

WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSION  
RENO CITY COUNCIL  
SPARKS CITY COUNCIL

JOINT MEETING

TUESDAY

9:00 A.M.

DECEMBER 17, 2002

PRESENT:

Pete Sferrazza, Washoe County Commissioner, Chairman

Jim Galloway, Washoe County Commissioner\*

Jim Shaw, Washoe County Commissioner

Ted Short, Washoe County Commissioner

Robert A. Cashell, City of Reno, Mayor

Dave Aiazzi, Reno City Councilmember\*

Dwight Dortch, Reno City Councilmember

Toni Harsh, Reno City Councilmember

Pierre Hascheff, Reno City Councilmember

Jessica Sferrazza, Reno City Councilmember

Sharon Zadra, Reno City Councilmember

Tony Armstrong, City of Sparks, Mayor

Michael Carrigan, Sparks City Councilmember

Geno Martini, Sparks City Councilmember

Phil Salerno, Sparks City Councilmember

Ron Schmitt, Sparks City Councilmember

ABSENT:

Joanne Bond, Washoe County Commissioner, Vice Chairman

John Mayer, Sparks City Councilmember

The Board and Councils met in joint session in the Council Chambers of Reno City Hall, 490 South Center Street, Reno, Nevada. Also present were Washoe County Manager Katy Singlaub, Deputy District Attorney Paul Lipparelli, County Clerk Amy Harvey, Reno City Manager Charles McNeely, Reno City Attorney Patricia Lynch, Reno City Clerk Lynnette Jones, and Sparks City Manager Shaun Carey. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerks called the roll for their respective entities, and the Commission and Councils conducted the following business:

AGENDA

Chairman Sferrazza stated that Commissioner Galloway has advised he would be arriving late to the meeting and requested that Item 5 regarding the City of Reno Redevelopment Agency's request for use of the 1/8-cent infrastructure sales tax

money to replace a floodwall on the Truckee River be heard after Item 7 concerning the consolidation of roads maintenance and snow removal.

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, on motion by Councilmember Martini, seconded by Councilmember Harsh, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that the agenda for the December 17, 2002 joint meeting be approved.

**\*9:03 a.m.** Councilmember Aiazzi arrived at the meeting.

**02-1303** **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Sam Dehne, Reno resident, expressed appreciation for the hard working Washoe County, Reno and Sparks staff members who are taking care of the problems during the bad weather Reno is experiencing. He also commended the Air and Army National Guard and SNCAT. Mr. Dehne thanked the Reno City Council for keeping Public Comment at the beginning of the Council meetings.

Susan Donaldson, University of Nevada, Cooperative Extension, discussed issues regarding noxious weeds that are becoming a greater threat in the Truckee Meadows. She advised the Cities of Reno and Sparks, Washoe County and local residents share the responsibility for managing the weeds. Treatment costs increase every year and the community cannot afford to wait to address the problem. Ms. Donaldson urged the Joint Board to consider a coordinated weed management program that would share resources and achieve cost effective weed management in the entire region.

Lori Bellis, Cooperative Weed Management Area Coordinator, Nevada Department of Agriculture, stated they are promoting Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMA) as a way to control noxious weed infestations. They would like the CWMA to encompass the entire Truckee Meadows, but, at the least, have coordinated activities along areas where weeds spread the most, such as roadways, waterways, and recreational areas. Ms. Bellis submitted material concerning this issue, which was placed on file with the Clerk, and asked that this matter be placed on a joint meeting agenda.

Mayor Armstrong requested this item be placed on a future meeting of the Joint Board.

**02-1304** **PARKS CONSOLIDATION**

This item was continued from the November 19, 2002 joint meeting.

Gary Goelitz, Consultant with MAXIMUS, reviewed their assessment of the cost impact of regionalizing park maintenance services. He said the report indicates the cost savings for consolidating park maintenance between the City of Reno and the

County would not be significant. Mr. Goelitz stated he is not suggesting that consolidation should not be pursued, and the entities may want to examine alternatives ranging from consolidation of park maintenance functions to interagency contracting of some services.

