

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA  
2008 BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**

MONDAY	<u>9:00 A.M.</u>	MARCH 10, 2008
MONDAY	<u>9:00 A.M.</u>	MARCH 17, 2008
MONDAY	<u>9:00 A.M.</u>	MARCH 24, 2008

**08-222      PRESENTATIONS – DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS AND  
FISCAL YEAR 2008-09 BUDGETS**

PRESENT – MARCH 10, 2008:

**Bob Larkin, Chairman**  
**Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairman**  
**Jim Galloway, Commissioner**  
**David Humke, Commissioner**  
**Kitty Jung, Commissioner**

**Amy Harvey, County Clerk**  
**Katy Singlaub, County Manager**  
**Melanie Foster, Assistant District Attorney**

A public meeting took place in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada to hear presentations from Washoe County Department Heads regarding their departmental operations and their fiscal year 2008/09 budgets. No deliberation or action of the Commission took place.

**MANAGER’S OFFICE**

Katy Singlaub, County Manager, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting the Administration Division, the Community Relations Division, the Internal Audit Division, key challenges and opportunities, the total budget and budget reductions for all the divisions, the impact of the reductions, and budget restoration priorities.

Commissioner Galloway asked what the new guidelines would be for event sponsorship since that was being reduced. Ms. Singlaub replied events would not be funded from the Management Services Division. She clarified the funding provided for firework displays on July 4, 2008 would go forward because that was funded through

the 2007/08 budget. Ms. Singlaub explained Commissioner District funds had been reduced proportionally; however, events sponsorship could come from those funds.

Commissioner Weber requested organizational charts be provided from each department. She asked what the Managers vision was for restoration. Ms. Singlaub indicated the County experienced a budget deficit before, but she did not think there would be a restoration of these funds during the fiscal year. She said departments had plans on recommending how those funds would be restored in priority order.

Chairman Larkin asked if the Legislature Affairs position was currently encumbered. Ms. Singlaub replied it was not encumbered. She explained there was funding in the budget for the position, but that funding would be held off for the present time.

### **FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

John Sherman, Finance Director, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting the department's overview, management team, department functions, Administrative Division, Collections Division, Budget Division, Comptrollers Office, Risk Management, accomplishments, budget reduction plan and an above base request.

Commissioner Jung asked what the cost would be for payment of fines online. Mr. Sherman explained the Collections Division primarily dealt in past due accounts. However, he agreed that initial payments could be completed online.

Commissioner Galloway wondered how the work for the Risk Manager position would be completed if the Risk Manager retired and the position remained vacant. Mr. Sherman remarked that retirement would not occur until June, but staff had been working on a transition plan. He explained it would be a combination of delegating some of those activities to other staff members and contracting other functions such as claims administration. Commissioner Galloway requested a cost benefits analysis on contract work versus in-house for claim settlements.

Chairman Larkin asked why there could not be one Risk Manager for the entire region. Katy Singlaub, County Manager, replied the Shared Services Team had begun discussions on that issue.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

Steve Watson, Acting Human Resources Director and Labor Relations Manager, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting the lines of business, reduction plan, specifics of proposed reduction plan, organizational chart, impacts of the reduction plan, reinstatement priorities and ramifications.

In response to Commissioner Jung, Mr. Watson replied as an employer of approximately 3,000 employees, the County spent significant amounts in the past for advertising and recruitment to maintain a presence with professional associations to keep Washoe County in the forefront so when the County would recruit they would be recognized as an employer to gravitate towards. He commented that would still continue on a local level, but marketing efforts on a national level would be restricted. Commissioner Jung said there were innovative practices and policies implemented from the Board including a telecommuting policy. She remarked that could be an incentive to a new employee as part of a benefit package. Mr. Watson agreed.

### **RECORDER'S OFFICE**

Kathy Burke, Recorder, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting the overview of the Recorder's Office, statutory requirements, budget reduction plan and reinstatement priorities.

Chairman Larkin asked what was the additional tax base the Legislature allocated for the redacting of Social Security numbers. Ms. Burke replied it was a totally unfunded mandate.

Commissioner Galloway asked about the volume of the recorded documents per month. Ms. Burke replied approximately 600 documents a day were recorded; however, noted in 2004 the Office recorded approximately 1,200 documents per day. Commissioner Galloway said the budget reduction plan did not directly correspond to the volume of business. Ms. Burke remarked it was because there were additional statutory duties without any additional funding.

