



Gerlach/Empire Citizens Advisory Board
Minutes of the regular meeting of the Gerlach/Empire Citizens Advisory Board held on June 11, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Gerlach Community Center.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION QUORUM

Present: Chair Russell Bierle, Vice Chair Kristin Evans (via Zoom), Brandy Wilbur, Schatzi Gambrell, and Carl Copek

Absent: none

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Joe Childs expressed gratitude on behalf of his friend who was involved in a bicycle accident on the playa and was helped by various members of the community who were also in attendance at this meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF May 14, 2026

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Member Wilbur moved to approve the May 14, 2026, Gerlach/Empire Citizens Advisory Board minutes as written. Member Gambrell seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved on a 5-0 vote.

5. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES

Washoe County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Jackson Crews stated calls were received regarding a domestic incident, a motorcycle crash, and a plane crash, among other things. Responding to Member Gambrell's query, he said inmates were expected to come to the area on July 23 to handle lawn maintenance.

Royal Ambulance

Corey Vaughn indicated there were no lapses in service throughout the month of May, and 58 calls had been received so far this year. In that time, there were 19 ground transports, two air transports, 30 treat-and-releases, and a handful of unable-to-locate. He remarked that there were plans to remain continually in service.

Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department

Greg Nielsen noted they responded collaboratively with Royal Ambulance and Washoe County Search and Rescue on some calls. Because his department was experiencing

difficulty with dispatch calls, he encouraged people to contact him on his cell in an emergency. He relayed the community's appreciation for treat-and-releases, eliminating the need in some situations to transport people all the way to Reno. He announced that the department graduated its first volunteer that did not start with the department, who will begin working with the department once he was fitted for his gear. He hoped this was the first of many graduates.

Member Gambrell asked whether the volunteer fire department had any requests. Firefighter Nielsen indicated the department had more money than people, and both the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and Washoe County have been collaborative and responsive partners. The department may learn of some needs in the coming months, but it was fortunate because there had not been many situations to handle. He said he would make any needs known to the Citizens Advisory Board and the County.

6. WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

No one from the school district was present for this item.

7. IVESON RANCH EMPLOYEE HOUSING/RV PARK

Mike Arth, General Manager of Iveson Ranch, conducted a slideshow presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Site Location; Existing Master Plan & Zoning; Development Code Amendment – Approved; Site Aerial Map; Site Plan – Housing Improvements; Conceptual Housing Images/Elevations; Application Requests; Relocated Outdoor Storage; Grading; Modification of Standards; Project Benefits; and Process.

Manager Arth expected that the project would start with a recreational vehicle (RV) park with 25 to 30 spaces for living quarters for employees. Because the County considers that to be 25 to 30 housing units, it means that the applicant would need to use the previously approved development code amendment earlier than anticipated. Approval of the special use permit (SUP) would allow them to construct the RV park. The application submitted to the County, he continued, was a semi-comprehensive plan of what Iveson Ranch was expected to look like in the future. He cautioned that the applicant was not committing to everything that would be presented, but the plan would lay out everything they might possibly do.

Manager Arth indicated that the SUP application would allow the developer to change the original planned location of the outdoor storage area, as that space is better suited for the RV park. The hydrology study revealed that the original RV park site would be under six inches of water in a 100-year flood. The area outlined in green in the Site Aerial Map slide was identified as the location for alternative additional housing. He hoped that the RV park would be completed within four years, though the permit process might delay that. He expected that there would be changes to the comprehensive plan once more engineering work was done and budgets were more clearly realized. The applicant hoped to make the landscape look as much as it does today while providing nice accommodations for employees. He anticipated that six to eight employees who currently lived in Gerlach would move to the site once all housing infrastructure was built.

Chair Bierle pointed out that the 44 proposed units would use as much water and generate as much wastewater as the Town of Gerlach, but those utilities were not mentioned in the presentation. Manager Arth explained that those elements were outside the scope of the SUP. Specific details would be covered through the permitting process. He said a well permit has been pulled, which would increase well capacity, and power would be generated through a

large solar array. Dave Snelgrove with Bowman Consulting Group added that a water tank and a pump that meets fire flow and domestic supply requirements will be available. Those elements are on the plan. Manager Arth reviewed some of the specs of the tank, opining that the additional water would be a benefit to the town. Chair Bierle lauded the decision for reduced landscaping.

Member Copek inquired about fire mitigation. Manager Arth responded that hydrants in the RV park would be involved, and sprinklers would be installed in the team houses. An on-site truck would be utilized at the energetics facility during events, which could be relocated after they were done. Consultant Snelgrove indicated that the project will need to meet Wildland Urban Interface standards, including having 50 feet of clear space between structures.

Peter Dronkers with Burning Man Project asked about the fire flows on the suppression tank. Manager Arth stated that would be addressed in the permitting process, not as part of the SUP. The current draft of the permit application calls for 65,000 gallons, he remarked, though he would research the flow rate and get back to the speaker.

8. NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB & OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Candee Ramos, Media and Communications Program Manager, displayed the County's website and demonstrated how people could discover volunteer opportunities. She noted there were vacancies on the Planning Commission, the Board of Equalization, and the Washoe County Deferred Compensation Committee. She demonstrated how to access the Neighborhood Development Hub, where to find events in the Gerlach area, how to sign up to receive District 5 news or to be on the more general citizen involvement mailing list, how to provide community input, and how to submit non-emergency requests for service.

9. REPORT ON REQUESTS FOR SERVICE FROM PREVIOUS CAB MEETINGS

Chair Bierle noted he had previously requested to know the location of the planned turnaround point to direct people away from the playa and the identity of the second Burning Man staff member, but he did not receive clear answers.

10. CAB MEMBER/COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS

Chair Bierle requested that someone read any emergency plans related to Burning Man and inform him whether he, the Gerlach General Improvement District, or the Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department were required to do anything under the plan.

Member Gambrell wanted the school district presentation to be rescheduled for a future meeting.

11. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Shotzi Gambrell announced that Cassidy would begin working this weekend.

Katherine Yriarte remarked that she did not win her primary, but she hoped the person who would eventually be elected would serve the people well. She encouraged citizens to reach out to her if there was anything she could do to benefit the community in her current position.

She offered to provide assistance with evacuating animals during emergencies.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Member Wilbur moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Copek seconded the motion, which carried on a 5-0 vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

DRAFT