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**Sun Valley Citizen Advisory Board Minutes of the regular meeting of the Sun Valley Citizen Advisory Board held on May 3, 2025, at 10:00 A.M. at Hobey’s Casino, 5195 Sun Valley Boulevard, Sun Valley, NV 89433.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**
Present – Heidi Soper, Michael Rider, Amy Owens, Mark Neumann, Veronica Cortes (late)

Absent – Mary Esposito, Carmen Ortiz

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**The pledge of allegiance was recited
2. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**Diane Langs expressed concern about Senate Bill 318, which initially proposed consolidating fire departments and allowing taxation beyond the current property tax cap—an "unfunded mandate" impacting residents’ wallets. A revised draft now calls only for a study of the issue. She urged Sun Valley residents to monitor the bill over the next two years. Langs warned that creating a new fire entity could allow additional taxation authority, leading to more debt and higher property taxes, which she argued already hinder homeownership. She advocated for mutual aid agreements and a single dispatch center, as done in Clark County. She also highlighted other potential tax increases under consideration: sales tax, DMV fees, and a possible mileage tax after a current pilot ends. Lastly, she raised alarms about Assembly Joint Resolution 1, which proposes eliminating property tax abatements upon sale or transfer, triggering full reassessment and higher taxes for new owners. This would require a constitutional amendment and voter approval, and she encouraged ongoing public vigilance.

Mark Neumann voiced concern that Washoe County is increasingly limiting community input, particularly by shifting decision-making power away from Citizen Advisory Boards (CABs). He criticized the move toward **“Constituent Advisory Boards,”** suggesting it diminishes local influence. He referenced the **Chocolate Drive project**, where community members opposed apartments in favor of houses, but the County Commission sided with the developer, ignoring public input. Neumann urged residents to **tell commissioners they want to retain the CAB structure** and maintain meaningful community involvement. He also opposed a proposal to **combine Districts 3 and 5 into a single commission seat**, warning it would reduce representation for Sun Valley. His message: **speak up to preserve local voice and oversight in development decisions.**

Alexandra Wilson provided an update on the recent CAB input session focused on revising the **CAB ordinance language**. She clarified that the process is still in the early stages and mainly involves **cleaning up language**, which will eventually lead to revisions in **bylaws and resolutions** related to the CAB's purpose and function. She also noted that several CABs **share district boundaries**: Sun Valley with West Truckee Meadows, South Truckee Meadows, and others involving Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. For those who missed the meeting, she mentioned that the **recording and draft ordinance** are available on the CAB homepage. The updated ordinance will go before the **Board of County Commissioners on June 13**, and she invited anyone interested to reach out for an invitation to attend.

1. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF** April 5, 2025 –

**Heidi Soper motioned to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2025, Sun Valley CAB meeting. Mark Neumann seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously .**

1. **PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATES –**

Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
Derek Reid provided the Truckee Meadows Fire & Rescue public safety update for April 2025. The department responded to 264 total calls, including 6 fires, 199 EMS calls, 9 motor vehicle accidents, 6 hazardous materials incidents, 8 public assists, 30 good intent calls, and 5 false alarms. He also highlighted that detailed information on open and recreational burning is available on the TMFR website, with user-friendly navigation. He reminded attendees that open burning is currently closed until fall and encouraged residents to consult the website for guidance on fire codes and regulations.

Heidi Soper asked for clarification on how hazardous materials (hazmat) calls are handled and how the community would be notified if an evacuation became necessary. Derek Reid explained that most hazmat calls are minor incidents, such as a fuel spill or a leaking propane tank, typically resolved by a single engine company. If the situation escalates to a more serious level (a “hazmat two”), additional agencies are brought in to help manage it. Regarding community notification, Reid stated that the fire department uses a mobile application that links directly to emergency management. They can draw a custom evacuation zone on their phones, which is then relayed to emergency management to initiate public notifications—like the process used for wildland fire evacuations.

Michael Rider asked about the outlook for this year’s fire season. Derek Reid responded that it’s hard to predict, but they expect **more of the same**—increased fire risk once it becomes **hot, dry, and windy**. He added that their department is preparing through **preseason planning meetings**, both internally and with cooperating agencies, to ensure coordination and readiness for fire response across shared boundaries.