### **PURCHASING DEPARTMENT**

John Balentine, Purchasing and Contracts Administrator, stated the mission of the Purchasing Department was to procure necessary goods and services for all County departments, agencies and courts in a timely and cost efficient manner utilizing open, fair, and legal purchasing practices that allowed all suppliers equal opportunity to compete for County business. He discussed the Department's goals, objectives, performance measures, budget reductions and the anticipated impact of those reductions.

In response to Commissioner Galloway, Mr. Balentine replied the base line for the department should be 11 Full Time Equivalents (FTE's) and at the present time there were 9 FTE's.

### **ASSESSOR'S OFFICE**

Josh Wilson, Assessor, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting the mission statement of the Office, accomplishments for fiscal year 2007/08, short-term goals, commitment to efficiency in

government, staffing and parcel count, International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) recommended ratios, technology fund spending, appeals, permits and overtime, budget reduction and staff recommendations.

Chairman Larkin asked how the Assessor's Office would achieve the recommended reductions. Mr. Wilson replied to achieve those recommendations there would be staff reductions, which would be a hard task. Chairman Larkin explained the budget hearings were to present the impact of reductions. He said when the Board moved into budget approvals and denials and, if the entire impacts were not presented, the Assessor's Office could face the Board making the decision of what needed to be cut. Mr. Wilson commented the Board would do what was best for the operation of the organization. He explained staff was his most valuable resource, and he would not come before the Board and suggest layoffs. Mr. Wilson commented within the next fiscal year there could be three staff members retiring and with the incentives being offered there may be retirements this year; however, he felt there should be some strategic consideration to a revenue generating department.

Mr. Wilson remarked the "shalls" closed the roll, which was completed on December 31st. He said the "may" was re-opening the roll, which was the majority of new construction outside the tax cap and placed upon the re-open tax roll. Commissioner Galloway asked if there could be an extension on the three year transition to annual reappraisal. Mr. Wilson replied he could approach the Nevada Tax Commission for an extension; however, explained the majority of counties in the State would be completing reappraisals.

Chairman Larkin requested the Assessor's Office attempt to meet the target reductions.

**10:30 a.m. COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE**

Amy Harvey, County Clerk, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting mandated services, the Marriage and Business Division, Board Records and Minutes Division, Administration, Commissioner of Civil Marriages, the Incline Village Satellite Office, the fiscal year 2008/09 budget plan, consideration for possible further reductions, and possible legislative effect of the next census.

Chairman Larkin asked if there was a requirement for the Incline Village Satellite Office to be staffed Monday through Friday. Ms. Harvey replied there were no provisions in the law and noted the Board established the Office, so the Board could set the hours. Chairman Larkin asked if the Marriage Commissioner's Office was required to be open. Ms. Harvey replied statutes indicated that the Marriage Commissioner's Office had to be in a separate building from the Marriage License Bureau; however, the Board could modify the hours of operation. Ms. Harvey explained in anticipation of the reductions there had been some reorganization in the department and noted the Marriage Commissioner's Office was staffed on Friday, Saturday and Sunday with a part-time

employee. She stated the remaining days were staffed by the Board Records and Minutes Division. Ms. Harvey remarked the service could be offered by appointment only.

Commissioner Humke said it may take the closure of the Incline Village Satellite Office or the Commissioner of Civil Marriage to achieve the additional reductions. Ms. Harvey said it could be possible to share the position in the Incline Village Satellite Office with other County departments.

Commissioner Galloway asked if the Commissioner of Civil Marriages fee could be raised. Ms. Harvey replied the fee was statutorily set. Commissioner Galloway commented it would help if Legislation stated that the monies generated could be classified as an enterprise fund. He remarked the option of other departments sharing the Incline Village Office should be explored.

Commissioner Weber remarked it could benefit the County to utilize parks and libraries and suggested reviewing those locations for many different services.

### **TREASURER'S OFFICE**

Bill Berrum, Treasurer, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting accomplishments and budget reductions. He explained, except for the collection of utility bills and recreation fees from Incline Village, most of the Treasurer's services were mandated.

