



## **Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Gerlach/Empire Citizen Advisory Board held on June 16, 2022, at the Gerlach Community Center, 410 Cottonwood, Gerlach, NV 89412, and via teleconference.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM** – Elisabeth 'Schatzi' Gambrell, Tina Walters, Andy Moore, Allen Nash, and Kristy Evans
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- 3. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT** – There were no requests for public comment
- 4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF MAY 19, 2022 (for Possible Action)** – Elisabeth Gabrell moved to approve the minutes of May 19, 2022. Andy Moore seconded the motion. Kristy Evans abstained. The motion carried unanimously.
- 5. WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE – Deputy Trevor Burns, Washoe County Sheriff's Office general update (Non-Action Item)**
- 6. PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILT) – Leo Drozdoff and Michael Wilden from The Perkins Co. will share information about how the PILT program works (Non-Action Item)**

Leo Drozdoff introduced himself and Mike Wilden. Mr. Wilden provided a broad understanding of how the PILT works. He explained Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) are Federal payments to local governments to help offset property taxes losses due to non-taxable Federal lands within their boundaries. Land acreage hasn't changed, but the population factor has changed. The PILT Payment is approaching \$ 4 million now. It goes into the County's general fund. It's a small portion of the budget.

Ms. Gambrell said you talk about the money going to support the communities where this land is being held, because we cannot get taxes back from it; there are 2,934,000 federal acres in the County. Of that 2.934 million acres, 2.623 million is right here in the 5<sup>th</sup> district, our area. We hold the primary amount. It's supposed to go to schools, fires, and health. She said when she asks Washoe County; it's helping the administrative costs. We have a full-time firefighter and Sheriff, and our school is underfunded because we have 23 students. She wants these things funded. She said we would love a clinic out here. We have 100 people who live out here. She said we wanted to understand where the money.

Mr. Wilden said he doesn't understand how Washoe County makes budget decisions. He said he doesn't know the fund map to the expenditures. He suggested having a conversation to get allocated for district 5.

Ms. Gambrell read what the PILT does. Mr. Wilden confirmed that's the purpose.

Mr. Drozdoff said Washoe County asked us to be here to answer questions, and they are trying to assist. He said everything you listed with schools, fire fighting, and health. You can do a calculation of the percentage that is in district 5 of Washoe County. We are the majority of PILT in the County and district 5. With that, to me, there would be a calculation. \$3.7 million is coming in; you are 60% of that; you identify the expenses and money to get paid for as part of PILT. He said he thinks that is where you could start. If you know you should be getting some of those dollars, show how it should be spent.

Ms. Gambrell referenced 6903 of PILT. She asked is population calculated in County or based on the area where the land is located? Mr. Wilden said he believes its county population and total acreage. The total acreage hasn't changed in 22 years. The population is the driver. He provided the [www.doi.gov/pilt/resources/annual](http://www.doi.gov/pilt/resources/annual) reports. He said it would show you the calculations and money factors that go towards the acreage and population.

Ms. Evans asked how the money was allocated. Mr. Wilden said it's allocated to the County. Only one state set up the system that the funds go to the state. In Nevada, it goes to 17 counties. It's allocated to the County as a

whole; the commissioners decide the budgeting.

Mr. Wilden said the total PILT payments to Nevada are \$27.5 million. Washoe County gets under \$4 million. There is a lot of federal lands.

Mr. Nash asked if there is any directive in the law of how the money is spent other than public services? Is there a requirement? Mr. Wilden said it's high-level allocations. It's a county-wide population and acreage calculation. Mr. Drozdoff said that it was written not to be too prescriptive back in the day. It was by design.

Ms. Gambrell read section 4450. Mr. Drozdoff said you had researched a lot. You articulate a need. This is what it was designed to do. There are no other property taxes. He said we are happy to report back. Ms. Gambrell said that would be helpful. Mr. Moore asked if we could schedule a follow-up for next month after reviewing the website that calculates payment. Mr. Drozdoff said he would be happy and would like a representative from the County to attend.

Mr. Nash asked why they represent the County. Mr. Drozdoff said we had done a fair amount of work with HHS, homeless population, swan lake, and lands bill activity. This is a function of expertise of this and asked us to join. Mr. Drozdoff said he would follow up with Kate and Candee for the next meeting.

July 21 is the next meeting.

## **7. BRIEF UPDATE ON FIRE NEGOTIATIONS WITH PAIUTE TRIBE – Candee Ramos, Washoe County Community Outreach Coordinator, on behalf of Dave Solaro, Washoe County Assistant County Manager**

Mr. De La Torre read a statement:

Washoe County and the Paiute Tribe are negotiating one final clause in the contract. Manager Brown and Don Pelts met recently to see if the current proposal for Washoe County would be acceptable to the Tribe. Dave Solaro and Don Pelt met as recently as this week. And that, pending these final discussions, we have everything ready to go to before the Commissioners on June 28 if we get concurrence from the Tribe that they are comfortable with the proposed. This is all we can share at this time.

## **8. WASHOE COUNTY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY – Candee Ramos, Community Outreach Coordinator, Washoe County will discuss the new Washoe County Leadership Academy, what the program entails, and how Gerlach/Empire residents can apply to participate. (Non-Action Item)**

Mr. De La Torre provided updated information. Applications will be available on July 5. Go to [www.washoecounty.gov/wcla/](http://www.washoecounty.gov/wcla/). We are looking for five citizens from each of the five areas of the County. For those who live far, like Gerlach, if you accept into the program, we will provide lodging accommodations the night before. The academy will kick off on September 23. The graduation is on April 14. We will meet once a month for eight months. We will have a professional from UNR who will teach a lesson about Leadership. You will learn about the operations of Washoe County and networking. This is our inaugural year, and we grow upon it. In the future, we look to host a youth program as well. We will focus on government and community services.

Ms. Gambrell said the meetings on the Fridays? Mr. De La Torre said one meeting will be on Thursday due to a conflict. He said it's the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month. He said the dates are posted on the website.

Mr. Moore asked how long is the academy each day? Mr. De La Torre said it will be all day with tours and stops. Expect 8 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Ms. Gambrell asked if she can share at the post office. Mr. De La Torre said he would appreciate them getting the word out. He said he can send out some fliers.

**9. WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE - Washoe County Commissioner Jeanne Herman may be available to provide updated information on discussions and actions by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). (Non-Action Item)**

Jeanne Herman was not in attendance.

**10. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS — This item is limited to announcements and/or requests for future agenda items by CAB members. (Non-Action Item)**

Ms. Evans spoke about cardboard recycling at the transfer station. She requested Lt. Eubanks to be on our agenda to discuss Burning Man concerns.

Ms. Gambrell requested an update with the Tribe. And would like to find out about the Sheriff's update. Are we still going to get notifications from the planning commission when a project is planned out here? She said we have nothing on the gold mine on 447; we have heard nothing about six houses in the mountains along 34. Why are we not being notified if large projects are going in. It will affect roads and the water table.

**11. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT – Comment heard under this item will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and may pertain to matters both on and off the agenda. The public is encouraged to submit a "Request to Speak" form to the Board chairman. Comments are to be addressed to the Board as a whole. (Non-Action Item)**

Melissa said influx is starting in earnest for Burning Man staff. It will be full staff in August. The mural is going to on Helen's house; the artist is Betty Reves. The grading of granite point RV park is starting next week. Oasis will be open on July 4 for cornholing. There is pizza going in the oasis on July 28.

A public member spoke about a brief water outage on June 22. He said it will be 15 minutes if it goes well.

**ADJOURNMENT** – the meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.