

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

DECEMBER 9, 2025

PRESENT:

**Alexis Hill, Chair**

**Jeanne Herman, Vice Chair**

**Michael Clark, Commissioner**

**Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner**

**Clara Andriola, Commissioner**

**Janis Galassini, County Clerk**

**Kate Thomas, Interim County Manager**

**Michael Large, Chief Deputy District Attorney**

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:

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Chair Hill recognized the students and teachers from Glenn Duncan Elementary School who were in attendance to lead the Pledge of Allegiance, and she thanked them for their hard work. She acknowledged Music Teacher Andrei Hobson, Principal Ryan Smith, Counselor Beth Stoker, and the third-grade teachers and administrators. She expressed her appreciation for the students' efforts and said that she was honored to have the students open the Board of County Commissioners' meeting. She felt that Washoe County had the best students in the Country.

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**25-0842     AGENDA ITEM 3   Public Comment.**

Anne Kurzrock shared that she was a proud member of the Blue Star Mothers of America (BSMA) organization, which had been chartered by the United States (US) Congress. She said that the BSMA members were women whose sons and daughters served the US in every branch of the military, including the National Guard and Reserves. She explained that, before uniforms and rank, the BSMA members were simply the mothers who packed lunches and prayed over their children at night. She stated that one of the most visible missions was sending Nevada care packages to those who served. She mentioned that every year, hundreds of boxes were sent to deployed service members around the world. She believed that assembling those boxes was a genuine community effort from neighbors, businesses, and volunteers. She noted that the boxes were unique

and stood out, as they were covered with drawings and handwritten messages of love from children. She indicated that a very special part of the contents came from the Washoe County School District (WCSD) through Operation Postcard, which included thousands of notes written by students. She said that often those postcards were the very first items a young service member pulled from the box. She explained that the packages were filled with snacks, toiletries, and hand-sewn Christmas stockings made by mothers and volunteers, which served as a reminder that someone at home had lovingly stitched every detail. She believed that the packages saved lives. She suggested that many service members felt forgotten, were far from home, and carried burdens greater than most adults would ever have to bear. She mentioned that suicide was the leading cause of death among active-duty military personnel. She thought that when service members received a care package, it reminded them they were not forgotten, they mattered, and they were loved. She stated that items that were too large to be shipped were donated to the Homeless Veteran Stand Down, where essential items were provided, and, most importantly, meaningful connections were made. She said that the BSMA interacted with homeless veterans each month by cooking meals at the Veterans Guest House, which brought comfort to those receiving care from the Veterans Affairs (VA) system. She added that the BSMA members attended funeral services, which included the unaccompanied veterans at the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery (NNVMC). She felt that in those sacred moments, those in attendance became family. She surmised that those moments served as reminders of the profound duty to support fellow sisters whose blue stars had turned to a gold star. She explained that when a mother lost a child, the BSMA offered support to ensure that those mothers were never alone. She noted that the BSMA members shared love from Nevada, and she expressed her gratitude for the support that helped continue that mission.

David Spitzer shared that he was the Executive Director of Northern Nevada Legal Aid (NNLA), a nonprofit private organization with 47 attorneys and staff who had provided free legal services to the community since 1965. He noted that some of the public may have attended the organization's 60th anniversary celebration in October. He explained that the NNLA represented children who were removed from their parents' custody, adults and minors subject to guardianships, veterans, individuals experiencing homelessness, and seniors with legal issues that ranged from evictions and consumer issues to representation for victims of crime and family law cases. He stated that the NNLA partnered with numerous agencies and local governments across Northern Nevada, and he acknowledged the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and the community for their ongoing support. He thanked Commissioner Clark for his donation in Agenda Item 7E3. He mentioned that the ongoing partnership with Washoe County was a vital source of support, which enabled the NNLA to represent and give a voice to individuals who would otherwise not be heard in the legal system. He said that he looked forward to continuing and expanding the organization's work and collaboration.

Pam Roberts recalled comments she made to the BCC on October 14, 2025, regarding the Senior Advisory Board (SAB) appointments and accomplishments, as well as the background information she provided about herself. She shared her appreciation for seniors and cited an example from her first job at age 16, when she worked at the Hammond

Convalescent Center in Hammond, Wisconsin. She explained that during her overseas student teaching in Wales, she regularly visited the local nursing home in Holywell, North Wales. She mentioned that while attending law school in San Francisco, she worked with the General Assistance Advocacy Project, which represented individuals, mostly seniors, who had been denied or had their General Assistance benefits discontinued. She indicated that during her tenure with the Nevada Attorney General's Office, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, she prosecuted elder abuse cases, defended the elder abuse statute at the Supreme Court of Nevada, testified before the Nevada Legislature to amend the elder abuse statutes, and worked to improve them. She added that she assisted the Nevada Attorney General and the Nevada Division for Aging and Disability Services (ADSD) in developing an action plan to better protect seniors from abuse and neglect. She stated that she served as a senior evidence reviewer, developed training materials, and taught law enforcement how to investigate elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. She mentioned that in 2008, her mother suffered a massive stroke, leaving her unable to speak or eat without a feeding tube. She indicated that she was responsible for arranging her mother's rehabilitation, selling her home, and placing her in assisted living facilities, where she lived for eight years and passed away at the age of 84. She stated that her father was a Korean War veteran who had cardiac and pulmonary issues, as well as a gambling addiction. She shared that after his business failed in Texas, he relocated to Nevada and eventually became one of many seniors who had attempted suicide. She noted that Nevada's suicide rate for seniors was double the national average. She explained that following a family intervention, the family convinced her father to move back to Wisconsin, where her brother lived. She noted that her mother and father-in-law also lived in the Washoe County area, and when their health deteriorated, she was able to assist her wife with their care, since she was retired. She mentioned that her wife was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in 2017, and she served as her primary caregiver for six years before her wife passed away in October 2023. She suggested that anyone who wrongly accused her and her fellow senior board volunteers of being out of touch with seniors should do more research.

Terry Brooks shared an original poem on the topic of discrimination related to health and gender.

Kimberly Weingartner thanked Commissioner Clark for his continued support and recognition of the Katie Grace Foundation. She noted that the foundation was established in 2017 following the death of her daughter, Katie, and had since evolved into a program dedicated to giving back to the community. She shared that the foundation initially partnered with five nonprofits and had expanded to 300. She explained that the foundation received products from large corporations, stored them in its warehouse, and then distributed them to its partners. She said that Commissioner Clark recently recognized the foundation for its support of a veterans' organization. She shared that the foundation donated four pallets of frozen meat, valued at over \$100,000, to the National Guard during the government shutdown. She acknowledged that some Commissioners might not be familiar with the foundation and offered to show them how the foundation supported the community. She indicated that the organization had provided shoes to Glenn Duncan Elementary School for the past two years through a program that served more than 12

schools in the area. She stated that since the program began, over 8,000 pairs of shoes had been distributed.

Harper McDaniel and Emma Cates made a joint statement and said that wild horses were a beautiful part of Nevada's ecosystem and an essential piece of history. They noted that wild horses naturally thrived on a diet of sagebrush, shrubs, and other native plants. They added that some citizens fed the horses, which led to more harm than good. They explained that wild horses could not process the crops that domesticated horses typically ate, and that feeding them such foods could damage their digestive system and potentially cause colic. They mentioned that some horse owners left out spare food for the wild horses, unaware of the consequences. They added that the horses became dependent on hay, alfalfa, fruits, vegetables, and other crops, which reduced their intake of the foods they could naturally digest. They said that wild horses were being drawn from the mountains into residential and commercial areas, putting them at risk of being hit by cars. They stated that human intervention caused horses to become dependent on people. They explained that the existing penalties for feeding wild horses included a \$2,000 fine and a gross misdemeanor charge, but enforcement of those laws was limited. They mentioned that, in the Virginia Foothills and Galena areas, where they lived, they frequently saw horses in residential yards and streets eating food left out for them. They felt that laws against feeding wild horses needed to be enforced more strictly to protect both the Nevada ecosystem and the horses, which were federally protected under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971. They thought it was their civic duty to raise awareness and report violations. They proposed creating a mandated reporting system with at least one designated reporter in neighborhoods adjacent to the Virginia Range. They explained that law enforcement, knowledgeable and passionate civilians, or residents affiliated with legal organizations who lived in those neighborhoods could serve as mandated reporters, either voluntarily or by nomination. They mentioned that spreading awareness about the harm caused by feeding wild horses through an educational campaign or a news report could be more effective than discreetly increasing fines. They believed that an informed public would make fewer mistakes because people would understand the consequences of their actions. They explained that those who continued to feed the horses despite knowing the harm were not truly acting in the animals' best interest. They stated that the horses were a staple of the beautiful scenery, adding a wild and free atmosphere to the Western landscapes. They believed that it was the community's duty to protect the horses and preserve their natural beauty.

Blake Vander Well displayed a document, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. He stated that he was the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Senior ResQ, a nonprofit that provided rental assistance to seniors in Washoe County. He thanked Commissioner Clark for his generous donation and encouraged seniors and fellow Commissioners to review the organization's programs and services. He explained the monthly report that was shared with the public and the BCC, and noted that as of November 2025, over \$50,000 in direct rental assistance had been provided to the community. He mentioned that the average percentage of income seniors paid for rent was nearly 72 percent, which he considered outrageous. He indicated that Senior ResQ's clients' average income accounted for just over 26 percent of their rent. He stated that while rent continued

to increase, seniors' incomes did not, and the goal was to help seniors obtain Section 8 vouchers from the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) whenever opportunities became available. He shared an example of a senior who recently signed papers to receive a Section 8 voucher from the RHA, which would reduce their rent from \$812 per month to \$235. He encouraged Senior ResQ's clients to get on the RHA waitlist. He thanked Commissioner Clark for his generous donation and support of seniors and Senior ResQ, and he expressed gratitude to Vice Chair Herman for her ongoing support of the organization. He urged the community to follow their example because seniors were in desperate need of support.

Cooper Richardson stated that he was the co-founder and Executive Director of Boosted Diplomas. He explained that the organization was an educational nonprofit that provided free tutoring and educational advocacy to foster and at-risk youth in the community. He thanked Commissioner Clark for his generous donation, which would support weekly tutoring sessions and ongoing educational advocacy. He thought that Commissioner Garcia would likely be aware that many of the youth that the organization worked with were at risk, in foster care, and faced numerous hurdles. He stated that Boosted Diplomas aimed to remove as many educational barriers as possible and would provide long-term support to become one of the most consistent educational resources for the students. He noted that educational advocates were paired with students around seventh grade and supported them through graduation. He indicated that the organization's programs consistently maintained a graduation rate of over 80 percent, compared to the foster care graduation rate in Washoe County, which was approximately 42 percent. He mentioned that the previous year had an approximately 86 percent graduation rate. He expressed his amazement at the community partners who had supported the organization's efforts to provide comprehensive wraparound services for students. He said it was wonderful to gain recognition for the needs of foster and at-risk youth and have the community become increasingly involved. He shared that about three weeks prior, the organization held its largest fundraiser at the Nevada Museum of Art, a sold-out event that aimed to raise \$100,000. He informed that the community donated over \$180,000 to support programming. He said that, although he had never met Commissioner Clark, he was grateful that the Commissioner felt compelled to support the initiative.

Donna Klontz congratulated County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas on her recent appointment and said that the County was in a stronger position under the current leadership. She addressed Agenda Item 7C2 regarding the reappointment of members to the SAB. She explained that over the past few years, the board members had come together to learn about seniors' needs, the various resources available to them, and had invited experts to meetings to gain further knowledge. She believed that the members who were seeking reappointment had greatly benefited from their experience and would serve exceptionally well in a second term. She urged the BCC to follow the recommendations in Agenda Item 7C2 and reappoint the current members to the SAB. She shared that she had the pleasure of serving with the group as an advisor. She explained that before becoming an advisor, she and many others had served time on the board. She mentioned that serving as community advisors provided an opportunity to bring in experts and gather information about how to better serve seniors in Washoe County.

Todd Bailey self-identified as a paid lobbyist for Nevada Accountability. He stated that the housing crisis in Washoe County would need to be addressed from all angles and based on facts. He suggested that the BCC currently had more tax revenue to spend than any other board in Washoe County's 150-year history, with a source that increased annually. He argued that the development decisions made by the Board had contributed to government inflation, with one of the largest spending increases being the salaries and benefits of Washoe County Commissioners. He alleged that the BCC's votes on spending, taxes, development, green energy codes, and salaries had contributed to the issue of homelessness. He claimed that Board members had asserted that no one in Washoe County paid enough taxes, including homeowners, and that growth did not pay for itself. He identified property tax abatements as part of the problem and suggested eliminating property taxes on single-family homes used as primary residences. He stated that the high cost of homeownership included property taxes often amounting to several thousand dollars per month, and failure to pay those taxes could put the homeowner at risk of losing their home, potentially leading to homelessness. He believed the BCC should support eliminating property taxes so homeowners could fully own their homes without the fear of the government taking them away. He indicated that if other states had successfully removed those taxes, Nevada could do the same.