Chairman Larkin asked if the \$140,000 listed in reductions was a net gain to investment income, which was added to the overall reduction target. Mr. Berrum replied that was correct. Chairman Larkin said the recommendation of the Investment Committee was that the County participate in the Securities Lending Program and asked how that would reduce the Department's cost by \$140,000. Mr. Berrum explained the \$140,000 would add to the County's revenues. Chairman Larkin clarified that would be a revenue enhancer, not a reduction, that would offset the \$140,000 reduction. Mr. Berrum agreed.

### **TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**

Cory Casazza, Chief Information Management Officer, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting the Technology Services Division's Fiscal Year 2007 accomplishments, Fiscal Year 2008/09 goals, base budget, infrastructures supported, budget adjustments, budget reduction impacts and reinstatement priorities.

Chairman Larkin stated the majority of the reduction impacts would be reduced response times and a limited number of process improvements. Mr. Casazza agreed.

**FISCAL YEAR 2008/09 BUDGET UPDATE**

Melanie Purcell, Budget Manager, informed the Board that the consolidated sales tax was continuing to decline at a significant pace.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no response to the call for public comment.

\* \* \* \* \*

**12:10 p.m.** There being no further hearings or business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

\* \* \* \* \*

PRESENT – MARCH 17, 2008:

- Bob Larkin, Chairman**
- Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairman**
- Jim Galloway, Commissioner**
- David Humke, Commissioner\***

- Amy Harvey, County Clerk**
- Katy Singlaub, County Manager**
- John Berkich, Assistant County Manager**
- Melanie Foster, Legal Counsel**

ABSENT – MARCH 17, 2008

**Kitty Jung, Commissioner**

A public meeting took place in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada to hear presentations from Washoe County Department Heads regarding their departmental operations and their fiscal year 2008/09 budgets. No deliberation or action of the Commission took place.

**PRESENTATIONS – DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS AND  
FISCAL YEAR 2008-09 BUDGETS (CONTINUED)**

**HEALTH**

Dr. Mary Anderson, Washoe County District Health Officer, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk, highlighting the Health Department's organization, programs, issues, and budget.

**\*9:10 a.m.** Commissioner Humke arrived at the meeting during Dr. Anderson's presentation.

Dr. Anderson confirmed for Chairman Larkin that the Health Department was trying to increase the efficiency of the Department's services and to increase community partnering. She felt there would not be a complete shift towards the Department solely providing administration, expertise and guidance for family planning; but there would be a combination approach used for the delivery of services. Chairman Larkin commended Dr. Anderson and the District Health Board for taking that approach.

Dr. Anderson clarified for Commissioner Galloway that the family planning budget was made up of an approximately 50 percent General Fund transfer and 50 percent Federal Grant with the General Fund transfer being reduced 50 percent as mandated by the Board of Health.

Dr. Anderson advised that the reduction in the General Fund transfer met the Department's 5 percent goal. Commissioner Humke asked if the Cities of Reno and Sparks requested a reduction in their General Fund contributions and what their contributions were. Dr. Anderson replied no specific reduction had been requested by the Cities and no individual contributions were made by the Cities. Commissioner Humke advised this was fiscal inequity because the Cities were not contributing any kind of fair share; and, if the County had to go it alone with the Health Department's budget, then the County should consider ending the Interlocal Agreement with them.

In response to Commissioner Weber asking for clarification, Dr. Anderson explained the Family Planning Program's financial support was, almost fifty-fifty, from a Title X Federal Grant and the County's General Fund. Commissioner Weber asked if there was any possibility that Title X funding could go directly to outside sources, which would get the County out of the business of family planning. Dr. Anderson stated community agencies could apply for Title X funding by going through a grant application process. She said the issue the Department was dealing with, which came up because of the joint meeting between the Commissioners and the District Board of Health, was a need to plan for any transition so there would not be gaps in service to clients due a hasty change in one way of doing business to another.

Commissioner Weber asked if the Division Director was being eliminated. Dr. Anderson explained that the Division Director for Community and Clinical Health Services was retiring. She noted the position would be held open and an acting Director would be used to help reduce personnel expenses. She said it was also anticipated there would be a loss of some of the personnel who support the family planning program.

Dr. Anderson clarified for Commissioner Galloway that 10 positions were permanently abolished for fiscal year 2009. She said the Health Department engaged in a significant restructuring effort over the last year to make the Department more efficient and economical in the way it did business at the request to do so by this Board.