Mayor Cashell stated he believes a significant amount of money would be saved if staff and the consultant were directed to study a consolidation of all the agencies, and he does not think piecemealing is the answer.

Commissioner Shaw suggested the School District be involved in the study because of their ballfields.

Upon inquiry of Councilmember Aiazzi, Mr. Goelitz advised a range of alternatives could be considered that would begin with simple procedures like interagency contracting and increase to a complete analysis of consolidating the entire parks departments. He said, as the scope is broadened, the savings would increase, and the consolidation study would normally take three to four months at a cost of approximately \$25,000.

Councilmember Hascheff suggested that, if Sparks is interested, their staff could participate in the study to determine the savings that would occur from consolidation of all three parks departments. He said the study would be brought to the Joint Board, and interlocal agreements and other alternatives could be considered at that time. He said the short-term goal would be to look at immediate efficiencies that could be gained while completing the study in the next three to four months.

Katy Singlaub, County Manager, advised the staff report outlines areas of opportunity for interlocal agreements for park maintenance, contains a list of tasks the staff of the three agencies could participate in, and defines a timeline for that process. The report also sets forth a timeline for the agencies to work together on comprehensive park planning services and a regional reservation system. She said staff would add a component for an overall analysis of consolidation that would include the School District.

Sam Dehne, Reno resident, suggested waiting for the financial results of consolidation of the fire departments to see if that was successful.

Councilmember Hascheff moved that staff of the respective agencies and the consultant be authorized to complete the parks consolidation analysis. The scope of work would include looking at consolidation of the Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County parks departments and a timeline for that study. The interim steps outlined in the staff report would be put together with a timeline and brought back to the Joint Board for consideration, while proceeding with the consolidation study, which would include the School District.

Reno City Manager McNeely asked if the Managers would be authorized to discuss what could be done in-house and what would need to be done by the consultant. Councilmember Hascheff said his motion does not require the hiring of a consultant and provides flexibility to do in-house work and retain the consultant for the outside expertise that would be needed. He said the motion also contemplates that when everything is compiled, a report would be presented to the Joint Board before going forward with any additional work. He stated the end product would be a determination of the cost savings to the community or region, if the School District and all three entities consolidated their Parks and Recreation Departments.

Councilmember Harsh said the quality of the parks should be reviewed as part of the report back to the Board. Councilmember Hascheff agreed and stated any consolidation analysis would need to look at levels of service. Councilmember Harsh seconded the motion.

**\*9:50 a.m.** Commissioner Galloway arrived at the meeting.

Sparks City Manager Shaun Carey suggested that governance of a consolidated department be considered. He said parks and recreation is a service that is very close to the people in all of the local communities.

On call for the question, the motion for the City of Reno passed unanimously.

On motion by Commissioner Shaw, seconded by Commissioner Short, which motion duly carried, Chairman Sferrazza ordered that staff be directed to proceed with an evaluation of parks consolidation, which study would include determining whether or not to use a consultant and would include the Cities of Reno and Sparks, Washoe County and the School District. Staff would proceed with the list of recommendations for savings that might be achieved in the interim, and the study would be broad enough to determine the savings if only the City of Reno and Washoe County consolidated. He noted that parks and recreation services would be included in this evaluation.

Upon inquiry of Councilmember Martini, City Manager Carey said his opinion and the opinion of the Sparks Parks and Recreation Director is that proceeding further with studies of consolidation of their entire Parks and Recreation Department is not appropriate at this time. He advised that Sparks completed their community resource plan and a reengineering effort and believes their services are appropriate and efficient for the community. He said the Sparks City Council passed a resolution directing staff to seek efficiencies rather than looking at consolidation of services. Staff would support the recommendations of Mr. Goelitz in the areas where Sparks can achieve efficiencies. Mayor Armstrong noted the voters have twice told the City of Sparks they do not want any part of consolidation of their parks and/or recreation services.

