

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA

SPECIAL MEETING

MONDAY

9:00 A.M.

APRIL 10, 2006

PRESENT:

Bob Larkin, Chairman
Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairman
Jim Galloway, Commissioner
David Humke, Commissioner
Pete Sferrazza, Commissioner

Amy Harvey, County Clerk
Katy Singlaub, County Manager
Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel

The Board met in special session at the Ranch House at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park, 1595 North Sierra Street, Reno, Nevada. The Pledge of Allegiance was not conducted because there was no flag in the room. The Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

06-345 AGENDA

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, on motion by Commissioner Galloway, seconded by Commissioner Humke, which motion duly carried, Chairman Larkin ordered that the agenda for the April 10, 2006 special meeting be approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no response to the Chairman's call for public comment.

06-346 DISCUSSION – STRATEGIC PLAN TASK FORCE CHARTERS AND MEMBERSHIP

John Slaughter, Management Services Director, reviewed the task force charters and identified individuals submitted to serve as task force chairmen. He said serving on the task forces was an opportunity for leadership development. He noted a list of employees recommended by Human Resources to serve as associate chairmen. He said each of the suggested employees was going through a leadership development program through Human Resources. He noted the associate chairmen were not matched to a taskforce yet, and task force members were being identified.

Commissioner Galloway was concerned with making sure each task force was completely open to suggestions because it seemed the chairman of each task force

was also the director of the department the task force was dealing with and thought they might not be as open.

Katy Singlaub, County Manager, said they wanted to make sure there was an environment conducive to new ideas. She agreed the notion of the associate chairmen coming from a different content area was good for the employee in terms of broadening their awareness and allowing them to bring new perspectives and ideas forth.

In response to Commissioner Galloway, Ms. Singlaub said the chair and associate chair could be from the same department. Commissioner Galloway said each task force should have a couple of people from the department it was most concerned with but thought the majority of each task force should consist of people who did not depend on that leadership for promotions or ratings.

Commissioner Weber was concerned that two of the suggested associate chairmen were in the same departments as two of the chairmen. She wanted two people from other departments for wider representation.

Ms. Singlaub said staff would check with Human Resources to see if there were others in the leadership development program that could function in the associate chair role.

Chairman Larkin said this process would validate the indicators. He hoped they would continue to press for quantification of the measures and targets. He said there would be an initial tendency toward quality; but if something cannot be measured, it cannot be improved.

Ms. Singlaub said the priority, Cost Savings and Efficiencies Realized Through Regional Collaboration, would be difficult to accurately quantify.

Commissioner Sferrazza said it seemed the Board's policy-making role was being delegated to staff through the task forces, and he wanted to be more involved. He said when the task forces recommended action, a series of alternatives or suggestions for the Board to discuss and vote on should be presented. Ms. Singlaub reassured Commissioner Sferrazza that staff would not be creating plans like the Regional Open Space Plan but only recommending updates, and the decision to accept those recommendations was up to the Board. She said a preamble could be included in each charter that would state the Board of County Commissioners made all policy decisions.

Commissioner Humke discussed his concerns with the makeup of the task forces. Ms. Singlaub said the role of the chair was not to direct or be the advocate representative but to coordinate efforts.

In response to Commissioner Humke, Mr. Slaughter said people with appropriate backgrounds and skills would be sought to fill the spots on each task force. Commissioner Humke asked for regular interim reports.

Chairman Larkin said this was a departure from past standard practices in terms of how items came to the Board. He said this process would link an agenda item with a specific task force, goal, objective, and target; and all departments would use a standardized form to facilitate this.

Commissioner Galloway pointed out some issues would be addressed by more than one task force due to the nature of the issue.

Commissioner Sferrazza said the task force on Support a Healthy Economy should include someone from the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority. Chairman Larkin asked if the Board wanted to make a policy that required the County Manager to bring outside influence to these task forces. Commissioner Sferrazza thought it would be a good idea especially when discussing regional collaboration. He requested staff be directed to seek other entities to serve on the task forces.

In response to Commissioner Galloway, Ms. Singlaub said she was not sure the Board should appoint task force members, stating she was concerned with Open Meeting Law issues. She said she would meet with legal counsel to discuss possible issues.

In response to Commissioner Weber, Ms. Singlaub said Charting Our Course was implemented under the first goal of Improved Efficiency and Financial Stability of Washoe County. She said strategic planning should focus efforts and drive the things already being done toward specific results. She noted the process would require more reporting.

Commissioner Galloway said he did not want to be involved in selecting members of the task forces. He preferred a recommended list for Board approval.

Ms. Singlaub summarized the direction she had received as to try not to have associate chairmen from the same functional area of the priority in an effort to expand input and perspective. She said staff would go back to Human Resources to see if there were other individuals in the leadership development program that did not duplicate departments already represented. She said representation from other agencies or stakeholders that were impacted by the priorities would be encouraged to join the appropriate task force, and associate chairmen and members would be identified for each task force. She said language for the Regional Plan update would be considered, and alternatives for actions and measures would be brought forward.