Jill O'Leary displayed and read from a document, copies of which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She said that she had filed a complaint requesting that the BCC and the CM exercise their administrative oversight responsibilities to address alleged misconduct in the Second Judicial District Court (SJDC) related to a probate matter. She indicated that an issue had left her, a 63-year-old County resident, the victim of significant injustice. She stated that the document distributed to the Board was her complaint and request for oversight. She explained that the matter involved misconduct that required the BCC's oversight of the SJDC. She added that on November 3, a probate judge struck her October 7 request for administrative enforcement of filing standards, including the certificate of service, which she determined was unsigned by the judicial assistant. She stated that a default was denied on October 6, yet in October 2023, the plaintiffs entered two pages of attorney fee filings and, in conjunction with the filing office manager, sought to obtain a default against an answering defendant. She explained that despite her appearance at a court hearing and her repeated responses, a default judgment was entered on February 16, 2024. She noted that the docket reflected both a judgment and a default judgment that had been entered into the case. She said that on March 9 and April 24, 2024, the plaintiff asserted that heightened standards under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, standards she contended were inapplicable and irrelevant, should be disregarded. She indicated that she had received no follow-up to her request for the metadata log related to the recording of a judgment lien at the Washoe County Recorder's Office (WCRO). She requested a written response, citing the seriousness of the violations and the ongoing harm to her as an older resident,

Trista Gomez displayed a document, copies of which were placed on file with the Clerk. She explained that as a child, her parents took offense to her describing their family as poor and encouraged her to refer to them as economically challenged. She thought that some would view her family as resourceful or efficient, noting that they could

prepare six different meals using only a loaf of bread, five pounds of hamburger, a ten-pound bag of potatoes, a few cans of vegetables, and various seasonings. She explained that living in a one-bedroom home with several family members required them to be self-sufficient and resourceful. She stated that, due to minimal income, her family learned to manage household chores independently without hiring outside help. She expressed concern that lower-income workers were paying taxes that supported the salaries of senior-level positions in Washoe County. She suggested that Washoe County had the most well-funded homeless program that she had ever seen. She alleged that lower-income individuals were often one paycheck away from a financial catastrophe. She felt that the BCC had imposed taxes on those individuals to fund the salaries of the high-level positions, which she described as a gross injustice and misuse of taxpayer dollars. She suggested that Commissioner Clark was the only Commissioner to raise concerns. She stated that she appreciated Vice Chair Herman's vote in support of residents, rather than increased revenue.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

**25-0843**     **5A2** Presentation of the "Washoe County Emergency Management River Park Defensible Space Program" by Washoe County Emergency Management Intern Alayna Barrie. (All Commission Districts.)

Washoe County Emergency Management (WCEM) Defensible Space Intern Alayna Barrie conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: River Park Defensible Space Program Recap; Pre-Planning Activities; Work That Was Done To Find Area; Research; Area Selected: River Park Neighborhood; Timeline: August – October 2025; CERT Distribution of Doorhangers; Postcard Mailers; Community Meeting; Defensible Space Inspections; Interior Home Inspections; Vegetation Removal; Revegetation: Moana; Revegetation: Education; Before; During; After; Post Revegetation; River Park: Homeowner Survey; Survey Results; Survey Results Continued; Next Steps; Thank You.

Ms. Barrie introduced herself and thanked the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for inviting her to provide her presentation. She noted that she would give an overview of the River Park Defensible Space Program (RPDSP) that she created.

Ms. Barrie displayed the slide titled *Pre-Planning Activities*. She explained that certain pre-planning activities needed to be conducted to initiate the RPDSP, including ride-alongs with all fire agencies in Washoe County, the creation of a dedicated website, and multiple partner meetings to determine project participation.

Ms. Barrie introduced the *Work That Was Done To Find Area* slide, reporting that she had participated in three ride-alongs with the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District (NLTFPD), the Reno Fire Department (RFD), and the Sparks Fire Department (SFD). She explained that she had also conducted a meeting with the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD). She showed the *Research* slide and noted that

the research locations chosen for the three ride-alongs were selected based on areas of concern within each of the fire departments' jurisdictional areas. She explained that consideration of different ride-along locations was based on neighborhoods with historical fire problems and localized demographics such as veteran status, socioeconomic background, and age. She displayed the *Area Selected: River Park Neighborhood* slide. She reported that she chose the 229-home River Park neighborhood based on her research and experience during the ride-alongs.

Ms. Barrie introduced the *Timeline: August – October 2025* slide by explaining that, following the selection of the River Park neighborhood, she needed to develop a timeline and determine partner participation in the project. She noted that the project's timeline was divided into several phases, the first of which was planning and consisted of the ride-alongs and preliminary research. She stated that an introductory meeting was held with partnering organizations to initiate the project. She described that outreach efforts were then conducted for the residents of the River Park neighborhood, which consisted of door hangers, mailed notifications, and a community meeting at a local business. She explained that her team was then able to receive notices from those who wanted to participate in the program. She stated that following those efforts, her team conducted defensible space inspections and vegetation removal on the participating households. She noted that once those actions were completed, her team was able to begin revegetation and create a homeowner survey, which was followed by a debriefing meeting with program partners.

Ms. Barrie showed the slide titled *CERT Distribution of Doorhangers*. She explained that the first step of the program involved the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) distributing informative door hangers to all 229 homes in the River Park neighborhood. She noted that approximately 14 CERT volunteers were involved in the door hanger distribution and had used the task as an opportunity to practice an evacuation exercise. She reported that CERT volunteers managed to distribute all the RPDSP materials in approximately an hour and a half, which provided their organization with an indication of how quickly a neighborhood evacuation could be completed in the event of an emergency. She displayed the *Postcard Mailers* slide and noted that informative postcards were mailed to every resident in the neighborhood. She stated that the postcards included a quick response (QR) code that directed those residents to a website, enabling them to sign up for participation in the RPDSP. She explained that the text of the postcards was written in both English and Spanish. She introduced the slide titled *Community Meeting* by reporting that, approximately a week and a half after distributing the RPDSP materials by mail, her team conducted a community meeting at a business near the neighborhood. She opined that the meeting had a great attendance, with approximately 40 people present. She noted that there were multiple presenters from different agencies at the meeting, such as Living with Fire, as well as herself and a colleague from WCEM, to discuss emergency preparedness and go-bags. She reported that the meeting resulted in multiple people signing up for the RPDSP and Smart 911. She reiterated that the community meeting was a collaborative effort that allowed for a substantial amount of information to be conveyed in a short amount of time.



Ms. Barrie displayed the *Defensible Space Inspections* slide. She reported that the defensible space inspections began after the conclusion of the enrollment period for resident participation in the RPDSP. She noted that 39 homes participated in the inspections, with three leading agencies cooperating to conduct them. She explained that the leading agencies in the inspection efforts were the RFD, WCEM, and Living with Fire, with Team Rubicon providing assistance as a supporting agency tasked with following the lead organizations and taking notes about the observations made during the inspections. She reported that the inspections had taken approximately seven hours in total to complete, spread across two days. She noted that 6 of the 39 homes that participated in the program had passed the inspection and were determined not to need any further work on the residence. She showed the *Interior Home Inspections* slide. She stated that inspections of the interiors of 23 homes within the neighborhood had also been conducted after residents signed up for that service. She reported that the American Red Cross (ARC) was able to replace 101 smoke alarms within homes during the interior inspections, serving a total of 46 people. She introduced the *Vegetation Removal* slide and explained that the notes collected during the defensible space inspections allowed her team to begin a vegetation removal weekend. She noted that 24 homes signed up for the vegetation removal service, which she reported had taken two days to complete, consisting of a total contribution of approximately 107.5 hours of volunteer labor. She stated that 80 cubic yards of green waste were collected, resulting in all of her team's waste bins being filled to capacity. She thanked the RFD and Waste Management (WM) for organizing that aspect of the service, as it helped significantly.

Ms. Barrie showed the slide titled *Revegetation: Moana* and explained that the revegetation phase of the RPDSP was conducted with the help of Moana Nursery, who provided coupons for three free, low-flammability perennial plants to every resident who signed up to participate in home revegetation. She noted that those coupons helped to ensure that the undesired vegetation her team had removed could be replaced with beautiful flowers that contributed to a safer environment. She reported that Moana Nursery ultimately donated 117 perennials for the RPDSP participants. She displayed the *Revegetation: Education* slide. She explained that her team had also provided education on revegetation alongside the physical service they offered. She explained that 32 buckets were distributed, each containing kneeling pads, soil, and safety glasses for participants to use to assist in planting the perennials provided by Moana Nursery. She noted that educational links from Moana Nursery and Living with Fire were listed on the project's website, which provided information on where the perennials should be planted and how to do so.

Ms. Barrie displayed the *Before* slide and expressed her intention to describe a series of photographs taken of the property of one of the program participants. She noted that the bush shown in the picture had overwhelmed the house by completely covering the eaves of the home, as well as an electrical box behind the plant that was not visible in the photograph. She showed the slide titled *During* and explained that the picture depicted what the bush in the previous slide looked like when her team had begun the complete removal of the foliage. She stated that the residents of that home were outside during the removal and had been very involved throughout the process, which provided

her team with the opportunity to give substantial education and answer many questions. She explained that the photograph included in the *After* slide showed the same bush once it had been completely removed. She displayed the *Post Revegetation* slide and stated that the image depicted the area where the removed bush had previously been located after residents visited Moana Nursery to receive the three free perennials. She explained that the residents had also purchased three additional plants from Moana Nursery to include in that space. She reported that those residents had loved the project and were very excited about the education element of the service.

Ms. Barrie introduced the *River Park: Homeowner Survey* slide. She explained that her team had created a homeowner survey after conducting the revegetation portion of the RPDSP, which was made available to homeowners in the River Park neighborhood regardless of whether they chose to participate in the program or not. She showed the *Survey Results* slide and reported that her team had received 23 responses to the survey, with 100 percent of them indicating that those households would participate in the program again in the future, if it were offered. She displayed the slide titled *Survey Results Continued*. She noted that the survey results demonstrated that 95.7 percent of participants believed that the RPDSP had provided an adequate education on defensible space and home hardening. She explained that many residents of the River Park neighborhood were unfamiliar with the concept of defensible space and what their home hardening efforts could or should entail.

Ms. Barrie showed the *Next Steps* slide and reported that her team had created a guidebook for replicating the RPDSP in other areas throughout the County when funding was available. She thanked the Board for listening to her presentation.

Chair Hill commended Ms. Barrie for the RPDSP. She asked Ms. Barrie to provide additional information on her background. She acknowledged that Ms. Barrie was an intern and asked whether she was also a student at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Ms. Barrie explained that she had graduated and completed her schooling in December of the previous year. Chair Hill stated that she was glad Ms. Barrie had applied for WCEM's internship program and conducted the RPDSP as her capstone project. She opined that the program was amazing and needed to be replicated in many other areas. She acknowledged that Ms. Barrie had to collaborate with several different agencies, government entities, nonprofits, and Moana Nursery. She thought that coordinating the project with so many stakeholders and residents, while also helping to educate community members to ensure everyone's safety, was commendable. She asked Ms. Barrie how the RPDSP pilot project was funded. Ms. Barrie explained that funding for the program was sourced from a Green Recovery Grant totaling \$20,000. She explained that she had chosen for the funding to be invested in the program's revegetation efforts by purchasing materials such as kneeling pads, gardening buckets, and soil.

Chair Hill asked Ms. Barrie what she wanted to work toward following the program's completion, and Ms. Barrie indicated that she would gain a better understanding of that over time. Chair Hill inquired whether Ms. Barrie wanted to stay in the emergency management field, and she responded that she was currently working on an evacuation

study by WCEM. Chair Hill commended Ms. Barrie again and stated that everyone was very excited about both the evacuation study and the RPDSP.

Commissioner Garcia stated that she was similarly curious about Ms. Barrie's background. She thanked Ms. Barrie for working hard on her amazing project from its inception until its completion. She noted that the RPDSP seemed very successful, and she expressed her appreciation for the fact that Ms. Barrie provided the program directly to the River Park neighborhood community. She thought there was often an expectation from those in local government that residents would visit specific locations where meetings were being held. She acknowledged that Ms. Barrie had instead gone into the neighborhood and knocked on residents' doors herself, which she thought was a very nice method of interaction between her and those community members. She expressed certainty that the residents of the River Park neighborhood would be grateful for her efforts, as was the BCC. She thanked Ms. Barrie for her hard work.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Ms. Barrie and described her capstone project as great, noting that projects of that kind were always fun. She opined that it was commendable that Ms. Barrie's capstone project was not only fun but also relevant. She referred to a statistic provided during the presentation, which indicated that only 39 homes, or 17 percent of the neighborhood, had expressed interest in participating in the RPDSP. She thought Ms. Barrie had described a total of 229 households in the neighborhood. She inquired about how those in the neighborhood who chose not to participate could access information about the program and how Ms. Barrie would share those details following the project's completion with those who had missed the opportunity to participate in the RPDSP. She wondered how those residents could learn more about project partners, such as the ARC and Living with Fire, and how they could also provide methods of contributing to defensible space and home hardening.

