**North Valleys Citizen Advisory Board**

**Minutes of the regular meeting of the North Valleys Citizen Advisory Board held on July 14th, 2025, at 6:00 P.M. Cold Springs Community Center (3355 White Laky Pkwy, Reno NV 89508)**

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

PRESENT – Teresa Aquila, Aaron Jennings, Susan Vanness, Scott Finley, Roger Edwards

ABSENT –

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF June 9, 2025**

Aaron Jennings motioned to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2025, North Valleys CAB meeting. Scott Finley seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Roger Edwards abstained.
2. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**Jennifer Fitzpatrick, veterinarian and director of Community Medicine and Surgery with the Nevada Humane Society, shared information about new programs aimed at addressing pet overpopulation in rural areas. She announced that the organization received grant funding from the Washoe County Community Reinvestment Program to provide over 4,000 reduced costs spay and neuter surgeries annually. To overcome barriers such as cost and transportation, the Humane Society now has two mobile vans, including one fully equipped surgical unit capable of performing 30–50 surgeries in a day. Fitzpatrick is seeking community partners with four available parking spaces in accessible rural locations to host the mobile clinic and distribute flyers to promote the initiative.

Teresa Aquila asked if the commenter had any pamphlets to share and they were able to provide some to the CAB.
3. **ELECTION OF CAB CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**Scott Finley nominated himself for chair of the North Valleys CAB, stating that although he is a newer member, he brings relevant experience and a strong commitment. He holds degrees in paralegal law and communications, has held leadership roles in student organizations at TMCC and UNR, and has experience facilitating inclusive meetings. Finley emphasized his dedication to transparency, civic engagement, and ensuring all voices are heard. He pledged to be present and accessible, and highlighted the importance of the CAB in advising county commissioners and empowering the community.

Teresa Aquila, a North Valleys resident of 52 years and long-serving CAB member for approximately 10 years, expressed her strong commitment to the board and community. She emphasized the advisory role of the CAB, noting that while the board cannot change policies, it serves as a vital voice for local residents. Aquila highlighted the importance of community participation to ensure concerns are heard and addressed. Although she missed a few recent meetings due to increased work demands, she affirmed that her commitment to the board remains unwavering and expresses pride in representing the North Valleys.

Scott Finley received a majority of votes for his nomination as CAB Chair of the North Valleys Citizens Advisory Board and was elected as CAB Chair. Roger Edwards declined to be Vice Chair of the North Valleys CAB. Aaron Jennings was assumed as the Vice Chair, but there was no formal nomination or vote.
4. **PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District**
Derek Reid provided a public safety update emphasizing the current high to extreme wildfire risk due to hot temperatures, dry conditions, and afternoon winds. He reminded the public that over 80% of wildland fires are human-caused, often from everyday activities like mowing, welding, or barbecuing, and urged residents to be mindful of timing and conditions when working outdoors. He also stressed the importance of hydration during the heat, noting that people often wake up already dehydrated and should prepare for the day by drinking water early. Reid briefly touched on lightning safety, warning that if you can hear thunder, you're close enough to be at risk. He then reported recent incident statistics: 7 fire responses, 96 EMS calls, 6 motor vehicle accidents, 1 hazmat, 14 good intent calls, and 6 false alarms, totaling 216 calls. He concluded by introducing Chief Edwards.

Fire Chief Richard Edwards introduced himself as the new chief of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District. He shared that he brings 30 years of fire service experience, including 25 years with the City of Stockton, where he rose through every rank and served as fire chief for the past five and a half years. Edwards highlighted his background in addressing financial challenges, dispatch coordination, community partnerships, and regional collaboration—issues he believes are relevant to Truckee Meadows as well. He expressed his pride in serving the community and his enthusiasm for working together moving forward.

\*\*This part of item #6 came after item #10
**Washoe County Sheriff’s Office**
Lieutenant Nick Tone introduced himself as recently promoted and now overseeing the North Valleys area, having previously served in the Crystal Bay and Cold Springs regions. He provided a brief public safety update noting that while 911 and other dispatched calls for service in the North Valleys are slightly down from a three-year average of 768 to just under 700, self-initiated activity by deputies has increased significantly—from an average of 834 to 1,158—due to improved staffing levels. He mentioned increased DUI enforcement in neighborhoods and highlighted that July 4th was extremely busy for dispatch, with over 2,911 calls received that day alone. Despite the high volume, he felt the holiday was handled successfully.
5. **WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS AND RESOURCES**

\*\*This item was delayed allowing the presenter, Brett Taylor, time to arrive.

