehicles on the road, and whether people supported or opposed the project, safety was critical. He expressed support for bus turnouts and said that plans called for the entire boulevard to be lit.

This item was reopened later in the meeting.

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Member Cortes encouraged people affected by planning commissions to attend two meetings being held on July 7, opining that the people needed to represent themselves, or development would continue unencumbered. Members of the public would be given opportunities to provide public comment at those meetings.

## **10. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Monty Turner talked about fires that occurred on the 4th of July and the slow response to one of them. He said he observed kids shooting guns and lighting off fireworks towards people's homes. He expressed frustration at a lack of enforcement for fireworks as well as a neighbor who had trash in his backyard. A suggestion was made that he contact the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District for enforcement.

William Bates wanted the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) members to contact State legislators to update eviction laws. He said people did not want unhoused individuals living in their backyards; rather those individuals should utilize the resources offered by the County. He did not think they should be given 30-day notice periods or the ability to appeal. He mentioned an incident where a homeowner needed to brandish a gun to get someone off her property.

Veronica Cortes requested that Agenda Item 9 be reopened so she could make announcements. Please see that item for details. She then stated that CAB members are allowed to give public comment per Robert's Rules of Order. She spoke about pushback she received over the last year, including vandalism and threats to her business, for trying to fix things in Sun Valley. She reviewed the areas encompassed by the Nevada State Assembly District 27 seat for which she a candidate. She said she was working with the Health Department on a Food Inspection and Safety Guide. She stressed the importance of Sun Valley pride and discussed instances of voter fraud that she said were discovered at the Sun Valley Neighborhood Center.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

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

carried on a 6-0 vote with Member Neumann absent.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

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