Commissioner Galloway stated he did not want to see the Health Department get out of the family planning business, because he feared attacks on family planning would continue by folks in the community who did not want to see any type of family planning. Commissioner Galloway indicated he just wanted to mention there was not unanimity, and he felt he spoke for the majority of people in the community who cared about the issue.

**9:28 a.m.** Commissioner Humke temporarily left the meeting.

### **COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

Frank Flavin, Cooperative Extension Washoe County Director, conducted a PowerPoint presentation that included an organization chart, funding, budget highlights, and programs, which was placed on file with the Clerk.

Mr. Flavin said that even though the Cooperative Extension function was funded by a special revenue account, there was still an impact to the General Fund budget. He explained the goal was to reduce the Cooperative Extension's impact on the County's infrastructure as near to zero as possible by July 1st. He said staff was also trying to identify areas, such as the parks program, where Cooperative Extension volunteers and faculty could be used provide some of the educational programs that would otherwise be lost.

**9:31 a.m.** Commissioner Galloway temporarily left the meeting during Mr. Flavin's presentation.

**9:35 a.m.** Commissioner Humke returned to the meeting during Mr. Flavin's presentation.

Chairman Larkin noted the Cooperative Extension program was funded by a dedicated ad valorem tax that went into a special revenue fund, which was why there was no reduction requested. Mr. Flavin reiterated his comments about reducing the program's impact on the County by reducing the services received from the County. Mr. Flavin noted that within the last year the program started paying its own water and energy costs that the County used to pay.

**9:40 a.m.** Commissioner Galloway returned to the meeting.

Mr. Flavin further noted the largest share of Cooperative Extension services went to youth development in Washoe County. He noted a national study showed 4-H was the most successful program for diverting youth from at risk behaviors.

Commissioner Weber asked how volunteers could help supplement Parks Department's staff. Mr. Flavin explained volunteers, such as the Master Gardeners, could be used as consultants and educators, but could not do manual labor.

Commissioner Humke asked what the 1 percent ad valorem tax translated to in today's dollars. Mr. Flavin replied it translated to \$1.5 million.

Commissioner Galloway suggested talking with the County Manager about sharing an employee if some costs could not feasibly be migrated to the Cooperative Extension's special revenue account or if duplicated costs between the County and the University could not be shifted to the University.

Katy Singlaub, County Manager, advised Commissioner Humke that many County departments had overhead cost allocations (COWCAP) in both funds, such as Cooperative Extension, and in Federal reimbursements. Melanie Purcell, Budget Manager, confirmed staff was updating COWCAP and expected it to be completed in July, 2008. She noted the update would be used for the Federal Reimbursement Program, primarily in Social Services and the District Attorney's Office. She explained staff increased the charges to other funds within the Cooperative Extension to the maximum allowed under COWCAP, and directly charged more of COWCAP so the charges were less debatable under Federal Reimbursement Standards. She noted the Federal government considered 10 percent a "safe harbor" for administrative overhead, but they would pay above that if there was a methodology provided in a cost allocation plan done under Federal standards by an outside consultant; and the County's COWCAP adhered to those standards. She said there was a transition from a negotiated process regarding the ability to pay, to a direct relation to the COWCAP during the last year.

### **WATER RESOURCES**

Rosemary Menard, Water Resources Director, discussed the Department's mission, how the different funds would be handled this year, and how the performance standards would use a more balanced scorecard strategy. She also discussed the Department's service areas as noted in the PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk.

Ben Hutchins, Finance and Customer Services Manager, continued the presentation, focusing on the Department's planning, operations, budget, Capital Improvement Program, and debt service.

Mr. Hutchins noted the Department's focus had to change from development to rehabilitation during a slowdown in development, and the change increased labor costs because they were no longer being paid by connection fees. He indicated the Department was also seeing significant increases in energy, wholesale water, and sewage disposal costs.

Mr. Hutchins explained there were currently 88-90 employees in the Department and the Department ran the Sanitary Sewer, Reclaimed Water and the Water Utilities. He confirmed only the \$2,011,323 base-budget portion of the General Fund dealt with planning and everything else was either an Enterprise Fund or some type of dedicated fund. He said 8-10 employees would not be replaced to accommodate the increase in operating funds associated with a growth slowdown. He noted a lot of debt service was paid by connection fees and that would continue; and the Department did not want to have to increase user rates to pay for connection fee driven debt service, so it was tightening its belt and freezing a number of positions.