Carol Burns asked if the **goats used for vegetation management**, as seen on TV, could be brought to **Sun Valley** to help reduce fire risk. Derek Reid explained that those goats are typically used on **larger BLM-managed parcels** and **wildland-urban interface areas**. He said he wasn't certain about the criteria or availability for Sun Valley and would need to **follow up with BLM** to get more information.

Michael Rider asked for BLM to be a a future CAB agenda topic and that Commissioner Garcia will possibly addressing this later during her comments.

Veronica Cortes, new to fire department issues, asked Derek Reid for his thoughts on the proposed changes. Reid acknowledged he’s aware of the situation and described it as **another study focused more on financial impacts than operations**. With 25 years of experience, he noted that **similar studies have come and gone over decades**, and that major changes **won’t happen suddenly**. While he couldn’t take an official position, he advised staying **informed and patient**, emphasizing that no decisions have been made yet and more information is still to come.

Washoe County Sheriff’s Office

Sergeant Davis from the Washoe County Sheriff's Office provided a public safety update focused on crime activity in Sun Valley. He noted that an information sheet with crime statistics for the area, including data from the first quarter of 2025, is available at the back of the room. In April alone, the Sheriff's Office responded to 1,080 calls for service countywide, with 368 of those—about 34%—occurring in the Sun Valley area, which is designated as Beat 3. He also explained the black mourning band on his badge, known as a memorial band, worn in recognition of public safety memorial observances throughout May. These include National Firefighters Memorial Day, National Law Enforcement Memorial Day on May 15, and Emergency Medical Services Remembrance Day on May 24. While no peace officers were killed in the line of duty in Nevada in 2024—a rare and fortunate outcome—232 names will be added nationally to the Law Enforcement Memorial, 165 of whom died in 2024. Nevada has already recorded a line-of-duty death in 2025: North Las Vegas Police Officer Jason Roscoe, who was killed by gunfire in February. Memorial ceremonies are ongoing, with recent events held in Carson City and Reno.

Ellen Chapin expressed their appreciation for what law enforcement does for the community.

1. **NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB & OTHER ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES –**

Alexandra Wilson provided an overview of the Neighborhood Development Hub, explaining how residents can access information about local projects and meetings by visiting washoecounty.gov and searching for “Neighborhood Development.” From there, users can view a list of current projects, access meeting recordings (audio or video), see questions asked, and review summaries. All gathered input is compiled by county planners and included in staff reports presented to governing bodies like the Planning Commission or County Commission. She noted that no new projects are currently listed for the Sun Valley area but encouraged residents to reach out if they need help navigating the site or learning more about existing developments. Wilson also announced openings on two county boards. One is for the Nevada Local Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council, which advises the Nevada Sentencing Commission. There are no strict qualifications, but those with experience or interest in recidivism are encouraged to apply. The other vacancy is on the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife, where the public seat is currently open. No district or professional requirements apply—just an interest in wildlife, hunting, fishing, or related issues.

A citizen asked how to access county information and apply for board openings without using a computer, internet, or social media. Alexandra Wilson responded that she could mail or hand deliver printed materials or have them available at CAB meetings. For applications, she can provide a printed version to be filled out by hand, and then manually enter the information into the system. She assured the resident that this is a common and easily accommodated request.

1. **BOARD MEMBER/COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS/ REQUESTS/ DISCUSSION -**