Ms. Barrie explained that WCEM still had the RPDSP website posted, allowing residents to access the information online. She noted that the RPDSP website included links to the websites of the program's partners, such as Living with Fire, the ARC, and the RFD. Commissioner Andriola opined that having such information available was beneficial, as she thought there might have been some residents who were not in the area during the program's conduct who would have otherwise participated. She indicated that she thought providing an opportunity to inform them of the program at a later time was important, should they want to revisit the information. She inquired how Ms. Barrie was communicating that information to the residents in the River Park neighborhood, who ultimately did not participate in the RPDSP, which she suspected was fewer than 200 households.

Ms. Barrie confirmed that there were fewer than 200 households that did not participate in the program. She stated that she was happy to conduct the program again if and when funding became available to revisit the River Park neighborhood. She explained that she received calls from several residents who informed her that they would not be in the area on the weekend the RPDSP services were being offered. She reiterated that she would be happy to have the opportunity to revisit the River Park neighborhood in

the future to assist those who had not been able to receive help from the RPDSP in addressing any issues at their homes. Commissioner Andriola suggested that the 39 households that had participated in the RPDSP could inform their neighbors about the program, which she thought was a cost-effective way to share the program's success and direct other residents to the proper sources. She thanked Ms. Barrie for her hard work and for considering a capstone project that was both viable and necessary. She congratulated Ms. Barrie on her work with Washoe County and for developing a creative, locally applicable, and needed program. Ms. Barrie agreed and remarked that the RPDSP was much better and more fun than the capstone project she had conducted during her senior year of college.

Commissioner Clark thanked Ms. Barrie for her report. Chair Hill remarked that the Board clearly loved Ms. Barrie's program. She acknowledged that there was a page on the WCEM's website for the program with resources people could be directed toward. She thought the education component of the RPDSP was something Vice Chair Herman also wanted, as it enabled residents to take initiative independently in creating defensible space, which she thought was something everybody could do. She described a bush on her property similar to the one Ms. Barrie had noted during her presentation as removing for an RPDSP participant, which she said she would need to address. She stated that the BCC would anticipate hearing a presentation from Ms. Barrie on the WCEM evacuation study when it was ready.

**25-0844**      **5A1** Presentation from Dwayne Smith, Division Director of Engineering and Capital Projects, to provide an overview of the Washoe County Sewer Utility - overview of the adopted schedule of rates, future infrastructure needs and planning, including anticipated capital projects, and summary of recent projects status, improvements in service delivery, and operational efficiencies. (All Commission Districts.)

Division Director of Engineering and Capital Projects Dwayne Smith conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Washoe County Utility Update – December 2025 (two slides); Who We Are; What Do We Do?; Where Washoe County Provides Service; Sewer and Recycled Water Connection Fee and Rate Update (two slides); Total Sewer and Recycled Water Current Cash Fund and 5-Yr Projection; Utility Connections 2015-2025; Treatment Capacity – Reclamation Facilities; Treatment and Conveyance Capacity; Capital Projects; Capital Projects – cont. (two slides); Recycled Water Opportunities (two slides); Regional Wastewater Discussions; Thank you.

Mr. Smith greeted the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and thanked them for the opportunity to provide a brief update on what staff had worked on regarding Washoe County's utilities. He displayed the first slide titled *Washoe County Utility Update - December 2025*. He noted that substantial work was being undertaken, with a focus on new capacity and environmental considerations. He showed the second *Washoe County Utility Update - December 2025* slide and stated that there were three primary points he wanted to address during his presentation. He described those topics as the fiscal status of

the utility, including discussions on user rate and connection fee updates, the treatment and conveyance capacity and how that was managed within the facilities, as well as a brief prediction of what efforts would be conducted in the future. He opined that those matters were highly relevant to the overall health of the utility and would provide meaningful and helpful information for the Board to know prior to engaging in conversations on the topic.

Mr. Smith displayed the *Who We Are* slide. He noted that he wanted to recognize the frontline team members of over 30 individuals, as they were the people who delivered and maintained the related utility services for Washoe County every day. He showed the slide titled *What Do We Do?* and explained that his team provided wastewater treatment and recycled water opportunities to over 36,000 customers across four service areas and managed a substantial amount of infrastructure while remaining in compliance with partners from the State of Nevada. He noted that the primary focus was ensuring that the best services possible were being delivered to customers at the lowest cost while maintaining high standards. He emphasized his support for new development, as progress could not be made without the appropriate sewer, water, and utility services. He mentioned the regional collaboration staff engaged with through organizations such as the Cities of Reno and Sparks, as well as other utility providers, including the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) and the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection (NDEP).

Mr. Smith introduced the *Where Washoe County Provides Service* slide by explaining that service was provided through four primary areas. He noted that the North Spanish Springs region was operated in a slightly different manner than the other service territories, as there was no wastewater treatment plant in Spanish Springs. He stated that the County owned, operated, and managed three wastewater reclamation facilities in the South Truckee Meadows, Cold Springs, and Lemmon Valley areas. He noted that a different approach to recycled water management strategies was taken within those facilities, which he would discuss later in the presentation when describing the recycled water production in South Truckee Meadows.

Mr. Smith displayed the first slide titled *Sewer and Recycled Water Connection Fee and Rate Update*. He noted that the first area of focus he wanted to discuss was associated with the connection fee and user rates. He explained that all of the County's sewer and recycled water services operated through an enterprise fund that was entirely funded through connection fees and user rates. He emphasized the importance of understanding the utility's fiscal health. He recalled that one of the ways staff had addressed that need was through the 2023 rate and connection fee study, which he had brought forward for the Board's consideration and subsequent approval in November of 2023. He noted that several years had passed since the implementation of the new connection fee and user rate approach. He explained that the new approach was necessitated by increases in capital and operational costs for electricity, chemicals, and provided services. He noted the three primary scenarios staff identified to address those increases. He explained that Scenario 2, listed on the slide, was ultimately chosen as the method staff would utilize. He mentioned that the sewer utility and the recycled water utility had been operated entirely independently of one another before the implementation of that scenario. He elaborated that staff had decided to implement the chosen scenario, which ultimately combined the

sewer and recycled water utilities, in an effort to ensure the health and sustainability of the utilities and to advance the goal of not increasing base user rates. He opined that if staff had not chosen that scenario, the County's recycled water utility would have been at risk and could have required an increase in recycled water rates, which he believed would have resulted in a loss of existing customers and the inability to add new ones.

Mr. Smith introduced the second *Sewer and Recycled Water Connection Fee and Rate Update* slide. He stated that there was no base increase in user rates, which was a substantial commitment that staff had made to the utility's users as they began to conduct the 2023 study. He reiterated that staff had been working on the rate study over the previous two years and had successfully done so while adhering to the Board's guidelines. He acknowledged that the connection fees had been increased, which he described as serving the purpose of building capacity that would allow new development. He reported that recycled water fees were removed, and he reiterated his earlier emphasis on the importance of recognizing that the philosophy of a unified utility approach was that users paid for the service throughout the entire process, not only for the treatment of the recycled water itself but also for the management of the final product at the end. He opined that combining the utilities in that way allowed staff to eliminate the recycled water rates, thereby incentivizing the retention of current customers while attracting new ones. He emphasized that staff had succeeded in those efforts.

Mr. Smith showed the *Total Sewer and Recycled Water Current Cash Fund and 5-Yr Projection* slide. He reported that the new user rate approach had been operating successfully for the previous two years. He explained that the total fund balance for sewer and recycled water was nearly \$125 million, and the five-year outlook for the fund was operating as anticipated based on the rate study. He noted that the graph included on the slide displayed the five-year relationship between revenues and expenses. He stated that the yellow bars on the chart represented total revenues per year and acknowledged a significant increase in the listed 2026 expenses. He thought the Board would already be aware that staff were conducting the final stages of improvement efforts for the South Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility (STMWRF) and had begun a substantial lift station project, as well as other conveyance projects. He referred to the chart on the slide, noting that the estimated fund balance would decrease in subsequent years before eventually returning to its expected level.

Mr. Smith introduced the slide titled *Utility Connections 2015-2025* by explaining that he would discuss treatment capacity. He noted that the graphic on the slide depicted an increase of over 10,000 new connections made to Washoe County's facilities during the previous ten years. He reported that the vast majority of those new connections had been implemented at STMWRF, with other important areas including the Lemmon Valley Water Reclamation Facility (LVWRF) and the Cold Springs Water Reclamation Facility (CSWRF). He explained that the graph on the slide demonstrated a continued increase in demand and growth in the region, which established the expectation for sewer treatment capacity and effluent management. He noted that the data did not reflect all of the unincorporated Washoe County customers that had connected to facilities operated by the Cities of Reno or Sparks. He reminded the Board that the County worked

collaboratively with those agencies in a partnership formed through agreements to share capacity and customers.

Mr. Smith displayed the *Treatment Capacity – Reclamation Facilities* slide. He reiterated that Washoe County owned three water reclamation facilities, which were listed on the slide's chart. He referred to the column on the chart labeled *Available Capacity*. He noted that he occasionally heard comments regarding a lack of capacity, an issue with capacity in the County's facilities, or inadequate capacity that prevented progress with new developments. He wanted to reassure the Board that there was available capacity at all of the County's current facilities, which allowed for new developments to be planned and for the obligations to customers to be met. He noted that the final column of the chart regarding the initiation of facility expansion planning, which he opined was equally crucial to the actual physical facility capacity. He explained that there was a very strong relationship between what his team did when providing capacity for new development and the planning efforts to initiate the implementation of that additional capacity. He stated that capacity planning was a substantial aspect of utility facility planning, master planning, and fiscal preparations. He emphasized that the user rates and adjustments to connection fees were the efforts that enabled staff to identify where they needed to plan for capacity changes and ultimately build the facilities to meet those necessities when relevant.

Mr. Smith showed the slide titled *Treatment and Conveyance Capacity*. He stated that he wanted to discuss capacity further, as he thought it was sometimes a challenging concept. He described the term *committed capacity* as being associated with a situation where a Will-Serve Commitment Letter had been issued for a specific development, industrial business, or commercial project, for which a flow of water supply would be provided, received, and treated. He explained that *available capacity* referred to the amount that remained within the treatment facilities and conveyance systems, allowing for the subsequent increment of capacity. He emphasized that new development could not purchase capacity in advance, as it was only determined when a business was actually prepared for the service. He explained that operating the available capacity in such a way would significantly disrupt facility planning efforts. He emphasized that facility master planning was hugely critical to the success of the utility, which he noted as motivation for the County's partnership with organizations like the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA). He opined that the TMRPA was comprised of a fantastic team that helped County staff make good decisions about future planning. He reported that staff also considered internal matters by regularly inspecting facilities, operational constraints, and potential opportunities. He reiterated that capacity was not built until it was needed. He emphasized his intent to dispute fallacious comments regarding claims that the County was building treatment plants at a maximum potential capacity that was not expected to occur for the following 10 to 50 years. He clarified that those practices were not implemented due to the additional capital costs associated with them, as well as the associated operational, repair, and replacement costs. He stated that taking those actions would not be fair to existing users, as it would result in increased rates to pay for capacity that was not immediately necessary.

Mr. Smith displayed the *Capital Projects* slide and acknowledged that several members of the BCC had visited STMWRF. He reported that the very important expansion project at STMWRF was nearing completion. He explained that planning for the project was initiated in 2017, construction started in 2020, and those efforts would be finalized within the following two quarters of 2026. He reiterated the project's importance to the County.

Mr. Smith introduced the first slide titled *Capital Projects – cont.* and noted that the way in which wastewater flowed to plants was just as important as the capacity within the facilities. He explained that the first capital project listed on the slide was associated with one of the County's conveyance projects, which would ensure that wastewater was safely and successfully conveyed. He noted that the second project described on the slide was for the Pleasant Valley Interceptor, which would enable expansion of the County's collection system in the southernmost parts of Washoe County. He remarked that a recycled water line would also be installed as part of that project. He displayed the second *Capital Projects – cont.* slide. He explained that while a significant amount of facility planning for the County's facilities was done to ensure there was enough capacity, he did not want the Board to forget that the recycled effluent water associated with the end of the treatment process was equally important. He noted that the importance of such factors was particularly demonstrated in areas like South Truckee Meadows, where a very impressive recycled water treatment and distribution system was located. He stated that it was also crucial to identify new areas to maximize the use of recycled water, which he associated with staff's efforts to be continuously engaged in the effluent master planning. He referred to the Cold Springs area and acknowledged that the Board had likely heard about the City of Reno's changes to the StoneGate development project. He reported that staff were initiating master planning in the Cold Springs area to anticipate potential changes regarding the new development.