Commissioner Galloway asked when water rates were last adjusted. Mr. Hutchins advised water rates were adjusted annually in March based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

After discussion, Chairman Larkin summarized that \$11 million was being transferred out because it was typically shown as a cash account that was not included as an asset. Anna Heenan, Senior Administrative Analyst, explained the \$11 million was just for the Remediation District. She noted the \$3 million Water Management Fund was going out as an expenditure because it would no longer be part of the Water Resources Department. Chairman Larkin stated combining the transfer with depreciation and amortization and taking them out of the \$50 million left \$29 million, which was less than the 2006/07 figure.

Commissioner Galloway asked if moving from building to maintenance would also mean a decrease in staff on the operational side and not just the planning side. Mr. Hutchins advised a significant effort was required to maintain facilities, especially since the County had been in a growth mode for such a long period. He said that mode meant few resources were available to be used in rehabilitation projects. Ms. Menard noted rehabilitation and replacement projects were rate funded.

Commissioner Weber asked if Ms. Menard could explain what the Central Truckee Meadows Remediation Fund was for those listening at home. Ms. Menard stated the Central Truckee Meadows Remediation Fund was a special revenue fund collected as part of people's tax bills in the area where groundwater was contaminated by TCE and PCE to take steps to mitigate that contamination. She felt the boundaries of the existing area could be modified if problems were found in another area.

## **SENIOR SERVICES**

Grady Tarbutton, Senior Services Director, conducted a PowerPoint presentation addressing the Department's Mission and Vision, services, funding, budget reduction plan, impact of the reductions, projected operating budget, organization, and priorities. A copy of the presentation was placed on file with the Clerk

**10:27 a.m.** Chairman Larkin left the meeting for several minutes during Mr. Tarbutton's presentation.

Commissioner Weber asked Mr. Tarbutton to explain what the Daybreak program was. Mr. Tarbutton advised the Daybreak program was an alternative to nursing home care, but the program size was limited by the County's license and by the size of the facility. He noted the Daybreak program had a waiting list of approximately 70 people, while 70 people per year were served. He explained the homemaker services were being subcontracted out and those services provided shopping, housekeeping, and other services that individuals could no longer do for themselves.

Commissioner Weber suggested as a region, a community-wide kitchen should be investigated. Mr. Tarbutton replied there had been discussion regarding a community-wide kitchen and guests from around the country had visited to talk about their programs. He said it was believed meal costs could be cut almost in half.

Commissioner Galloway asked if Mr. Tarbutton was aware Sheriff Haley was interested in the community-wide kitchen. Mr. Tarbutton replied he was aware the Sheriff's Office was interested in participating in any discussions about a community-wide kitchen. He noted a community-wide kitchen would not only save money, but would substantially increase capacity. He indicated further discussions were scheduled for the summer. He felt a community-wide kitchen would work because there were no conflicts between the types of meals served by the Sheriff's Office and Senior Services.

**10:35 a.m.** Commissioner Weber temporarily left the meeting.

Mr. Tarbutton confirmed for Commissioner Galloway that homemaker services would be subcontracted out and that there were other possible subcontract opportunities that were being looked into. He stated the Department's goal was to improve services and reduce costs.

In response to a question by Commissioner Humke about what a representative payee did, Mr. Tarbutton explained a representative payee was appointed by the Social Security Administration or the Veterans Administration to manage an individual's money due to exploitation or because they could no longer manage it. He said Senior Services had an \$18,000 contract with the State Division for Aging Services to provide services to about 35 people a year. He stated that care could keep the individual out of some other type of institutional care by keeping them from getting evicted. He noted the individuals were not quite to the competency level of needing the

Guardianship program. He stated the County would like to find a non-profit organization in the community over the next year or two, who could become the representative payee. He said the County's key role was setting up the care for the individual and that role was not something someone else could do. He noted once everything was set up, the case manager could move on to something else.

Commissioner Humke asked about the legal workshops that were presented. Mr. Tarbutton said the workshops were on a variety of things. He noted, for example for "Older Americans Month," staff recruited pro bono attorneys that helped present the senior colleges on preparing for retirement, and he stated there was a lot of support from the local Bar Association.