The City of Sparks did not make a motion on this item.

Upon inquiry, Mr. McNeely said his understanding is that staff would move forward as a joint body but limit Sparks' involvement to efficiencies. The next tier of the evaluation would be consolidation with respect to Washoe County, the City of Reno, and the School District.

**02-1305      REQUEST TO USE 1/8-CENT INFRASTRUCTURE SALES TAX MONEY FOR REPLACEMENT OF FLOODWALL ON TRUCKEE RIVER – CITY OF RENO REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

This item was continued from the November 19, 2002 joint meeting.

Doreen Soto, City of Reno Redevelopment Agency, advised that, at last month's joint meeting, staff presented their Midblock riverfront project consisting of 4 restaurants and 14 apartments. She said, in conjunction with the project, staff is talking with the Corps of Engineers because Reno would like to replace the floodwall at the same time the Midblock development is constructed, and this would allow them to receive Section 104 approval from the Corps of Engineers. She said they have also pursued some Federal grant money to provide a cost savings to the flood control funds.

Steve Varela, City Engineer, City of Reno, conducted a PowerPoint presentation that depicted the floodwall design and how the floodwall replacement fits in with the overall flood project and the Midblock project. He said the floodwall design meets all Corps of Engineers requirements, but design adjustments could be made before construction is implemented. Mr. Varela advised they continue to pursue development of a stair-stepped wall that would meet Corps requirements. He stated that early implementation of the floodwall would save \$400,000 to the flood project. He advised the total cost of the Midblock floodwall is about \$1.2-million, they are asking for approximately \$800,000 of the 1/8-cent flood money, and \$400,000 would come from Federal TEA-21 grants. Mr. Varela advised the project passed Section 106 review, the environmental review for the floodwall. Early construction of the floodwall would benefit the taxpayers because, if the floodwall is not built to meet Corps requirements in conjunction with the Midblock Project, the work would essentially have to be redone.

Mr. Varela then discussed the major flood control alternatives considered by the Community Coalition that went to the Corps for review through the EIS process. The alternatives included rehabilitation of existing bridges, replacing matching bridges with reinforced concrete bridges similar to the Center Street bridge, replacing landmarked bridges with clear span bridges, and preserving the Virginia Street Bridge. He stated the most hydraulically beneficial alternative was determined to be the landmark bridges. Mr. Varela advised the Corps is mandated to conduct the 106 process, which means looking at every possible means and alternative to preserve as much of the Virginia Street Bridge as possible in a historic manner and still meet flood criteria and project goals.

Councilmember Harsh noted the reference from staff is to the bridges, but the focus has always been on the Virginia Street Bridge because of a pre-existing

Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Reno and the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT). She expressed concern that the downtown bridges were analyzed together, and a modeling has not been done just for the Virginia Street Bridge; and that the analysis does not look at the ability of floodable upstream parks already incorporated in the flood plan to assist with downstream flooding. She said she is also concerned that the entities move through the EIS and this project in an orderly and legal fashion, commenting it is important the governmental entities take actions that would minimize harm to historic properties. Councilmember Harsh stated she feels the project is premature and is concerned the process is done in the correct interest of the entire flood plan.

Chairman Sferrazza said he thought the north floodwall would be stair-stepped or have something to beautify it. Mr. Varela advised the proposed floodwall is more architecturally pleasing, and there is some flexibility with design.

Commissioner Galloway stated the only way to be sure the project is compatible with the EIS is to let the 106 process be completed. He referred to a memorandum dated December 6, 2002 from Paul Urban, Washoe County Flood Control Manager, which discussed the existing channel and terraced floodwalls. Commissioner Galloway said a vertical wall would not be compatible with terraced floodwalls, and he prefers the terraced floodwall. Commissioner Galloway moved that no action be taken to make these funds available early. The motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Varela advised the Corps has said the proposed project is compatible. He stated, as the 106 process is completed, there is a potential for redesign.