Commissioner Mariluz Garcia began by expressing appreciation for the recognition of the James D. Hoff Peace Officer Memorial, which she attends annually, describing it as a powerful and emotional event that honors first responders and their sacrifices. She emphasized that a healthy community depends on a safe community and expressed deep gratitude for public safety personnel. She shared highlights from her busy week, including providing opening remarks at a substance abuse and mental health conference and attending a senior fair. She also participated in the Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful cleanup, where she volunteered at a site near Pyramid Highway, an area prone to illegal dumping. During the cleanup, she and other volunteers intercepted a person attempting to dump a large load of trash, and they successfully encouraged the individual to use the designated dumpster. Commissioner Garcia announced an upcoming event called “TNT: Tires and TVs,” scheduled for Saturday, May 31, from 9 a.m. to noon at Scolari’s in Sun Valley. The event will provide free disposal for tires—up to 15 per household—and electronic waste like TVs, monitors, and computers. She encouraged residents to spread the word and mentioned the need for Spanish-speaking volunteers to assist during the event. She then addressed three key topics requested by meeting organizers. First, she provided an update on Stella Drive, where a year-long squatting situation on private land had worsened. After she raised concerns, multiple county departments coordinated a response, resulting in trespass warnings, offers of assistance to those squatting, and a cleanup carried out by the private landowners at their own expense. She reported major progress and hoped the property would be fenced to prevent future issues. Second, she discussed illegal dumping on BLM land. Garcia had invited a BLM officer to present to the County Commission, which revealed that BLM lacks the staffing and budget to conduct cleanups unless hazardous materials are involved. She emphasized that it falls on local communities to report dumping through 311, and that cleanups are often carried out by volunteer organizations. She encouraged continued community engagement in addressing the problem. Finally, she spoke about the Protect Grant and the effort to bring Sun Valley Boulevard under county control. Although a Connecting Communities grant application was denied and the Protect Grant submission was disqualified due to a federal deadline issue, she remains committed to securing the $40 million needed for necessary infrastructure improvements. The project had support from NDOT, which offered a matching $40 million. Garcia shared her disappointment and said she had already met with Senator Catherine Cortez Masto and will soon meet with Senator Jacky Rosen and other federal officials in Washington, D.C. to advocate for future funding opportunities. She closed by assuring residents that she will continue pushing for resources to improve Sun Valley and will keep the community informed.

Ellen Chapin raised a concern for the third time about the traffic signal configuration from McCarran to Selmi Drive, requesting that someone address the issue. She mentioned that the details were included in an email and acknowledged that she had not yet contacted Bill Thomas but intended to do so. The response acknowledged the concern and apologized for the delay in following up.

Carol Burns asked for an update on the Reno-Dandini apartment development and whether anyone had contacted the developer, Bill Rogers, as discussed at a previous meeting. Commissioner Mariluz Garcia clarified that she is not involved with the project, as it falls within the City of Reno’s jurisdiction, not Washoe County’s. She suggested that Carol reach out to Reno City Councilwoman Megan Ebert, who represents that area, to express concerns and potentially have Ebert contact the developer.

Mark Neumann asked for an update on the BMX park at Sun Valley Regional Park. The response explained that there had been a communication gap between the BMX group, known as the Biggest Little City Bike Group, and Washoe County. However, after Commissioner Herman helped facilitate a conversation, county staff and the bike group reconnected and began working together on the redesign and redevelopment of the park. While the speaker had not personally visited the site yet, they noted that progress is being made and that the bike community is now feeling more reassured and appreciative after direct communication resumed.

Veronica Cortes shared that the cleanup of the Stella property began with a simple text conversation between her and another community member, sparked by concern for her family's nearby property. She emphasized that meaningful change can start with one person speaking up and encouraged others to take action, noting that support often follows when someone takes the first step. She also shared a dramatic anecdote about one of the motorhomes involved being pushed down the street and later catching fire, illustrating the chaotic and challenging nature of the situation. Despite the complications, she expressed gratitude for everyone's efforts in addressing the issue.

1. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT –**

Michael Rider gave an update on the Stella Drive cleanup, noting that most of the area has been cleared and that he has personally monitored progress, even using drones to track it. He mentioned that residents know where many of the displaced motorhomes relocated, and confirmed that the motorhome that had caught fire was finally towed away, possibly relocated to another nearby area. He expressed frustration that some individuals refused help despite the outreach efforts and offered to share additional details in a private conversation. He then highlighted the vibrant community activity happening simultaneously at the local park, where soccer games, BMX races, and baseball were taking place. He encouraged others to take time to enjoy these moments and support local youth, reminding everyone that these recreational opportunities are part of what their community efforts are meant to protect and enhance. Rider thanked Commissioner Garcia and everyone involved in the Stella cleanup and stated that their next focus will be addressing issues at Quartz Lane. He emphasized the power of community collaboration, saying that while individuals can only do so much, meaningful change happens when everyone comes together with shared purpose. He closed by expressing appreciation for all who actively contribute to making the community a better place.