Mr. Smith displayed the first *Recycled Water Opportunities* slide. He emphasized the importance of focusing on opportunities for recycled water, as it was through those efforts that staff could maximize progress in reducing dependency on very precious resources like water from the Truckee River or Nevada's groundwater. He showed the second slide titled *Recycled Water Opportunities*. He referred again to the world-class water reclamation distribution and treatment system in South Truckee Meadows. He reported that staff had successfully launched operations at the Hidden Valley Golf Course, with the focus currently being on initiatives located more westward, such as Anderson Park, Bartley Ranch Regional Park, LakeRidge Golf Course, and eventually the Washoe Golf Course. He noted that the Board would receive additional information about those projects later in 2026.

Mr. Smith showed the *Regional Wastewater Discussions* slide. He noted that he did not want to conclude his brief update to the Board without mentioning some of the collaborative efforts with the County's regional partners. He acknowledged that three members of the BCC also belonged to the Western Regional Water Commission (WRWC), which was led by the WRWC Program Manager, Kim Rigdon. He explained that Ms. Rigdon had taken the initiative to lead the County in investigating opportunities, options,



needs, and approaches for potential changes in the way wastewater and recycled water are provided and used regionally for the future. He wanted to ensure the Board was aware that Washoe County acted as a participating member in that process.

Mr. Smith introduced the *Thank you* slide by describing his intent to reaffirm his gratitude for the Board's support and approval of the 2023 rate and connection fee study. He emphasized that the study had helped verify that the County was following the right approach for fiscal sustainability. He noted that staff continued to manage the relationship between capacity and planning within the County's facilities to ensure consistent responsiveness for new developments. He reiterated that throughout 2026, the Board would be provided with more information regarding the capital projects he had described, as well as details regarding additional future initiatives. He thanked the Board for allowing him to provide his update.

Chair Hill thanked Mr. Smith and noted that the Board was very proud to partner with him and his team on ensuring that those utility fees were not increased, despite such activities happening throughout different industries across the Country. She stated that the Board was also proud to have been part of the process in making those decisions. She thanked Mr. Smith for his leadership.

Vice Chair Herman expressed her appreciation for Mr. Smith's presentation and thanked him.

Commissioner Garcia thanked Mr. Smith. She noted that she had a question regarding the pipe highlighted in purple on the slide titled *Recycled Water Opportunities* and requested that Mr. Smith display the slide. She stated that the opportunity to tour STMWRF was one of the most enlightening experiences she had throughout her previous three years of service, and she described the facility as incredible. She opined that the capital needs required to implement the related mechanisms and processes represented fascinating and essential work. She suspected that people often overlooked the importance of recycled water. She acknowledged that there was a substantial holding tank at the STMWRF location depicted as an orange box on the slide, and that Mr. Smith had provided her with the same map following her tour of the facility. She recalled the first time she saw the map and the various uses and applications being utilized at the facility as an enlightening moment. She referred to the new pipelines depicted in purple on the slide's map, noting that they were spreading westward, while the existing pipeline already traveled in a northeast direction. She expressed curiosity about recent conversations Mr. Smith and his team might have had regarding the new opportunities he had discussed during the presentation. She noted that the Board was always considering new opportunities for users to engage with the recycled water service, particularly with the increased prominence of discussions regarding data centers in the region. She asked whether Mr. Smith had seen any new businesses, technologies, or industries coming forward with recycled water needs. She described her interest in hearing more information about any updates on those matters.

Mr. Smith noted that the region was known for the high quality of recycled water produced at STMWRF, as well as the substantial investment the County had made in the process. He opined that attention had been given to the fact that the commodity fees

had been removed for the proper reasons. He acknowledged that his team had received calls from individuals interested in potential future opportunities with the utility, which he expressed was a mutually shared interest among the staff, particularly regarding opportunities with Ormat Nevada. He noted that Ormat Nevada utilized clean water in some of its approaches, which led to staff engaging in discussions with that organization over the previous years. He acknowledged that challenges were always present and possible, such as those related to chemistry, conveyance, or water quality issues. He attributed those challenges to one of the reasons why staff consistently entered discussions that would assist in understanding the potential of exploring new opportunities and the anticipated investments in time and money. He explained that as opportunities were further developed, staff would create recommendations for subsequent actions. He reported that the current focus of staff at STMWRF was on construction water and irrigation water. He reiterated that staff were investigating new opportunities, such as those offered by Ormat Nevada, potential collaborations with the Cities of Reno and Sparks, and ongoing initiatives at the Tahoe-Reno Industrial (TRI) Center, which had significant recycled water demands. He emphasized that conversations between the County and the organizations he had listed were currently occurring, and that he looked forward to opportunities that would reduce dependency on Nevada groundwater and the Truckee River surface water, which was the primary goal.

Commissioner Garcia asked whether those interested in learning about recycled water as a possible or viable solution for their business or initiative should contact the County directly with such inquiries, or if there was a different process for those parties. Mr. Smith explained that he or another member of his staff would receive a phone call in such a situation. He noted that Ms. Rigdon, with the WRWC, held both periodic and regular meetings with all of the related utility providers. He reported that Ms. Rigdon had been leading an effort to understand the region's best opportunities for recycled water. He acknowledged that the Board had heard some information about those efforts, and he explained that several approaches could be taken to convey that information, answer potential questions, and discuss opportunities to implement individuals into the recycled water system.

Chair Hill referred to Commissioner Garcia's earlier question and inquired whether the Storey County facility also helped with some of the recycled water services. She asked for clarification on precisely what that facility was used for. Mr. Smith noted that the project she had mentioned was not yet realized. Chair Hill acknowledged that it had not been completed, and she asked what the idea behind the conceptualized project was and whether it would help with some of the industrial uses throughout the County. Mr. Smith explained that, based on certain discussions conducted over the previous decade, staff had identified that the residential project she had referred to would ultimately connect sewer pipelines to STMWRF and convey recycled water back to its origin for parks, streetscapes, and golf courses. Chair Hill inquired whether the project was intended for single-family homes, and Mr. Smith confirmed that the project was designed for such use. Mr. Smith reported that there had been questions about whether it would be challenging for those pipelines to be integrated at the TRI Center as well, should the project be implemented. Chair Hill noted that a substantial amount of the water usage was happening

at the TRI Center, which had experienced related issues as one of the largest data center locations in the world. She opined that it was very interesting that Mr. Smith had been engaging in conversations on the matter.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Mr. Smith and expressed excitement about learning the dates for the projected regionalization of sewer and wastewater services, as well as knowing that the matter had transitioned from Phase 1A to Phase 1B with an anticipated recommendation to begin in January or February 2026. She recognized Ms. Rigdon and the WRWC, which she acknowledged had many members of the BCC also serving on it. She commended the dedication and expertise contributed by the regional organizations in balancing planning and potential growth with the immediate requirements before providing approvals. She opined that there was a substantial misunderstanding regarding the extent of those efforts, as people could not purchase services in advance for an anticipated project. She noted that no progress could be made if the required infrastructure was not implemented. She stated that those organizations were also balancing capital investments. She recalled the STMWRF tour she had taken and congratulated Mr. Smith on the pipeline project described in the *Recycled Water Opportunities* slide. She thanked him for his efforts on that project. She noted her intent to ask for clarification on a matter. She noted that an enterprise fund was often utilized, and she acknowledged that he had mentioned doing so during his presentation. She inquired whether Mr. Smith could share with those in attendance what an enterprise fund was, particularly regarding what he meant by his previous comments about the connection fees paid by developers which were invested in an enterprise fund.

Mr. Smith emphasized the importance of recognizing that the sustainability and resilience of the utility were primarily based on the effective planning efforts of those overseeing finances who ensured that funding was available for new capacity, which was achieved through connection fees. He explained that those capacity improvement efforts did not rely on the General Fund, as his staff did not utilize that fund to source the money necessary to build new capacity or to repair and maintain existing infrastructure. He noted that those matters were handled entirely through the enterprise fund, which was tasked with developing financial structures, connection fees, and user rates. He acknowledged that his department relied heavily on the County's strong Finance team, which included staff members like Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Abbe Yacoben, Comptroller Cathy Hill, and the budget managers. He stressed that the success of those efforts would not be possible without the oversight of those individuals and their management. He noted that the enterprise fund was how his team achieved its funding-related goals and the objective to provide for any new capacity.

Mr. Smith noted that he had frequently mentioned user rates during his presentation, as they generated the funds that would be collected and used to pay for electricity, trucks, and all the resources and operations necessary for the utility to remain solvent and resilient. He recalled that he had mentioned the relationship between capital projects and building new capacity, which he wanted to affirm, as such a connection demonstrated one of the reasons for not expanding facilities. He reiterated that the County did not expand facilities to the highest possible extent to reinforce capacity because the

user rates would have to be increased to manage that change, which was a factor that the Finance team helped significantly to regulate, as they helped to maintain consideration of that relationship between connection fees for new development and user rates, which ensured that the organization remained solvent and supplied the necessary services. He repeated that those efforts did not rely on funding sourced directly from the General Fund. He explained that the utility paid the General Fund for that support when the relevant services were needed.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Mr. Smith and opined that it was very helpful for people to understand that the enterprise fund was truly restricted and was paid by developers through connection fees. She wanted to recognize TMWA, which she noted was a governing board she served on, for being a partner of the County, as well as the TMRPA. She opined that it was commendable that everyone from various regional jurisdictions, including Mr. Smith, was collaborating, sharing their expertise, and seeking opportunities for efficiencies while avoiding rate increases that would burden taxpayers throughout the process. She expressed her desire to publicly thank those individuals, as they worked hard during the various governing board meetings. She noted that those who served in other governing boards or in different capacities had a shared understanding of the matters Mr. Smith had discussed. She opined that those who invested hours of work in providing a sustainable infrastructure to the community should be recognized. She referred to early comments about collaborating with regional partners. She remarked that people did not always know precisely which jurisdiction they were in when they walked across a road in the area. She reiterated her excitement about seeing the regionalization efforts being implemented, as it was one of the first initiatives she had investigated since her appointment in April 2023. She opined that the possible regionalization in January or February of 2026 was a cause for celebration. She reiterated that balancing those efforts was very important, as the infrastructure created an impact. She thanked Mr. Smith and noted that the Board would be anxious to hear further updates in February or March, after receiving the results from the regionalization. She asked whether Ms. Rigdon would be the person sharing that information.

Mr. Smith displayed the slide titled *Regional Wastewater Discussions*. He noted that a preliminary presentation was provided on November 5 by the WRWC regarding Phase 1A of the regionalization. He reported that the deliverable final document for Phase 1A would be released very soon. He recalled having spoken to Ms. Rigdon the previous day, and she had affirmed that work on Phase 1B would begin in January or February of 2026. He noted that the efforts for Phase 1B would build upon what was understood and learned following Phase 1A and would help those involved understand how alternatives could be advanced to further address the challenges and objectives identified during Phase 1A. Chair Hill asked when additional information might be provided and inquired about July as a potential estimate. Mr. Smith noted that he did not want to speak on behalf of Ms. Rigdon, although he expressed certainty that she would facilitate those discussions.

Commissioner Andriola expressed hope that there would be an opportunity to progress the regionalization efforts further after the results were presented to the Board, should there be sufficient substance following the first phase. She opined that it was very

important for everyone to recognize the significant effort being made to address the community's needs as it continued to expand. She emphasized that it was crucial to note that taxpayers were not being held responsible for funding those efforts. She stated that facts mattered and thanked Mr. Smith for his hard work. She said that it was always a pleasure to hear Mr. Smith clarify several times that the sewer and recycled water study did not increase the base user fees.

Commissioner Clark thanked Mr. Smith for his report and for the good work he had done.

Chair Hill acknowledged that the Board would hear from Mr. Smith again in 2026.

**25-0845      AGENDA ITEM 4 Announcements/Reports.**

County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas announced an opening of a board trustee on the Carson-Truckee Water Conservancy District (CTWCD). She advised that the CTWCD board was formed in 1958 and served Carson City, Churchill County, Washoe County, and parts of Douglas, Lyon, and Storey Counties to maintain minimum capacity for the Truckee River. She mentioned that the CTWCD board also reviewed river encroachment permits and water resource projects to ensure they provided the greatest benefit to the region and did not interfere with the river channel. She explained that the opening was for a partial four-year term that would begin at the time of appointment by the Nevada State Governor's Office and end on December 31, 2028. She specified that the application deadline was 5:00 p.m. on December 17, 2025.