Councilmember Sferrazza disclosed that her cousin is involved with this project and said she would abstain on the vote on this item.

Chairman Sferrazza said Councilmember Sferrazza's cousin is his niece by a former marriage, but is not a blood relative. He said he does not think she has any investment in the project or that he has a conflict of interest. Paul Lipparelli, Deputy District Attorney, said he did not think Chairman Sferrazza had a conflict but Councilmember Sferrazza might because of her blood relation to the person.

Councilmember Schmitt suggested a possibility for obtaining a commitment from the Joint Board would be for the Redevelopment Agency to loan the money for the project. He said the Joint Board could commit that, when everything falls into place and the flood control project is approved, the money would be reimbursed to the Redevelopment Agency. He stated this would put the responsibility on the City of Reno to perform on the project and obtain designs agreeable to everyone.

Commissioner Galloway stated the project could be built without these funds, as it could be constructed on a pad with a temporary or permanent wall. He said advancing the funds could impact the availability of money to acquire land or for use for some other part of the flood control project. He said he would be disappointed if he

supported the request and later found the floodwall was not terraced or was built in a manner that ruled out some other alternative. He would like to wait and see all the options.

Councilmember Dortch said it makes sense to take advantage of the opportunity to receive \$400,000 in grant funds and construct the floodwall in conjunction with the Midblock Project.

Mayor Cashell said he would assure there would not be an ugly wall. Mayor Armstrong stated he believes Mayor Cashell would not allow anything that would be called ugly. He stated that, under the direction of the Mayor and Council, he believes Reno would move ahead with the best project possible.

Councilmember Aiazzi moved to proceed forward with the use of the 1/8-cent sales tax dollars for this flood control project. Councilmember Dortch seconded the motion.

Upon inquiry of Councilmember Hascheff, Mr. Lipparelli advised his understanding is, in order for the project to be done as contemplated, the County would have to amend the plan that was required by the enabling legislation for the use of the 1/8-cent flood money. Councilmember Hascheff commented that the City of Sparks and the City of Reno could vote in favor of the use of these funds, but the County would have the final say.

Commissioner Galloway asked if the motion intended there must be terraced walls, because he was given assurances there would not be an ugly vertical wall. Councilmember Aiazzi advised the motion did not say there would be a terraced wall, but Reno would do their best to make it attractive. Mayor Cashell stated the design of the proposed floodwall could be modified as long as it complies with Corps requirements, and the City's desire would be that it looks like what is in front of the Riverside Artist's Apartments, if that is possible.

Sam Dehne, Reno resident, said he is in favor of savings taxes, flood control, and fairness. He said, before this project is allowed, every property owner along the river should be given the same opportunity to mitigate flooding. He said he is against doing this piecemeal.

On call for the question, Councilmember Harsh voted "no," and Councilmember Sferrazza "abstained," and the City of Reno's motion passed 5-2.

Councilmember Carrigan said he would make the same motion as Reno. Councilmember Martini seconded the motion.

Mr. Carrigan stated he trusts Reno to do the best they can for flood control. Councilmember Martini said this matter boils down to an issue of saving \$400,000 and a lack of trust. He trusts the Reno City Council will do the best for their

City, and the lack of cooperation and trust that exists between the three entities bothers him. Councilmember Schmitt stated he would not support the motion. He said he has found, when someone is willing to spend money out of their own pocket, they scrutinize the project a bit better. The Reno Redevelopment Agency has the money for this type of project, and, if they want this to go forward, they should loan the money for the project.

On call for the question, the City of Sparks motion passed 3-1 with Councilmember Schmitt voting "no."