On motion by Commissioner Sferrazza, seconded by Commissioner Weber, which motion duly carried, Chairman Larkin ordered that the recommended task force chairmen be approved.

06-347

DISCUSSION – STRATEGIC PLANNING CALENDAR AND STATUS REPORTS

Erica Olsen, Consultant, reviewed the Strategic Planning Timeline chart and suggested quarterly qualitative and semi-annual quantitative reporting. Commissioner Galloway felt both areas should be reported quarterly. Ms. Olsen said this could become overwhelming. Katy Singlaub, County Manager, agreed that it would be difficult to report quarterly on some of the measures. Commissioner Galloway said, with quarterly reporting, the Commissioners could look at the information and decide if they wanted it reported in a different manner.

Commissioner Sferrazza requested receipt of whatever materials the various task forces received including agendas. Ms. Singlaub said the task forces would not have agenda packets like the Commissioners received for County Commission meetings. She thought this would be a major endeavor and noted agendas would be generalized. After a general discussion of how task force meetings would be conducted, Ms. Singlaub said she would send copies of the agendas to Commissioner Sferrazza.

Commissioner Weber said the retreat scheduled for January 8, 2007 should be rescheduled, as that was the day elected Commissioners would be sworn in. It was decided to move the retreat to January 15, 2007, and a general discussion regarding future meetings followed.

10:17 a.m. Commissioner Humke temporarily left the meeting.

Chairman Larkin said approval of the associate chairmen should be a regular item on the Board of County Commissioner's agenda between now and the budget finalization.

Commissioner Sferrazza decided he did not need the task force agendas and asked that the chart provided by Ms. Olsen be redone to reflect the separate years.

Commissioner Galloway advised that the Board would receive a task force organizational report in May. Chairman Larkin noted the first quarterly meeting would be held in July.

06-348 **DISCUSSION – FISCAL YEAR 2007/08 STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS**

Chairman Larkin discussed having a meeting to solicit community input that the Board could consider for fiscal year 2007/08. He suggested staff be directed to put together meetings that would take place this July or August.

10:25 a.m. Commissioner Humke returned to the meeting.

Commissioner Weber said the Commissioners should seek input from their Citizen Advisory Boards (CAB's), stating they were already active and knew about the community. Commissioner Galloway supported that for 2006; however, he said a general public meeting should be held in February 2007.

Chairman Larkin said the all staff meeting would precede that date and suggested the meeting be held in September 2006. He also noted the Board should talk to the Cities.

Katy Singlaub, County Manager, noted that CAB's did not represent everyone the individual Commissioners represented. She said many issues crossed jurisdictional lines and thought this would be a great opportunity for the Board to be viewed as exercising regional leadership.

Commissioner Weber thought the CAB's and Neighborhood Advisory Boards should be surveyed. Commissioner Humke suggested a combination of contacts be used. He thought presenting a 10 to 15 minute talk to the CAB's could then lead to a community meeting.

Commissioner Galloway requested a report on the 2006/07 plan be sent to his CAB's sometime around August to allow time for them to think of what they would like to see in the future.

06-349 DISCUSSION – COUNTY COMMUNICATION POLICY AND PROTOCOL

Katy Singlaub, County Manager, reviewed the proposed policy and what had prompted it.

Commissioner Sferrazza thought the policy would cause problems and was overly burdensome. He said filtering everything through the Manager was not efficient. He stated the Commissioners had the same rights as any member of the public in contacting a staff member. He thought some staff might not want administration to know of their contact with a Commissioner, and he said sections of the policy went beyond the Open Meeting Law. He said the Board needed to review the policy paragraph by paragraph if they intended to adopt it. Commissioner Galloway said if they did not go through the policy in detail, no action should be taken.

Commissioner Weber disagreed, stating the policy would make for a more efficient process. She thought they should review the document and bring back any comments to the next retreat.

Chairman Larkin asked if there was general agreement among the Commissioners that a protocol was needed. Commissioner Galloway responded that each Commissioner had a process that worked for them.

Chairman Larkin noted Ms. Singlaub wanted something more formal. Ms. Singlaub said part of the issue was that staff needed to keep management in the loop. A general discussion of the policy took place.

Chairman Larkin asked Ms. Singlaub to provide an electronic copy of the policy to each Commissioner and that review of the policy be placed on the July retreat agenda.

Gary Schmidt, local resident, stated any e-mail received or sent dealing with the County should be instantly accessible to the public. Chairman Larkin asked Mr. Schmidt to speak to the agenda item. Mr. Schmidt said he was talking about communication, stating all communications ought to be on a website so the people could see how the Board operated making them easier to remove from office. Chairman Larkin again asked Mr. Schmidt to speak to the agenda item. Mr. Schmidt mentioned the Sunday *Reno-Gazette Journal* and an article regarding Ms. Singlaub. Chairman Larkin issued a first warning to Mr. Schmidt. Mr. Schmidt told the Chairman to take the wax out of his ears. At the request of Chairman Larkin, the Deputy Sheriff escorted Mr. Schmidt from the meeting.