**10:42 a.m.** Commissioner Weber returned to the meeting.

### **REGIONAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**

Doug Doolittle, Regional Parks and Open Space Director, conducted a PowerPoint presentation on the Department's Mission and Vision, operations, organization, and budget, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He noted the Department was not a mandated service, but was seen by many as an essential community service.

Chairman Larkin congratulated Mr. Doolittle on exceeding the Department's targeted 15 percent budget reduction. He noted it was unfortunate the public's reliance on public recreation tended to increase during downturns in the economy because, due to the funding mechanisms in place, public parks and recreation were one of the first areas to be decreased. He noted the Cities would be having the same discussions about budget, and he asked if there was an opportunity for collaboration other than what Mr. Doolittle hinted at. He asked if there could be partnerships with the other two governing bodies to have their employees manage some County facilities rather than shutting them down. Mr. Doolittle acknowledged that there had been ongoing conversations over the years to look at ways the entities could collaborate to provide the services the community really wanted. He said the County did not duplicate services already provided by the Cities, the Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, and so on; but it augmented existing programs with different types of programs. He felt those non-typical programs were embraced and enjoyed by the community based on the attendance. He advised meetings were scheduled over the next few weeks with the staff of both Cities to discuss which entity could provide a particular service the best. He noted those discussions would become more in depth over time, because the Cities would have the same budgetary challenges as the County. Chairman Larkin felt none of the County buildings should be closed and there were private entities, such as church groups, that could fill in those gaps.

Chairman Larkin said the golf subsidy was only reduced \$11,000, which was not nearly enough. He felt it was time for public entities to get out of the golf

business. He stated the \$225,000 subsidy could buy almost every senior a first-class pass to a first-class golf course for the rest of their lives.

Commissioner Galloway thanked Mr. Doolittle and his staff for going beyond what was requested.

Commissioner Weber asked if any inroads were being made on collaborating with the School District regarding the District's athletic fields. Mr. Doolittle said there were regular meetings with School District officials to look at ways to jointly use facilities. He stated the difficulty in using the schools' athletic fields was from the coaches not wanting the fields to be used by the public. He noted the growth in athletic teams in the Truckee Meadows was also increasing the need for practice fields; and the Department did not have the resources available, for either the capital improvements or maintenance, to continue to do it all on its own. He said the Department would continue to work with the School District, but it was slow going down that path.

Commissioner Weber asked where the cuts were being made. Mr. Doolittle replied the cuts were in almost every classification in the Department for seasonal employees. He said staff was looking at bringing on other partners to provide the seasonal day camp programs, such as the City of Reno because it already staffed seasonal day camps. He stated the County could provide the buildings and could use someone else's staff, such as from the Cities or staff from the Boys and Girls Club or the YMCA.

Commissioner Weber agreed that during an economic downturn, it was important to keep the County's buildings open and staffed. She suggested looking at moving County services out to various locations to keep the buildings open, like the City of Reno was doing with its substations. She indicated she would encourage staff to use facilities that were already paid for to provide needed services for people, and would also encourage a greater dependence on the use of volunteers. She stated staff could do a lot of their work at different locations because of computer networking.

### **BUILDING AND SAFETY**

Don Jeppson, Building and Safety Director, conducted a PowerPoint presentation on the Department's mission, organizational structure, demographics, expenditures, revenues and fees, goals, and accomplishments, which was placed on file with the Clerk.

Mr. Jeppson explained the Department's fees had to be reduced 50 percent since 2004, from \$4 million to \$2 million, to meet the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) reserves mandate. He said at this time last year, it was proposed fees be increased in two steps with the first increase happening July 1, 2007 and the second on June 1, 2008. He noted that would increase revenue to \$2.8 million.

Chairman Larkin commented there had been a news report about the building fees being raised, which implied that raising those fees could substantially add to the cost of a new home. Mr. Jeppson replied fees were reduced by 50 percent since October 2004. He acknowledged the timing was unfortunate, but revenue had to be sufficient to cover staffing costs even though they had already been reduced from 31 to 19 employees during the last fiscal year. He explained there were not as many building permits being issued during a downturn in the economy, but a minimally staffed Building and Safety Department must still oversee any permits or any issue where public safety or health was involved; because it was a regulated government function. Mr. Jeppson stated the Department was very challenged to maintain services with its current staff of 19. He noted 4,500 permits were anticipated this year, but the number could be deceiving because some of the permits were small. He advised that issuing a \$45 fence permit in Gerlach would not even cover the cost of gas and staff time to drive to Gerlach. Chairman Larkin said the process was to take the number of permits divided by what it took to operate the department, which determined what the fees would be. He noted costs had to be covered by the fees per NRS, because the Department was funded through an Enterprise Fund.