Commissioner Garcia invited the public to attend a community workshop held by the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). She stated that the workshop would take place at Proctor R. Hug High School from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. that evening. She commented that she and Chair Hill served on the RTC board. She recalled an initiative approved the prior year to move forward with neighborhood network plans, and she alerted residents of Sun Valley and Panther Valley of the opportunity to learn about ways that walking, biking, and rolling through neighborhoods could be improved. She added that the workshops would be tailored to specific community needs, and she emphasized the importance of hearing directly from constituents. She advised that the neighborhood network plans would result in quick build projects, which residents would be able to see throughout the community in a relatively short amount of time. She encouraged people to remain aware of pedestrian safety measures the RTC was implementing.

Commissioner Clark spoke about an incident that occurred in Cold Springs the prior Saturday night, following a holiday parade. He said two people were hit by a vehicle while they were crossing the street, and one person died. He urged people to understand that drinking and driving at community events could lead to tragedy. He observed that pedestrians often saw headlights and presumed that drivers could see them, but he said that was inaccurate. He knew that upcoming parades were scheduled in Spanish Springs and the South Valleys, and he cautioned everyone to prioritize safety to avoid

further tragedies around the holidays. He disclosed a conversation he had with CM Thomas the prior day regarding the communication of residency requirements for various boards within the County. He described being involved in multiple boards, including the Senior Advisory Board (SAB) and Citizen Advisory Boards (CABs). He revealed that there was some confusion about the duration of appointments and residency requirements. He determined that some appointments were clearly outlined, but others were not. He thought people serving on boards should be reminded that if they moved out of an area or if somebody decided to resign, that needed to be brought to the attention of the County. He specified that it was the job of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to approve appointments, and positions should not be filled internally by the boards.

Chair Hill stated that she recently attended a Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) meeting that included a discussion about plans for a property that formerly housed an elementary school. She reported that the TTD asked the County to engage with them on a potential property swap or workforce housing project. She made a formal request for County staff to investigate the matter and recommended agendizing an item in January 2026 to approve more than two hours of work. She noted that there might be interest from the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) in using the site for a justice center.

Chair Hill said that she had a discussion with the County Communications Team about ensuring that media buys encompassed different languages and diverse language media outlets. She asked that the matter be heard by the BCC if staff determined that a purchasing policy change was needed. She pointed out the importance of providing equitable access to information so community members could participate in Washoe County activities.

### **DONATION**

**25-0846**      **6A1** Recommendation to accept a one-time donation of [\$1,000.00] from private citizen, Linda Groseclose, to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office to be used for operating costs, and if approved, direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Commissioner Garcia expressed how positive it was to see citizens support the County with financial gifts. She thanked Linda Groseclose for her support of the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO).

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Vice Chair Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 6A1 be accepted.

### **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 7A1 THROUGH 7G3**

- 25-0847**      **7A1** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' special meeting of October 27, 2025, and regular meeting of October 28, 2025. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0848**      **7B1** Recommendation to approve an Interlocal Agreement (Agreement No. NM196-25-015) between Washoe County and the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), retroactive to October 30, 2025, the date of the Agreement signed by NDOT, for design and construction coordination and a grant of easement to NDOT for operation and maintenance of project improvements on Assessor's Parcel Number 552-141-16, for the US 395 North Valleys Phase 2 Widening Project. Community Services. (Commission District 5.)
- 25-0849**      **7B2** Recommendation to adopt two resolutions accepting real property for use as public streets, which pertain to portions of two official plats as listed below totaling approximately 5.22 acres and 0.97 linear miles; and if approved, direct the Clerk's Office to record the resolutions to accept: (1) R25-137 for a portion of the official Plat of Pebble Creek Estates Phase 2, Tract Map 5417, recorded on April 16, 2021, as document number 5167780, being a portion of Diamond Stream Drive, Spanish Sand Drive, Black Opal Drive, Ruby Red Drive, and Still Creek Drive; approximately 3.15 acres and 0.60 linear miles; and (2) R25-138 for a portion of the official Plat of Golden Mesa North Phase 1, Tract Map 5491, recorded on May 26, 2022, as document number 5306151, being Crandell Road and a portion Brave Lane; approximately 2.07 acres and 0.37 linear miles. Community Services. (Commission Districts 4 & 5.)
- 25-0850**      **7B3** Recommendation to approve the Orr Ditch at Wildcreek Maintenance Agreement between Washoe County and Northern Nevada Youth Golf Foundation, doing business as, First Tee Northern Nevada (Youth Golf Foundation). This agreement clarifies and partially assigns Washoe County's maintenance responsibilities for Orr Ditch infrastructure at 3500 Sullivan Lane, Assessor's Parcel Number 027-011-12, to First Tee Northern Nevada (Youth Golf Foundation). Community Services. (Commission District 5.)
- 25-0851**      **7C1** Recommendation to approve the purchase and/or use of prepaid cards/gift cards to be utilized as an option for resource needs and/or incentives for individuals, clients, participants, children, and families who interact with the Human Services Agency retroactive beginning September 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

- 25-0852**      **7C2** Recommendation to make the following appointments to the Senior Advisory Board: (1) re-appoint Edward Lamb [District 4] for his second term; (2) re-appoint MaryAnn McCauley [District 5] for her second term; (3) re-appoint Pamela Roberts [District 1] for her second term; re-appoint Mac Rossi [At-Large] for his second term; appoint Ann Guinn and Alan Distefano for two vacant alternate seats; and appoint Monica Webb for the vacant District 5 seat. All appointments are effective December 1, 2025 with terms expiring November 30, 2029. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0853**      **7C3** Recommendation in accordance with NRS 244.1505 to approve a donation in the amount of [\$100] to the Sparks High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC); approve Resolution R25-0000139 for the same; and direct Finance to make the appropriate budget appropriation disbursements. The Sparks High JROTC Color Guard team represented their school and community at the Honor Senior Veterans Event at the Washoe County Senior Center. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0854**      **7D1** Recommendation to approve the Interlocal Agreement between the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony (RSIC) and the County of Washoe (Department of Juvenile Services) for the temporary housing of RSIC Juveniles; with a contract term of 01/01/2026 through 12/31/2027, if approved, authorize the Chair to execute the Agreement. Juvenile Services. (All Commission Districts.)
- 25-0855**      **7E1** Recommendation to enter into a sub-contract with the Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC, as a recipient of the Community Microgrid Assistance Partnership sub-contract of [\$295,000; no county match required], retroactive for the period from November 18, 2025 until September 17, 2027 to provide technical assistance and financial support for the County to sub-contract services to conduct detailed engineering studies, perform needed resource assessments, develop financial models, and identify funding sources for potential construction of a solar energy generating station to be owned and operated by the Gerlach General Improvement District (GGID) on land owned by the GGID in Gerlach, Nevada; authorize the Manager's Office to execute the sub-contract; direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments; funded 100% by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Manager's Office. Virtual Public Comment Eligible. (Commission District 5.)
- 25-0856**      **7E2** Recommendation to approve the use of General Fund Contingency in the amount of [\$47,000.00] for Fiscal Year 26 in accordance with Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 354.598005 to increase expenditure authority in the Office of the County Manager for a Contractor Agreement Amendment between Washoe County, a political subdivision of the State of Nevada, and



Royal Ambulance, Inc. a California corporation authorized to do business in the State of Nevada who is currently providing Emergency Medical Services in Gerlach to support reasonable and necessary costs related to a need to increase the contract amount and provide an additional Emergency Medical Technician for three months during the first year of the existing contract; if approved authorize the Chair to sign the Contractor Agreement Amendment retroactive to December 1, 2025; and direct Finance to make the appropriate cross-functional budget appropriation transfers. [Total Fiscal Year impact \$47,000.00; net fiscal impact \$-0-]. Manager's Office. Virtual Public Comment Eligible. (All Commission Districts.)

**25-0857**

**7E3** Recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, Commission District Special Fund disbursement in the amount of [\$42,500.00] for Fiscal Year 2025-2026; District 2 Commissioner Mike Clark recommends a [\$10,000.00] grant to Washoe County Human Services Agency – a government entity - to support Northern Nevada Literacy Council (NNLC) and the Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce with the Cares Campus project of providing classes supporting literacy, adult basic education and workforce readiness in a quality learning environment; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Bees 4 Vets - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support the program of providing hands-on training in beekeeping to veterans and first responders suffering from PTSD and/or TBI; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Truckee Meadows Blue Star Mothers of Nevada #3 - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support the mission of bringing comforts of home to soldiers fighting overseas; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Boosted Diplomas - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support the mission to provide every child in the Washoe County foster system with the opportunity to excel in school and graduate with their diploma; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Katie Grace Foundation - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support acts of kindness and charity in the community; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to The Life Change Center - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support a variety of services to help people make the changes necessary to beat their drug addiction; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to the Lizzy Hammond Foundation - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes – to support the development of programs to educate parents and bounce house owner/operators on the dangers and preventable measures associated with bounce houses; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Nevada Veterans Coalition - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support the mission to honor our Veterans and to support their families by providing a full military honors service that they so richly deserve; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Nevadans 4 Vets - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support the mission to raise community

awareness and provide financial support for various programs that honor and respect the contributions and sacrifices of deserving Northern Nevada veterans and their families; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Northern Nevada Legal Aid - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support providing legal advice, assistance, or representation in civil matters for those who could not otherwise afford an attorney; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Palomino Valley Pet Rescue – a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support the mission of rescuing dogs and cats from overcrowded shelters and helping animals with special needs; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Senior ResQ - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support financial education for seniors; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to Seniors in Service – a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support the mission of engaging vibrant experienced volunteers to enrich Northern Nevada communities one life at a time; and a [\$2,500.00] grant to SPCA of Northern Nevada - a nonprofit organization created for charitable, religious, or educational purposes - to support the adoptions of pets by senior citizens of Washoe County; approve Resolutions necessary for same; and direct Finance to make the necessary disbursements of funds and cross-fund and function budget transfers. Manager’s Office. (Commission District 2.)

**25-0858**      **7E4** Recommendation to approve, pursuant to NRS 244.1505, Commission District Special Fund disbursement in the amount of [\$60,000.00] for Fiscal Year 2025-2026; District 5 Commissioner Jeanne Herman recommends a [\$25,000.00] grant to Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department - a nonprofit organization created for religious, charitable or educational purposes – to support the fire department and enable it to service the citizens of Gerlach and the surrounding area; and a [\$20,000.00] grant to Food Bank of Northern Nevada - a nonprofit organization created for religious, charitable or educational purposes - to support the mission of feeding the hungry in Washoe County; and a [\$15,000.00] grant to Safe Embrace – a nonprofit organization created for religious, charitable or educational purposes - to support the mission of helping victims become survivors; approve Resolutions necessary for same; and direct Finance to make the necessary disbursements of funds. Manager’s Office. Virtual Public Comment Eligible. (Commission District 5.)

**25-0859**      **7F1** Recommendation to approve the establishment of fees for bulk data and image requests. Projected annual revenue of \$24,000 per year. Records. (All Commission Districts.)

**25-0860**      **7G1** Recommendation to retroactively approve the Security Agreement between the Palau Association and Washoe County, on behalf of the Washoe County Sheriff’s Office to provide reimbursement for extra

staffing/patrol services [up to \$7,500.00 total reimbursement] needed at the Washoe County Rancho San Rafael Regional Park during the Reno-Tahoe CityFest (2025) from 12:00 PM to 12:00 AM on August 23rd & 24th, 2025. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

**25-0861**      **7G2** Recommendation to accept a fiscal year 2026 Office of Traffic Safety grant award [amount not to exceed \$63,000.00, \$15,750.00 County match required] as administered from the State of Nevada Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety, Federal FY 2026 project numbers 69A37523300001640NVA, 69A37524300004020NV0, and 69A3752430000405ENVA for reimbursement of overtime costs related to conducting traffic enforcement checkpoint events and limited travel expenses for the grant period of Effective Date of Authorization through September 30, 2026; authorize the Sheriff to retroactively execute the award document; and direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

**25-0862**      **7G3** Recommendation to approve a Security Agreement between the University of Nevada, Reno, University Police Department - Northern Command and the County of Washoe on behalf of Washoe County Sheriff's Office to provide uniformed Deputy Sheriffs for security [No fiscal impact to County, annual security costs reimbursed per event] during special events including but not limited to Hot August Nights occurring for the period of August 2025, through the last day of December 2030 with compensation revised each year as employee contracts change. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

On the call for public comment, Pam Roberts spoke about Senior Advisory Board (SAB) appointments. She reviewed the role of the SAB, which she noted was outlined in Washoe County Code (WCC) 45.425. She said that, at a minimum, the SAB was expected to work with the Human Services Agency (HSA) Senior Services Division Director on development of both short-range and long-range agency goals. She recalled sharing an 11-page master plan document with the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) that the SAB had been working on for two years. She stated that the SAB was expected to provide input on programs, services, and community needs, which she reported they did on a regular basis at their monthly meetings. She noted the SAB was tasked with reviewing the quality of agency services, providing technical assistance as applicable, reviewing and providing input on the proposed budget of the Senior Services division, and providing information to the Senior Services Division Director regarding community trends and needs. She specified that the SAB only acted in an advisory capacity and did not have any monetary authority. She shared that the SAB had accomplished many wonderful things. She recounted that four SAB members were up for reappointment that day, along with three new members. She described that, in the past, announcements were made about openings for SAB members. She revealed that more than 20 applications were received, and SAB members went through all of them. She said applicants were advised to attend a SAB meeting to speak about why they wanted to serve on the board, but only six applicants

showed up. She related that the appointment recommendations made by the SAB were based on conversations with applicants. Ms. Roberts summarized that the SAB was extremely active. She expressed disappointment that, due to some delays, the number of SAB members was reduced for a time, which slowed progress. She hoped the new members would be approved at the meeting that day, and the SAB could resume its work on helping seniors in the community.