06-350 DISCUSSION – RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Larkin said a gap in procedures had been identified as to how the Board would decide subcommittee participation and review of applicants for various boards and committees.

Commissioner Galloway suggested the language for number three read, “Non-Board member appointments to certain boards and commissions: This may be done upon recommendation of the subcommittee and can only be established by approved motion of the Board. The subcommittee shall not consist of any member of the County Commission. The Board may consider all applications in a public meeting if so desired.”

Katy Singlaub, County Manager, noted more information was needed regarding which Boards required subcommittees. Commissioner Sferrazza commented he would like to do away with subcommittees. Commissioner Galloway said the Board could let the County Manager know which boards would most likely have numerous applicants. A general discussion ensued.

Juanita Cox, local resident, discussed the proposed policy in regard to “Terms of Service of County Appointees on Boards,” stating more application scrutiny was needed.

Ms. Singlaub stated applications were checked and concerns of falsification had been responded to. She stated applicants who submitted false applications were excluded from consideration.

In response to Commissioner Galloway, Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel, did not recommend a statement regarding falsification be placed under number six of the policy, stating Chapter 5 of the County Code discussed appointment and removal of Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) members.

11:13 a.m. Commissioner Sferrazza temporarily left the meeting.

On motion by Commissioner Galloway, seconded by Commissioner Weber, which motion duly carried with Commissioner Sferrazza absent, Chairman Larkin ordered that language be added to number six in the policy reading, “Non-Board member appointments to certain boards and commissions: This may be done upon recommendation of the subcommittee and can only be established by approved motion of the Board. The subcommittee shall not consist of any member of the County Commission. The Board may consider all applications in a public meeting if so desired. If there are more than five applicants for a position and the appointment is not one tied to a specific Commissioner or District, the establishment of a subcommittee will be considered. All Commissioners whose Districts are represented in CAB boundaries will be included in the review of those applications.” It was further ordered that the word “years” under number three be replaced with the word “terms,” and the sentence beginning, “In the event a Board member has served two terms...” will end with, “Board member can be reappointed to the Board for another term.”

11:17 a.m. Commissioner Sferrazza returned to the meeting.

06-351 **DISCUSSION – BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS’ ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Chairman Larkin said the Commissioners should consider doing self-evaluations. He said it would help keep them accountable to each other and to themselves and asked if this was something the Board wanted to do.

Commissioner Galloway said categories for the evaluation could be legislative, quasi-judicial, executive, and outside boards.

Commissioner Sferrazza said he preferred an open process versus anonymous. He did not support the idea but would support team-building efforts.

Commissioner Humke said they would run the risk of creating additional issues among Commissioners. Commissioner Galloway agreed.

Chairman Larkin asked that ideas on this subject be brought back for discussion in July.

**DISCUSSION – COMMISSIONER INTERN POLICIES AND
PROTOCOL**

Commissioner Weber thanked County Manager Katy Singlaub and Management Services Director John Slaughter for making the intern program happen.

Mr. Slaughter reviewed the background of the program and the proposed protocol. He started having monthly meetings with the interns. He noted there had been a problem with letters and correspondence going out in incorrect formats, and he asked the interns to have the Assistant to the County Manager review all outgoing correspondence.

Commissioner Sferrazza wanted the review to be changed from the Assistant to the County Manager to the Commissioner who assigned the work. Mr. Slaughter said the problem was with the general format of the correspondence and not the content. He said the Assistant to the County Manager was only looking at things such as salutations, carbon copies, and addresses. It was decided that the review of e-mails would be removed from the proposed policy.

Ms. Singlaub stated correspondence should be copied to the office file for each respective Commissioner including e-mails.

Commissioner Sferrazza asked if interns could attend political events if they were not attending as the Commissioner's representative. Chairman Larkin said interns should not attend political events and noted they should attend an ethics class.

Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel, said interns could attend a function if it was of their own volition; however, they should not be pressured to attend any function.

Commissioner Weber said there was an issue of the appearance of impropriety. Commissioner Humke suggested scenarios be created for the interns to review.

A general discussion of confidential issues, general open communication, and substantive content took place.

Chairman Larkin asked for this item to be placed on the last regular meeting agenda in April. Commissioner Sferrazza requested an electronic copy of the policy.

Juanita Cox, local resident, suggested the creation of a commonly used forms book for use by interns and staff.

Commissioner Sferrazza asked if some form letters could be created for use by the Commissioners.

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12:05 p.m. There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned.

ROBERT M. LARKIN, Chairman
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared by
Jill Shelton, Deputy County Clerk*