Mr. Jeppson commented that during a major earthquake, the United States was more fortunate than some other countries that did not have minimum building standards; and it was fortunate building standards in the United States were enforced day-to-day.

Commissioner Galloway noted there were net losses in fiscal years ending 2006 and 2007, and he asked about the size of the Department's Reserve Fund. Mr. Jeppson said at the beginning of this fiscal year, the fund was at \$1.4 million and would finish the year between \$900,000 and \$1 million. He explained staff and expenditures were cut by almost \$1.1 million at the beginning of this year, and the proposed fee increase should allow the Department to break even next year.

Commissioner Weber asked if Mr. Jeppson could again comment on raising permit fees during a downturn in the economy. Mr. Jeppson indicated there was an NRS mandated advisory board represented by six people from the construction industry that met quarterly. He noted that Board approved the last two fee increases and that the increases were held off for almost a year from the original implementation dates. He stated the Board also decided to do the increase in two steps to match the stepped reductions in fees. He said it was an important safety issue that the fees are at the same level they were in October 2004.

In discussing staffing levels, Mr. Jeppson said he anticipated building permits picking up in Spring, 2009; and he wanted to be prepared to bring on additional staff if necessary, which was why 24 positions were budgeted even though only 20 were filled.

**11:30 a.m.** Commissioner Galloway left the meeting.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

Dan St. John, Public Works Director, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. The presentation highlighted the mission, operations, and budgets for the Roads, Facilities Management, Engineering, Capital Projects, Animal Services, Fleet Equipment Services, and General Services Divisions of the Public Works Department.

Chairman Larkin noted the Department's budget cut was \$80,000 short of the targeted reduction. Mr. St. John said the strategy to reach that reduction was in infrastructure preservation cuts if further openings could not be found, but the \$80,000 would not make a significant difference from the cuts already identified.

Commissioner Weber asked that the impact of the Burning Man Festival on the Gerlach area roads be considered along with the possibility of imposing a fee on Black Rock, LLC.

## **TRUCKEE RIVER FLOOD MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

Naomi Duerr, Truckee River Flood Management Project Director, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. The presentation highlighted the Department's services, accomplishments, revenue sources and expenditures, goals, budget approach, work plan, contracts, land acquisition, land and property management, outreach, and TRAction projects.

**11:52 a.m.** Chairman Larkin temporarily left the meeting and returned several minutes later during Ms. Duerr's presentation.

Chairman Larkin emphasized that the project did not involve any General Fund money.

## **SOCIAL SERVICES**

Mike Capello, Director of Social Services, placed a PowerPoint presentation on file with the Clerk. He reviewed the Department's structure, budget, fiscal impact of the budget reduction, impact of freezing positions, and future challenges.

Chairman Larkin noted the Department was \$60,000 short of its targeted reduction in the General Fund budget. Mr. Capello explained the confusion in the numbers and clarified the Department was on target. Chairman Larkin indicated he would like to see a summary slide that indicated which programs the reductions would be coming from, and would also show the direct impacts related to those reductions.

**12:15 p.m.** Commissioner Humke temporarily left the meeting.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Adrian Freund, Community Development Director, conducted a PowerPoint presentation on the Department's mission, organizational structure, business and services, budget and targeted reductions, the impacts of the reductions, restoration priorities, and additional choices for the Commission to consider. A copy of the presentation was placed on file with the Clerk.

Commissioner Weber asked if further reductions were needed in Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) support. She suggested that CAB's meet every other month or on a quarterly basis and to possibly combine the CAB's for Commission District 5. She was not sure how that could be done, but she asked if it had been looked at. Mr. Freund indicated all those options were possible. He said substantial cost reductions were available if more efficient ways were used to manage the CAB meetings. He noted many of the meetings were taken up with fairly routine reports and agenda management would be helpful. He indicated the "Other Choices for the Commission" options were not needed for the Department to meet its target, but suggested ways to obtain additional reductions.