Brett Taylor delivered a presentation on wildfire preparedness, focusing on proactive steps homeowners can take to protect their properties before a fire occurs. He emphasized that the region is currently in peak fire season, with hot, dry, and windy conditions that increase fire intensity and spread—especially between 2 and 5 p.m. on red flag days. Taylor explained that defensible space and "home hardening" are critical to survival, particularly in older homes that are more susceptible to fire due to materials like wood shake roofs and untreated siding. He encouraged removing combustible materials near homes, clearing debris under decks, and replacing vents and roofing with fire-resistant materials. Taylor showed a video illustrating how embers can ignite structures by entering vents and gutters or collecting them in vulnerable areas. He stressed the importance of creating a 0–5-foot non-combustible zone around homes and extending defensible space up to 200 feet to reduce fire intensity. He noted that firefighters often have to triage during a wildfire and may not be able to save homes without adequate mitigation. He also covered key emergency tools, including Smart911 (which replaces Code Red), PerimeterMap.com for real-time evacuation updates, and Community Connect for sharing property-specific information with first responders. Lastly, he urged attendees to prepare a go-bag or evacuation checklist to be ready for emergencies, particularly when evacuation orders come with little warning. Taylor concluded by encouraging everyone to take these steps seriously to improve safety and readiness for the fire season.

Becky Flannery asked about the validity of using the Watch Duty app. In response to Becky Flannery’s question, Brett Taylor confirmed that Watch Duty is effective and uses Perimeter data but noted that Perimeter is the official platform used by Washoe County. He explained that while Watch Duty aggregates broader information, including from social media, Perimeter is more reliable for receiving direct, official evacuation updates from emergency management and is therefore the recommended resource.

Brett Taylor concluded his presentation by highlighting available wildfire mitigation resources. He noted that Green Waste Days will return to the district this fall, though curbside chipping is currently paused due to budget constraints. He is exploring grant funding to restore that service. Taylor encouraged the safe use of open burning during designated months like December and April, with proper permits. He also offered defensible space inspections and personalized property recommendations, inviting attendees to contact him directly for support and guidance.
6. **REPORT ON REQUESTS FOR SERVICE FROM PREVIOUS CAB MEETINGS**There were no requests for service to report on.
7. **NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELPOMENT HUB & OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Sally Johnston provided a walkthrough on how to access neighborhood development and Citizen Advisory Board information through the Washoe County website. She explained that by visiting **washoecounty.gov** and selecting “Connect with your Commissioners,” users can navigate to the Citizen Advisory Board and Neighborhood Meeting Hub pages. From there, residents can view upcoming development projects by district, including details on cases such as the Red Rock Road abandonment, Silver Hills amendment, and Village Parkway—all scheduled for the August 5 Planning Commission meeting. She encouraged residents to explore the site to review project documents and public comments. Johnston also demonstrated how to sign up for email updates by district and how to use the QR code on the CAB agenda to access the engagement portal, where the public can submit topics for future CAB meetings. She concluded by highlighting the usefulness of the site for staying informed about local development and advisory board activities.

1. **BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS/REQUESTS/DISCUSSION**Scott Finley requested that two items be placed on the next Citizen Advisory Board agenda. First, he referenced a prior public comment from Joy and Donald Anhold regarding a zoning change in the Horizon Hills neighborhood from residential to industrial use, specifically concerning a parcel near the Key Vine foothills. Finley asked that someone from the City of Reno present on the potential benefits of this zoning change and others nearby. Second, he requested a discussion on how Washoe County verifies the business status of developers and applicants seeking zoning changes or special use permits. He suggested a presentation by County staff to explain policies and procedures related to screening and auditing entities for compliance with Nevada Secretary of State business registration requirements. While others noted that presentations on development issues have historically been removed from CAB responsibilities, Finley acknowledged that he would still follow up to find a City of Reno point of contact.
2. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**Jesse Huntsman, a volunteer neighborhood ambassador with Fire Adapted Nevada, shared his efforts to promote wildfire preparedness and defensible space education. Motivated by personal family losses in past wildfires, he and his wife have started a small business providing defensible space services. He emphasized that his current outreach is volunteer-based and includes distributing University of Nevada–approved fire safety literature and QR codes linking to educational materials. Huntsman is also working with other neighborhood ambassadors to pilot volunteer clean-up days to assist vulnerable residents—such as seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities—with vegetation removal and hauling services. He invited others to become ambassadors and contribute to the cause. In response, Roger Edwards noted that organizing debris removal, like green waste days, typically falls under the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District and agreed there is a clear need for more community support in this area.

Suzie expressed her appreciation for the Sheriff's Office and Fire Department, noting that she closely follows legislation and County Commission activities. She shared her opinion against consolidating fire services, stating that many North Valleys residents prefer to keep their current fire department independent. She acknowledged that there are differing views on the issue but emphasized the importance of residents understanding both the pros and cons. She concluded by expressing hope that their County Commissioner will support the community’s position.

**ADJOURNMENT** The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 P.M.