Heidi Soper thanked everyone for attending the meeting, acknowledging that many other things were happening that day. She encouraged community members to share any topics they’d like to discuss, even if they’re uncomfortable speaking publicly. She offered herself and other board members as points of contact for private conversations and emphasized that all concerns are welcome. She closed by expressing appreciation again and hoped to see everyone at the next meeting.

 Veronica Cortes expressed her gratitude to Commissioner Herman who acts as a mentor to her.

Alexandra Wilson began her announcement by thanking Heidi Soper for her behind-the-scenes work and mentorship, emphasizing how much she’s learned from her. She then provided a series of updates based on community requests and upcoming initiatives. She highlighted the upcoming "TNT: Tires and TVs" event and encouraged community members to help spread the word, especially to Spanish-speaking residents. She mentioned that 100 flyers would be printed for distribution and noted that two TVs per household will be accepted at the event, which is significant because TVs are particularly difficult to dispose of properly. Wilson also addressed a request for a senior scam prevention seminar. While she had been working on organizing one, she found that the Older Americans Month booklet already includes three scam prevention sessions hosted by the Better Business Bureau on May 6, 13, and 20. These sessions will take place at various libraries and may be recorded for those who cannot attend in person. Regarding concerns about overcrowding in local schools, Wilson reached out to the school district and confirmed that the schools are currently operating at about 80% capacity. She provided a flyer with enrollment breakdowns for those interested in more details. She also investigated a request about the old Blue Moon Bar site and discovered, through the county's planning system, that it is currently permitted for a new Dotty’s establishment. She acknowledged the system is not very user-friendly and said she would work on bringing in planning staff to help the public learn how to access and understand development information on their own. Another request involved bringing back Catholic Charities to provide an update on the services they offer in the Sun Valley area. Wilson said she is working on coordinating that visit. She then discussed upcoming changes due to Washoe County’s budget constraints. Starting in fiscal year 2026 (July 1, 2025), the county will no longer provide refreshments at Sun Valley CAB meetings, in line with practices at other CABs. She is reaching out to local businesses, like Kobe’s, to see if they would be willing to donate coffee or water. In addition to refreshments, she announced that CAB meetings will no longer be held on Saturdays. Beginning in FY26, the Sun Valley CAB will transition to a weekday evening schedule (Monday through Thursday), similar to other CABs. To determine the best time for the community, Wilson will distribute a survey through printed flyers, social media, email, and Nextdoor to gather input from residents about their preferred meeting days and times. She concluded by stating that these updates reflect the county’s efforts to streamline services while still ensuring the community remains informed and engaged.

Heidi Soper asked whether paint could be accepted at upcoming cleanup events that are currently focused on electronics and tires. Alexandra Wilson responded that while paint and other household hazardous waste were accepted at a previous event in November, the current strategy is to target specific waste types to maximize collection efficiency. However, she anticipates future events will again include paint and other hazardous items. She also mentioned that the City of Reno is conducting similar collection events and may accept household hazardous waste, possibly without residency requirements. She offered to share the city’s information via email or printouts. Heidi then asked if it could be noted that May is Older Americans Month, and Alexandra confirmed that the booklet she provided includes a variety of senior activities beyond just the three scam prevention seminars, including numerous meetings and events hosted throughout the month.

Mark Neumann mentioned that May is Older Americans Month, and Alexandra Wilson confirmed he was correct. She added that the month officially begins May 1 and highlighted that the event booklet includes a wide range of activities—both social and educational—such as those hosted by the Better Business Bureau. She encouraged everyone to take a copy of the booklet, noting she helped edit it and ensured it was ready for the community to enjoy and participate in.

Carol Burns asked for an update on two properties at 310 and 320 Gifford Way, where she believes businesses are being run. Alexandra Wilson responded that there is an open code enforcement case for those addresses but did not have specific details on the status. She explained that the code enforcement process can be slow due to its administrative nature but offered to look into it further with Carol after the meeting and follow up together.

\*The recording cut off after this comment.

1. **ADJOURNMENT –**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 am**.**