Wendy Hammond thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity to speak. She mentioned that she was in attendance with her husband, Mitch Hammond, and they were present on behalf of their foundation, the Lizzy Hammond Foundation. She expressed deep gratitude for the generous support given to their foundation by the BCC. She shared that their foundation was created in honor of their daughter, Lizzy, who was a bright and spirited nine-year-old whose life was cut short in a bounce house accident in South Reno. She revealed that in the days following her passing, their family made a promise that what happened to Lizzy would never happen to another child. She advised that the promise was the catalyst for establishing the Lizzy Hammond Foundation, and it continued to fuel everything they did. She said most families viewed bounce houses as simple fun, and very few knew how quickly they could become dangerous when not anchored properly or when wind speeds exceeded safety limits. She described that her family learned far too painfully that even one missed safety step could change a family forever. She relayed that since that time, their work had centered on education, prevention, and advocacy. She said they created safety resources for parents and communities, trained event organizers, and collaborated with schools, non-profits, and State agencies. She stated that, with support from partners like the BCC, they were able to advocate for and help pass Lizzy's Law, which became a State law upon the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 198. She explained that the law mandated clear anchoring standards and wind speed limits for inflatable devices, and ensured that operators followed consistent, enforceable safety practices to protect children across the State. She reported that the donation from the BCC directly strengthened the mission and allowed their foundation to expand safety education, distribute operator posters Statewide, support youth and family outreach, and continue building safer environments for Nevada families. She felt that every resource they shared, every training they hosted, and every parent they reached carried the legacy of their daughter. She specifically offered her thanks to Commissioner Clark for championing community safety and for supporting the work of the Lizzy Hammond Foundation. She said his leadership and care for local families made a meaningful difference, and she and her husband were truly honored to have his partnership. She thanked the BCC for believing in the work of the Lizzy Hammond Foundation and for standing with them to help ensure that Lizzy's legacy was one of safety, love, and protection for every child in Nevada.

Nancy Rifkin thanked the BCC for considering a donation to the Nevada Veterans Coalition. She described that the Nevada Veterans Coalition was founded by a small group of veterans who wanted to maintain a beautiful cemetery in Fernley. She disclosed that the group began by pulling weeds and spending time at the cemetery to ensure it was well-maintained and drew people to it. She disclosed that, over time, volunteers observed services at the cemetery and noticed that there was no Honor Guard. She shared that they formed an Honor Guard and provided full military honors for

anywhere from four to eight services each week, depending on the weather. She expressed that it was a privilege for her to be part of the organization and witness what they did to honor veterans and their families. She identified the work as the foundation of the Nevada Veterans Coalition. She mentioned that the Nevada Veterans Coalition also organized an event on Memorial Day every year at the Veterans Cemetery in Fernley. She added that a Wreaths Across America event would take place on Saturday, December 13, at 9:00 a.m. She restated her appreciation of the BCC's consideration of a donation to the Nevada Veterans Coalition and reminded everyone that the organization was run entirely by volunteers. She said they relied on donations to keep the organization going and contribute to the community by honoring veterans.

Susan Meuschke thanked the Commissioners and the County Manager (CM) for allowing her to be there. She expressed her support for all seven SAB nominations. She explained that she was an SAB associate member, which meant the SAB had appointed her to provide expert assistance. She elaborated that she assisted the SAB with the development of their Master Plan over the prior two and a half years. She added that, during that time, she had the honor of serving with the four individuals who were recommended for SAB reappointment. She described that each of those individuals brought important and unique understandings, interests, and energy to issues affecting seniors in the County. She predicted that the three new people recommended for appointment would also bring important new ideas, interests, and experiences to the SAB. She encouraged the BCC to approve the reappointments as presented. She opined that SAB members were amazing volunteers who did great work, for which they did not get much credit.

Mac Rossi said that he was speaking on his own behalf regarding reappointment to the SAB. He expressed that he would appreciate the support of the Commissioners and wanted to continue working with the seniors on activities and better food conditions. He quipped that he changed his hair color to white to indicate his dedication to blending in with the seniors.

Shane Piccinini was not present when called to speak. Chair Hill advised that she received an email from him indicating that he had to leave the meeting.

On motion by Commissioner Andriola, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 7A1 through 7G3 be approved. Any and all Resolutions or Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Consent Agenda Items 7A1 through 7G3 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

**BLOCK VOTE – 8 THROUGH 13 AND 15 THROUGH 18,  
EXCLUDING PULLED ITEM 15 HEARD SEPARATELY**

\* \* \* \* \*

Commissioner Andriola requested Item 15 be pulled from the Block vote.

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**25-0863** **AGENDA ITEM 8** Recommendation to 1) approve roll change requests, pursuant to NRS 361.765 and/or NRS 361.768, for errors discovered on the 2022/2023, 2023/2024, 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 secured and unsecured tax rolls 2) authorize Chair to execute the changes described in Exhibits A and B and 3) direct the Washoe County Treasurer to correct the error(s). [cumulative amount of decrease to all taxing entities \$514,345.59]. Assessor. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 8 be approved, authorized, and directed.

**25-0864** **AGENDA ITEM 9** Recommendation to: (1) award a bid and approve the Agreement to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder for the 350 South Center 1, 3-6 Floor LED Retrofit Project, PWP-WA-2026-044 [staff recommends Electrical Solutions LLC., in the amount of \$516,250.00]; which includes all three of the Bid Alternates; and (2) [approve a project contingency fund in the amount of \$51,625.00, for a total project cost not to exceed \$567,875.00]. This capital project is the Washoe County Liberty Building, encompassing the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th floors, as well as the penthouse/roof level, and stairwells with the goal of modernizing lighting systems, improving energy efficiency, and enhancing the quality of the workspace environment. The project will replace outdated lighting fixtures with high-efficiency LED alternatives and install a wireless control system, targeting a minimum 50% reduction in lighting energy consumption and compliance with current code requirements. Community Services. (Commission District 3.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 9 be awarded and approved.

**25-0865**      **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to approve joining the State of Nevada's Contract for Services of Independent Contractor, contract number 99SWC-S1310, with Pilot Thomas Logistics, 995 So. McCarran Boulevard, Suite 103, Sparks, NV 89431, for vehicle fuel purchases and fuel dispensing processing, pursuant to the joinder provision of Nevada Revised Statute 332.195, retroactive to July 1, 2025, for the term expiring March 31, 2027, [in the amount of up to \$3,000,000.00 per fiscal year]. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be approved.

**25-0866**      **AGENDA ITEM 11** Recommendation to: (1) approve a new capital project - NV FLAP WAS CR34; (2) approve the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Memorandum of Agreement between Washoe County, the Federal Highway Administration - Central Federal Lands Highway Division, and the Bureau of Land Management, retroactive to September 3, 2025, for the NV FLAP WAS CR34(1) project to improve Washoe County Road 34 from County Road 447 to the "8 Mile" entrance to the Black Rock Desert using [\$29,011,000.00 in FLAP funds and \$1,874,000.00 in Washoe County matching funds, bringing the total project cost to \$30,885,000.00], and (3) authorize the County Manager to sign related agreements and documents. Community Services. Virtual Public Comment Eligible. (Commission District 5.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Chair Hill applauded Vice Chair Herman and County staff for securing funding for the road improvements described in Agenda Item 11. She knew that County Manager Kate Thomas had been working on the project for many years, possibly even before she began working for the County.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be approved and authorized.

**25-0867**      **AGENDA ITEM 12** Recommendation to approve a Regional Road Impact Fee (RRIF) Offset Agreement #0513014 between the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC), Touchstone Living, Inc., and Washoe County for eligible improvements to be made to the intersection of Highland Ranch Parkway and Midnight Drive for the Highland Village 1 Project. Under the RRIF Program, offset agreements are allowed to provide waivers of Regional Road Impact Fees in exchange for contributions of Offered Improvements, which may then be used to offset

Regional Road Impact Fees. The RRIF Offset Agreement being authorized by this action will result in an estimated \$1,150,233.76 in RRIF Waivers being issued to Touchstone Living, Inc. in exchange for roadway infrastructure designed, built, and dedicated by Touchstone Living, Inc. at the intersection of Highland Ranch Parkway and Midnight Drive within the Sun Valley area of Washoe County. Community Services. (Commission Districts 3 and 5.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 12 be approved.

**25-0868**      **AGENDA ITEM 13** Recommendation to approve Amendment #3 to the Interlocal Contract between the Department of Health and Human Services (Division of Health Care Financing and Policy) and the County of Washoe to authorize Human Services Agency to participate in claiming allowable reimbursements covered under Federal Title XIX of the Social Security Act, for activities performed for Medicaid Targeted Case Management (TCM) Services, Adult Day Health Care Direct Services, and Medicaid Administrative Services, retroactive July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2026, which changes the name of Public Entity #1 from Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Care Financing and Policy to Nevada Health Authority, and increases the maximum amount from [\$40,324,493.17 (\$8,435,977.85 for FY23; \$10,153,698.66 for FY24; \$10,602,349.86 for FY25; \$11,132,466.80 for FY26)] to [\$41,735,032.53 (\$8,435,977.85 for FY23; \$10,384,603.50 for FY24; \$10,951,138.18 for FY25; \$11,963,313.00 for FY26) due to increased Administrative Claiming payments; and if approved, authorize Chairman to execute Contract. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 13 be approved and authorized.

**25-0869**      **AGENDA ITEM 16** Recommendation to approve and accept grant funding from the State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services in the amount of \$810,362.00 [no County match] for personnel, toxicology testing, training, travel, and operating expenses relating to the State Opioid Response (SOR) grant, for a retroactive term of September 30, 2025 through September 29, 2026; and if approved, authorize the Chief Medical Examiner & Coroner of the Washoe County Regional Medical Examiner's Office to sign the grant award documents necessary to receive the grant; and direct Finance to make the necessary amendments to the



Regional Medical Examiner's Office's Fiscal Year 2026 budget to reflect the receipt and use of the grant funds. Regional Medical Examiner. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 16 be approved, accepted, authorized, and directed.

**25-0870**      **AGENDA ITEM 17**   Recommendation to accept a Jail-Based Mental Health subaward amendment #1 from the State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public and Behavioral Health in the amount of [\$9,991,955.00 which increases the total award amount to \$15,881,917, no County match] retroactive from March 15, 2024 through June 30, 2027 to support the jail-based mental health program including funding to support personnel, operating and equipment expenditures; authorize the creation of an additional 4.0 FTE Deputy Sheriff positions, funded 100% by these grant funds, and as such, if grant funding is reduced or eliminated, the position hours will be reduced and/or the positions will be abolished accordingly unless additional funding is secured; if approved, direct Finance to make the necessary budget amendments; and direct Human Resources to make the necessary staffing adjustments. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Chair Hill described that, during the recent Special Session of the Nevada Legislature, Washoe County was awarded \$7.5 million in General Funds to help with the Jail-Based Mental Health program. She highlighted the work of Government Affairs Liaison Cadence Matijevich, deputies from the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO), and individuals working on mental health initiatives at the County. She congratulated everyone who worked to secure the State funding and said she was thrilled.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 17 be accepted and directed.

**25-0871**      **AGENDA ITEM 18**   Recommendation to approve a contract with Naphcare Inc. under sole source purchasing exemption for inmate medical services for the Washoe County Detention Facility Jail Based Mental Health Unit for transitioning the current Jail Based Treatment Program to a full competency restoration treatment and evaluation model in the total amount not to exceed [\$6,234,727.36] for the period of January 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Herman, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 18 be approved.