Commissioner Shaw said he trusts that the City of Reno has a good project, and has faith that Mayor Cashell would assure something appropriate and in good taste would be done. He moved to make the same motion as Reno and Sparks for the release of money so Reno could move forward with their project. Commissioner Short seconded the motion with the caveat the project would be completely compatible and reviewed by the Flood Coalition for final design.

Commissioner Galloway stated he would not support the motion. He said the early release of money prior to the project being designed in its entirety is not a good idea, except for land acquisition. He commented that, by law, this is a County project, and the County has the responsibility of assuring the design is for a good flood control project that benefits everyone.

Chairman Sferrazza said he believes the County is ultimately responsible for what the project looks like. He stated he thought, to the extent possible, the north floodwall would be terraced or made to look natural, and does not see why that could not be a condition of approval.

Legal Counsel Lipparelli commented that this would not be the County Commission's last opportunity to look at the details of the project.

Councilmember Hascheff said the City of Reno has a lot of work to do on the project and they would want flexibility on the design. He suggested that, before Reno makes the final decision on the design, it be brought back to the joint body for final review.

Commissioner Galloway said the flood control project is the County Commission's responsibility by State law, and he does not want the project designed piecemeal. He stated, if this comes back for design approval, it should be to a meeting of the County Commission, not a joint meeting.

On call for the question, Commissioners Shaw and Short voted "aye." Chairman Sferrazza and Commissioner Galloway voted "no," and the motion failed with a tie vote.

Chairman Sferrazza said he would make a motion that would allow the County to ultimately see the designs to make sure they are compatible. He moved to authorize the City of Reno to go forward and bring their plan to the County Commission, with the understanding the County would have authority to approve or disapprove the release of funds based on the design.

Councilmember Aiazzi stated that, if the County Commission wants total control over the flood control project, the County staff should design the floodwall. He said he would not want City of Reno and Sparks staff to do this work and then come back for a yes or no on it.

Commissioner Galloway said he would support Chairman Sferrazza's motion, if it means the County Commission would take up the matter for discussion and possible action to the extent possible at the last meeting of the County Commission in January. He stated there will be two new Commissioners in January, and he thinks they need time to obtain some background on this matter.

Upon inquiry of Commissioner Short, Mr. Lipparelli stated no matter what motion is made the money cannot be spent from this source until the plan is adopted and the project is determined to be consistent with the plan.

Following further discussion, Chairman Sferrazza restated his motion that the City of Reno to go forward as far as possible, with the understanding the design and draft plan would come before the County Commission for action prior to any release of funds. Commissioner Short seconded the motion. On call for the question, Commissioner Galloway voted "no," and the motion passed 3-1.

**02-1306      AGENDA ITEMS FOR JANUARY, 2003 JOINT MEETING**

Following discussion by the Commission and Councilmembers, on motion by Councilmember Aiazzi, seconded by Councilmember Harsh, which motion duly carried, it was ordered that the following items be placed on the next joint meeting in the order presented:

Legislative Issues, Resolution Honoring Vivian Freeman, the Reno Annexation Plan, Road Maintenance and Snow Removal, and the Tiburon Software System.

It was further ordered that the following items be placed on future agendas:

Sex Offender Reporting, Noise Ordinance, and Cooperative Weed Management.

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There being no further business to come before the Joint Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

**ATTEST:**

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**PETER J. SFERRAZZA**, Chairman  
Washoe County Commission

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**AMY HARVEY**, County Clerk  
and Clerk of the Board of  
County Commissioners

**ATTEST:**

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**ROBERT A. CASHELL**, Mayor  
City of Reno

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**LYNNETTE R. JONES**, City Clerk  
City of Reno

**ATTEST:**

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**TONY ARMSTRONG**, Mayor  
City of Sparks

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**DEBORINE J. DOLAN**, City Clerk  
City of Sparks

*Minutes Prepared By  
Barbara Trow, Deputy County Clerk*