**25-0872**      **AGENDA ITEM 14** Recommendation to approve Washoe County Opioid Use Needs Assessment 2026-2029 (Needs Assessment) and the Washoe Opioid Abatement and Recovery Fund (WOARF) Plan (Funding Plan) for 2026-2027. The Needs Assessment outlines the current strengths, gaps, and needs in the community related to opioid use. The WOARF Plan provides the priority strategies based on the Needs Assessments, funding mechanisms, anticipated outcomes, and potential community impacts of funding these initiatives. This item does not constitute funding or budget approval for any of the components of the plan; any such funding, expenditures, or budget authority necessary to implement individual components of the plan will be brought before the Board for approval as necessary. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

Grants and Community Program Analyst Lauren Beal conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Washoe Opioid Use Needs Assessment and Funding Plan; The History; The Needs Assessment Process; What is Happening Here; Findings; Findings Continued (two slides); quote; Funding Plan Process; Funding Priorities – Continued from 2022 Assessment; Funding Priorities: New 2026-2028; Funding Priorities: New 2026-2028 Continued; Next Steps; Questions?

Ms. Beal explained that Commissioners were given two large packets, which consisted of the Washoe Opioid Use Disorder Needs Assessment and the associated Washoe Opioid Abatement and Recovery Fund (WOARF) Funding Plan. She showed her *The History* slide and stated that the opioid epidemic generated major impacts on the community and created many challenges for systems in the County. She advised that was why the County, the State, and other municipalities decided to pursue lawsuits against opioid manufacturers and distributors for their role in the epidemic. She noted that, of the \$41 million committed to the County over 20 years, \$10 million had been received to date. She mentioned that the settlements contained language regarding how funds could be used, which was restricted to remediation of opioid epidemic impacts. The first needs assessment was conducted for 2022 to 2025, and another one was needed to satisfy State statute, which required a needs assessment to be conducted every four years. She said that the first \$4 million was awarded in 2024.

Ms. Beal reviewed her *The Needs Assessment Process* slide and specified that State statute required WOARF funding recipients to use a community-based participatory practice. She informed that 748 people provided primary data by responding to a survey. She added that secondary data were collected from multiple community partners and their programs, as well as County departments. She summarized that the process resulted in the needs assessment document, which was over 200 pages long. She showed the *What is Happening Here* slide and advised that it provided a quick snapshot of

the information in the needs assessment document. She mentioned that heroin and illicitly manufactured opioids like OxyContin and oxycodone were not really being seen in the local drug market and had largely been replaced by fentanyl. She shared that there were occasions when trace amounts of fentanyl were found in other drugs, but it was not prevalent. She cautioned the importance of continuing to encourage people to test their drugs to ensure they did not accidentally overdose. She stated that methamphetamine was still the primary illicit drug used in Washoe County.

Ms. Beal showed her *Findings* slide and explained that treatment access and navigation was a major challenge in the County. In addition to long waitlists, people were unsure of which insurance they had and which places accepted their insurance. By the time people obtained access to services, they were often no longer ready for change. She communicated that the County needed to be ready to provide services immediately when somebody was ready for change. She said some great work was done to connect people who were disconnected from services, but that work was defunded in October 2025. She knew housing was a primary focus for everybody, and she advised that the same was true for family members, friends, and community members who were actively using or were in recovery from opioids. She emphasized that stable housing was necessary to even begin engaging in recovery, and a safe, supportive space was needed to be maintained once an individual was in the recovery process to sustain their recovery. She warned that if a person returned to a place where they had overdosed or where people were actively using, it could cause a setback. She explained that the behavioral health workforce was experiencing extremely high rates of burnout, which she attributed to low pay, unfavorable options for time off, and insufficient training. She informed that people who had gone through the recovery process themselves and were working as peer support specialists were particularly prone to burnout. She elaborated that those workers were often trapped in entry-level roles and were not given opportunities to grow, learn, and advance within the workforce.

Ms. Beal showed her first *Findings Continued* slide and elaborated on the goal of minimizing morbidity and mortality. In addition to high overdose rates, she noted that bloodborne pathogens and other illnesses contributed to morbidity. She divulged that the primary health concern people actively using opioids spoke to her about was dental care. She commented that more support was needed for families and youth. She explained that substance use was intergenerational, and whole-family care was required to break that cycle. She described that recovery outcomes could be improved by working with not just the parent, but with the parent and child individually and as a unit to try to heal relationship wounds. She added that the process could include grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Ms. Beal showed her second *Findings Continued* slide and stated that the needs assessment revealed that treatment access and navigation systems coordination could be improved. She knew that people in attendance at the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting were invested in efforts to prevent individuals from becoming further involved in the justice system. She emphasized the importance of maintaining treatment for people who were on medication for opioid use disorder (OUD) if they entered jail, and using the opportunity to maintain OUD treatment and immediately connect people to more services when they left jail. She showed her *quote* slide and related that one mother of a person lost to OUD starkly observed that a dead person could not seek recovery. Ms. Beal countered

that the goal of her team was to keep people alive and healthy so they could rejoin the community.

Ms. Beal displayed her *Funding Plan Process* slide and conveyed that her team collected and analyzed the information, then devised a series of strategies, which were outlined in the WOARF Plan. They verified alignment with State statute regarding settlement fund use, then presented their findings to the steering committee, the Living Experience Advisory Board (LEAB), and at a public community meeting to get feedback. Through that process, they made revisions and established priorities. They learned that the community wanted to continue two of the priorities from the original assessment, which were shown in her *Funding Priorities- Continued from 2022 Assessment* slide. She related that overdose prevention and outreach referred to the education and knowledge that accompanied the tool of Narcan or Naloxone. She stated that it was evident that people needed to have the knowledge, not just the tool. She outlined the new priorities in her *Funding Priorities: New 2026-2028* slide and explained the importance of supporting people through targeted outreach and care navigation. She said it was essential to educate people on where to find services, then continue to support them as they navigated the entire system and obtained all the necessary resources. She described that efforts to expand housing services were kept broad. She acknowledged that measures had to be specific to opioid use because of the litigation documents, but said she wanted to align funding with momentum in the community to maximize impact and help people maintain their recovery. She showed her *Funding Priorities: New 2026-2028 Continued* slide and described that the initiatives outlined addressed healthcare issues that were not readily identified as top priorities by those working to address OUD, but were a priority for individuals struggling with opioid use. She stated that mobile health clinics and street healthcare could more easily bring healthcare directly to people. She related that mental health and behavioral health support for peers was crucial for preventing burnout among members of the workforce. She added that it was essential to provide them with resources and a place to share their needs and what was happening in their lives, separate from the same spaces that their clients accessed.

Ms. Beal showed her *Next Steps* slide and summarized that, with Board approval, she would announce the next Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) in 2026 to address the priorities identified in the needs assessment. She added that a brief document based on the needs assessment would be developed for community partners to optimize continued collaboration and coordination, and to address fragmentation within the system. She said another needs assessment would be conducted in 2029.

Chair Hill observed the extensive work Ms. Beal invested in the needs assessment and WOARF Plan. She pointed out that Ms. Beal had been out in the community, connected with residents who had lived experience, and worked to get them what they needed. She expressed her wish that the County had more money to invest in housing and the CrossRoads program, which was known to work. She identified that, even with the expansion of the CrossRoads program to CrossRoads Families, there were still waiting lists. Ms. Beal responded that she was reasonably certain that all CrossRoads programs currently had waiting lists. Chair Hill noted the need for permanent housing for

CrossRoads graduates, which was challenging because of the housing crisis in the community.

Vice Chair Herman remarked that Ms. Beal did amazing work on the reports.

Commissioner Garcia mentioned that she would start referring to Ms. Beal as Dr. Beal due to the comprehensiveness and excellent quality of the reports she provided. She commented that saw firsthand how much Ms. Beal worked in the community, and she applauded Ms. Beal's knowledge, passion, and leadership. Commissioner Garcia recalled a recent presentation she and Ms. Beal gave at a Join Together Northern Nevada (JTNN) event in which they implored providers not to burn out. She said that, at that time, she did not realize that imperative was one of the findings of the needs assessment. She knew there was a shortage of individuals in the behavioral workforce. She acknowledged that it was hard work, and she theorized that it could not be done unless practitioners and providers were healthy. She added that the nonprofit organizations represented by practitioners also needed to be healthy, and the entire system needed to work collaboratively. She offered Ms. Beal a chance to highlight the LEAB, which she observed was in the report and participated in the process of prioritizing the initiatives.

Ms. Beal described that the LEAB provided guidance and feedback on all survey tools and helped refine the questions used in interviews to ensure that matters of importance to the respondents were included. She shared that a new section was added to the original version of the survey to specifically ask people who were currently using substances questions about their experiences. Ms. Beal reported that LEAB members received training to go out into the community and speak directly with people about the survey. She noted that it allowed the team to reach people who might be reluctant to speak openly with a County employee or representative but would talk to somebody with living experience. She opined that the approach ensured that the survey results provided a broader perspective on what was happening in the community. LEAB members also participated in evaluating the data, sharing their perspectives on what resonated with them, and held their own session to rank priorities.

Chair Hill commented that she and Commissioner Garcia could help mitigate transportation barriers. She elaborated that they could provide bus passes and other support if they were aware of the need well in advance. Ms. Beal agreed that transportation could be a barrier and said she would discuss it further with Chair Hill. Chair Hill affirmed her commitment to supporting individuals in recovery.

Commissioner Andriola thanked Ms. Beal for her work. She acknowledged that it was a collaborative effort among many people, but she thanked Ms. Beal for her passion in making a difference and utilizing the WOARF funds to create change and have an impact. She recalled the summary Ms. Beal mentioned creating for community partners and asked Ms. Beal to include the BCC on the distribution list for that summary. Chair Hill stated her agreement with Commissioner Andriola's request.

Commissioner Andriola added that she was interested in learning how the Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) connected with the scope of work established in the WOARF plan. She wondered if that could be outlined in a follow-up presentation as the next steps of the plan were taken. Ms. Beal replied that she would ensure Commissioners received that document and any other similar summaries. She advised that her department regularly updated its website with current data on all programs it funded. She said that the data showed how much money was received and where it was expended. Commissioner Andriola opined that reading data was inferior to the enthusiasm Ms. Beal brought, which she thought the BCC would welcome.

Commissioner Clark thanked Ms. Beal for her report. He asked if both reports were available to the public on the County website. Ms. Beal affirmed that she was waiting to get approval from the Commissioners, and with that approval, the reports would be published on the website.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Garcia, seconded by Commissioner Andriola, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 14 be approved.

**25-0873**      **AGENDA ITEM 15** Requesting Board approval (1) to transfer the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund grant funds of a minimum of \$10,587,450.94 million (\$9,427,223.08 million principal and \$1,160,227.86 million interest as of 8/31/2025) to the Community Foundation of Northern Nevada (CFNN). All but \$500,000 of the funds will be for the creation of the Washoe Behavior Health Endowment Fund. The County will utilize a portion of the income from the Washoe Behavioral Health Endowment Fund to support the operations and maintenance of the Washoe Behavioral Health Center (WBHC). If the annual operations and maintenance of the WBHC are satisfied and there are funds in excess, those funds may, at the discretion of the County Manager or his/her designee, be placed into the existing Regional Behavioral Health Initiatives Fund at CFNN to support strategic behavioral health initiatives. In addition, the Board will authorize the designation of \$500,000 to the Regional Behavioral Health Initiatives Fund for payment to Renown Health to support the Crisis Care Center upon completion of a written agreement with Renown Health, after a \$2 million contribution from the State is exhausted, and conditions in the agreement are met, and (2) authorize that any remaining funds designated to Renown that are not utilized remain at CFNN and be designated to the Crisis Response System. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Hill noted that County Manager (CM) Kate Thomas was the lead staff member on Agenda Item 15. CM Thomas explained that there were many representatives available for discussion if the Board wished for a presentation. Chair Hill pointed out that Commissioner Andriola requested that Agenda Item 15 be pulled from the Block vote.

Commissioner Andriola expressed appreciation for the individuals in attendance. She felt that Agenda Item 15 was crucial and required continuous attention. She explained that Agenda Item 15 was not a typical government model and that mental health concerns permeated throughout the community and the Nation. She mentioned that the community had expressed the need for child services at the Washoe Behavioral Health Center (WBHC). She recalled that there was a gap in the community for child mental health services, which would be filled by the WBHC, since the West Hills Behavioral Health Hospital (WHBHH) had closed. She understood that the Board was aware of the WBHC initiative since it was part of the County's Strategic Plan. She asserted that the WBHC was an investment that would make a difference in children's lives. She thought that Behavioral Health Administrator Julia Ratti could provide an overview of Agenda Item 15 before Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Abbe Yacoben followed up with a fiscal model summary regarding the Community Foundation of Northern Nevada (CFNN).

Ms. Ratti and Ms. Yacoben conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Sustainable WBHC Operations Funding Plan Crisis Care Center Funding Proposal; What is WBHC and Why is this Funding Important?; What is the CCC and Why is this Funding Important; What is LATCF; How are We Making this Funding Sustainable; Why is this an Ideal Strategy; Mechanics and Next Steps; Thank you & Questions?. Ms. Ratti recalled that the community experienced the unfortunate closure of WHBHH in 2021, which she believed created a gap in behavioral health services. She stated that, with the County's guidance and the use of federal funds, the County decided to remedy the loss of WHBHH by purchasing the facility and planning for renovation, thereby ensuring that mental health services were not compromised. She reported that approximately \$28 million was secured to continue the renovation. She said that the facility's demolition was underway and that the Board would see a final bid package early the following year for the finalization of the facility. She explained that the building was important, but the services provided were even more so. She said that there were child mental health services available; however, there were not enough to meet the community's needs.

Ms. Ratti noted that the WBHC would have a psychiatric residential treatment facility that would allow inpatient needs for three weeks to three months, where residents could receive behavioral health services, schooling, activities, and 24-hour care. She explained that, in addition to inpatient treatment, there would be an outpatient clinic with the intention of providing families with behavioral health services in their own homes. She stated that an innovative service not currently available in the community was a crisis stabilization center that would provide urgent care for behavioral health needs, and that foster and adoptive families could utilize the integration of emergency respite services. She speculated that those in attendance had visited the emergency room (ER) once or twice in their lives and that it was probably not a therapeutic experience; however, she believed a crisis stabilization center would be a therapeutic setting that provided behavioral health services. She opined that meaningful services helped address the needs of children and families in the community.

Ms. Ratti mentioned that the County hoped to have a teaching facility located at the WBHC since there was a shortage of behavioral health providers in the community. She asserted that at any given time, there were about 50 kids in the community who were transported out of State or to Las Vegas to receive care. She asserted that she wanted to keep children close to home. She said that the WBHC addressed a critical community need and filled gaps in services. She stated that the County would solicit an operator because it did not intend to operate the WBHC independently. She explained that the County would issue a request for proposal (RFP) to understand what different operators could provide in terms of expertise and services. She noted that Agenda Item 15 pertained to the operations of the facility, which would allow the operation level to be covered through an endowment and not impact the General Fund. She said that the endowment would ensure that resources were kept for other focuses, such as patient care.

Ms. Ratti recalled that she had presented to the Board multiple times regarding the County's crisis system of care and its transformational work in the community. She stated that Renown Regional Medical Center's Crisis Care Center (CCC) was a broad-based collaboration aimed at transitioning individuals experiencing behavioral health crises out of the current status quo system, which required them to call 911. She noted that when someone called 911, they were likely to be received by first responders, including police, fire, and ambulance personnel, which could potentially lead to an ER visit or jail time. She said that the CCC would require individuals to call 988 to be received by the behavioral health mobile crisis team, which would then transport the person in crisis to the CCC. She asserted that the CCC was innovative and new to Nevada. She thought that the CCC was a significant commitment on the part of the operator because it would require continuous operations, and a substantial amount of funding would be needed to get started. She stated that \$6.2 million in federal funds was committed, through a competitive RFP process, to Renown Regional Medical Center, which would cover the remodel of the facility near the Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services' (NNAMHS) campus. She explained that the funds would cover some services, such as information technology (IT) and medical records, but would also contribute to the startup costs. She indicated that the belief was that the CCC would be sustainable; however, the model had never been implemented before in Nevada. She recalled that some of the \$6.2 million was spent, and the rest was retained from the federal government. She said that the CCC was opened in February but closed again shortly after. She expressed gratitude to the State of Nevada for granting Renown Regional Medical Center \$2 million to reopen the CCC. She pointed out that Agenda Item 15 would allocate \$500,000 to the CCC to cover the CCC's start-up costs.

Ms. Yacoben referred to the *What is LATCF?* slide and noted that the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund (LATCF) was part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fund. She recalled that the County accepted \$9.4 million in October of 2022, but the funds had restrictions. She explained that the funds could not be used for lobbying; however, the County wanted to ensure the funds were sustainable through either spending them all at once on an eligible project or creating an endowment fund. She said that there were many eligible projects, but the proposal was to transfer the funds to the CFNN to be invested with a slightly longer investment strategy. She reported that an extended investment period for cash flow would increase the program to a three- to five-year program, creating more flexibility.



Ms. Yacoben referred to the *How are We Making this Funding Sustainable* slide, which indicated that \$500,000 would be a one-time fund for the CCC. She explained that the remaining funds would equate to approximately \$10 million, as the original \$9.4 million, plus about \$600,000 in interest, would be proposed to remain in perpetuity, with 0.75 percent retained by the CFNN for investment advisory and custodial services. She stated that the funds were proposed to be used for the operations and maintenance of the WBHC, rather than capital improvements. She explained that the County would be invested for a long time and would not be dependent upon General Fund fluctuations. She reported that if there were an excess in addition to the 4.5 percent proposed annual distribution, the excess would be allocated to the Regional Behavioral Initiatives Fund to support projects surrounding participants entering various centers, hospitals, and programs.

Ms. Yacoben relayed information on the *Why is this an Ideal Strategy* slide and asserted that Agenda Item 15 was the ideal strategy because the CFNN could focus on a longer-term investment. She said that the County would have a dedicated investment advisor, Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Ken Lambert, who managed the County's Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) investments. She believed that he was qualified in the market and noted he was a Nevada resident expert. She stated that the endowment was aligned with the larger behavioral health priority, which she believed signified a long-term commitment to the project and to any potential operators who might want to partner with the County.

Ms. Yacoben pointed out the information on the *Mechanics and Next Steps* slide and recalled that the Board had augmented the fund by increasing the budget to allow the transfer of the interest portion to the CFNN. She indicated that there was an appropriation of budget authority to transfer the original grant amount of over \$9.4 million; however, the State law required the Board to take action for an increase to the budget for any reason. She stated that once the transfer to the CFNN was complete, the first \$500,000 would be allocated to the CCC, and the second portion would be invested in long-term assets. She noted that there would be a little more than a year invested once the CCC opened, which she opined was great timing for the CCC to have funding available immediately. She mentioned that Renown Regional Medical Center would exhaust the State's funding contributions and that a written agreement would be created to ensure the terms and conditions were met based on the Board's vote on Agenda Item 15.

Chair Hill thought that Agenda Item 15 was creative and believed that WHBHH could not maintain the building. She recalled that individuals who visited WHBHH had received help, and they requested that the County invest in the facility to ensure a better experience for those in crisis. She thought that having sustainable funding for maintenance was brilliant and appreciated the work done in creating Agenda Item 15.

Vice Chair Herman expressed appreciation for the staff's hard work. Commissioner Garcia thanked the CFNN for being a great County partner and for participating in a creative solution. She believed that having approximately \$450,000 per year for ongoing maintenance would be beneficial. She noted that the funds were approved in 2022 before she was elected. She acknowledged the staff's time and contributions in helping to bring Agenda Item 15 to fruition.

CM Thomas thanked and commended the Board for their steadfast willingness not to spend the funds on many different projects. She recalled that she had the opportunity to run a program earlier in her career, stemming from a settlement with Waste Management (WM). She said that she spent the interest income on a used oil recycling program when she was an early analyst in a public works department. She explained that when Agenda Item 15 was brought forward to staff, many worked towards making it sustainable.

Commissioner Andriola thanked CFNN for their public-private partnership (P3) and the Board's historical foresight to maintain the funds. She believed that the ER was not the best environment for a child seeking mental health assistance. She stated that the operator would maintain the WBHC's operations, which would not affect the General Fund. She thanked Vice Chair Herman for her previous dedication and leadership prior to the current Board's Commissioners being elected. She relayed that many individuals across the State thought that the WBHC was something to be proud of. She said that primarily when there was a government program, government funding would continually feed the program; however, the WBHC's model did not warrant that. She expressed that she wished representatives from the Lizzy Hammond Foundation were present for the accolades. She asked about the anticipated timeline for the operation. Ms. Ratti said that the Board would have more decisions to make in February regarding the next guaranteed maximum price (GMP) agreement and the total costs for the WBHC's finalization. She noted that if the GMP was successful, the WBHC could open during the first half of 2027.

Commissioner Clark thanked Ms. Ratti for her report. Chair Hill asked if the County had considered including the word *children* in the WBHC's title, as that was the primary focus of the center. She felt that it would be beneficial for the title to state who the services were catered to. Commissioner Andriola noted that she unofficially adds the word *children* to the WBHC's titles, as the services were intended for children. She did not think that there was a bigger gift than having specialty services save the lives of children. Chair Hill indicated that another letter *C* could be added to the WBHC's title after future discussion. She thought that the Board was performing a monumental service that she believed the State should have done. She noted that the WBHC was mentioned during the Interim Committee on Finance (ICF) meeting for the Legislature because it was going to help Northern Nevada. She speculated that the Board should be proud of the work performed and mentioned she could not wait for the first half of 2027.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Andriola, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 15 be approved and authorized.

**25-0874      AGENDA ITEM 19 Public Comment.**

Trista Gomez displayed an image, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. Ms. Gomez observed that Commissioner Andriola stepped out every time she

provided public comment at the end of meetings, which she wanted to note for the record. She supposed that residents were not opposed to adequately funding essential services, but she questioned how determinations were made about what constituted essential services. She asked that the community be entrusted to make those determinations. She remarked that jurisdictions across the Country arrived at different answers to that question and had mixed success with implementation. She advocated for sustainable funding sources for programs that were needed, but beyond that, she suggested that programs could be augmented if there was a budget surplus. She expressed concern that the County budget indicated a significant shortfall and had increased dramatically in recent years, which necessitated increased revenue sources. She commented that increased costs created barriers for County citizens, and she used her displayed image to indicate areas of financial strain on specific demographics. She asked the Commissioners to review the 2019 budget, which she viewed as sustainable and exemplary. She cautioned against over-taxation and overregulation, which she believed contributed to increased crime, litter in the streets, and a decline in businesses. She expressed concern that the County was starting to experience those problems, and she encouraged the Commissioners to pay attention to the local population and address the needs of their constituents.

Katherine Yriarte spoke about the presentation on the Washoe County Sewer Utility given in Agenda Item 5A1, which she said was fantastic. She recalled a discussion toward the end of the item about data center water usage, the lack of potable water, and the pressure that was put on the Truckee River and groundwater. She suggested considering a reimagined fee structure for businesses that did not require potable water to operate, such as data centers that used it solely for cooling. She proposed that those businesses be required to use reclaimed water and cover the cost of additional filtration at their own expense. She felt that using potable water to cool a data center when it could be used to care for County citizens was wasteful, especially considering the limited water supply in the area. She disclosed that she was required to purchase water rights as part of her business. She advocated putting the burden back on developers and businesses rather than on County citizens.

**25-0875      AGENDA ITEM 20    Announcements/Reports.**

Chair Hill applauded the generosity of all County staff who participated in the Clerk's Silver Sleigh giving challenge. She invited County Clerk Jan Galassini to provide an update on the award and join her in recognizing the staff who served the community in their work every day, who then chose to further give back to the community through direct donations. She remarked that the County had the best staff in the region.

Ms. Galassini recalled the challenge Chair Hill issued to County employees and citizens in November. She reported that, to date, County employees had donated \$9,455 to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada (FBNN) through the Clerk's Silver Sleigh event. She reminded everyone that it was a competition among departments, and the department with the highest donation amount per full-time employee (FTE) would be the winner. She noted that the number of FTEs in each department was factored in. She revealed that the Public Guardian's Office was in first place. She reported that they had 20

FTEs and had donated over \$1,000. Human Resources (HR) was in second place with \$1,025 and only 21 FTEs. Third place was the Clerk's Office with 17 FTEs and over \$800 donated. Fourth place was the Office of the County Manager (OCM) with \$990 donated and 32 FTEs. Fifth place was the Treasurer's Office with \$550 donated and 21 FTEs. She acknowledged that some departments preferred to strategically delay their donations until the very end of the challenge, and she reminded everyone that they only had until December 19, 2025, to participate. She shared that the department with the highest dollar value of donations at the end would be recognized, but the overall winner was determined by a combination of the dollar value and the number of FTEs. Ms. Galassini thanked all County employees. She said it was a tremendous undertaking, and almost \$10,000 was raised in the first two weeks.

Chair Hill thanked Ms. Galassini for her leadership and the County employees for their donations.

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**12:36 p.m.** There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

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**ALEXIS HILL**, Chair  
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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**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*  
*Jessica Melka, Deputy County Clerk*  
*Lizzie Tietjen, Deputy County Clerk*