## **REGISTRAR OF VOTERS**

Dan Burk, Registrar of Voters, conducted a PowerPoint presentation on the Department's cuts, the effect of those cuts, and proposed additional savings if needed. He also discussed what would be done in the way of program enhancements and increased efficiencies, voter privacy enhancements, and improved polling place operation. A copy of the presentation was placed on file with the Clerk.

**12:36 p.m.** Commissioner Humke returned to the meeting.

Mr. Burk advised Chairman Larkin that the money proposed for additional savings could be used to implement the recommendations of the Elections Task Force. Chairman Larkin said he did not favor any further reductions beyond those required to meet the target, but would favor putting back any savings into the innovations suggested during today's presentation to the Board.

In response to concerns expressed by Commissioner Weber, Mr. Burk discussed the cost of printing voter information in English and Spanish. He advised that Federal law was clear that, when the population of a minority reached 5 percent and they indicated they did not speak English well or at all, then voter information must be printed in that language. He advised the County would not want to fall under Federal enforcement because everything the County did would have to be forwarded to the Federal government and quarterly compliance reports would have to be done for the next eight years, which would cost the County a tremendous amount of money.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Patty Elzy addressed the Board on the Health Department’s budget cut and its impact on family planning. A copy of her remarks was put on file with the Clerk.

Gary Schmidt discussed his views on the County’s budget crisis and on comments made during these hearings.

\* \* \* \* \*

**12:48 p.m.** There being no further hearings or business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

\* \* \* \* \*

PRESENT – MARCH 24, 2008:

- Bob Larkin, Chairman**
- Bonnie Weber, Vice Chairman\***
- Jim Galloway, Commissioner\***
- David Humke, Commissioner**
- Kitty Jung, Commissioner**
  
- Amy Harvey, County Clerk**
- Katy Singlaub, County Manager**
- Melanie Foster, Assistant District Attorney**

A public meeting took place in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada to hear presentations from Washoe County Department Heads regarding their departmental operations and their fiscal year 2008/09 budgets. No deliberation or action of the Commission took place.

**08-222      PRESENTATIONS – DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS AND FISCAL YEAR 2008-09 BUDGETS (CONTINUED)**

**INCLINE CONSTABLE**

Joe Kubo, Incline Constable, reviewed the personnel, primary duties and 2007 statistical information for the Incline Constable’s Office. He talked about the proposed cuts in overtime, operating supplies, office supplies, cell phones used for redundant communication, and safety expenses that would be necessary to meet the targeted 5 percent budget reduction. Mr. Kubo emphasized the negative impact on the Sheriff’s Office of cuts in safety expenses, which would eliminate the ability to hire, train

and equip prisoner transport deputies. He pointed out the Constable's Office could transport prisoners at approximately one-third the cost of the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Humke confirmed with Mr. Kubo that a 5 percent budget reduction placed his office in the same category as other courts and the District Health Department. Mr. Kubo indicated the operation of his office was very entwined with the other courts, although it was technically a separate entity.

### **INCLINE JUSTICE COURT**

Justice of the Peace Alan Tiras conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He provided statistics for each year from 2004 through 2008 to illustrate increases in court filings and dispositions, which led to a 260 percent increase in caseload backlog since 2006. He briefly reviewed increased revenue and expenses for the same time periods, indicating that most of the increased expenses went toward rent for additional space to accommodate increased caseloads. He cited greater court efficiency, as measured by a 15 percent reduction in the cost per case disposed since 2006. He discussed challenges created by budget reductions, which he anticipated would lead to the termination of court personnel, increased backlog and a likely reduction in Court hours.

**\*9:14 a.m.** Commissioner Weber arrived at the meeting.

Judge Tiras provided an organizational chart and discussed possible opportunities for the Court to increase its revenues. He said the Court was currently evaluating a plan to implement a computerized case management system that could increase the percentage of fines collected by allowing better monitoring and tracking.

Commissioner Jung asked whether it was possible for the various courts to work together and share resources for court management software. Judge Tiras said a new system was currently under evaluation by the Reno and Sparks Justice Courts. Although their needs might be somewhat different from those of the Incline Justice Court, he indicated the Incline Justice Court was staying in the loop to see if it could join in their efforts. He said a few other systems had been evaluated and would offer improvements, but represented software licensing costs of \$2,500 per seat. Commissioner Jung suggested it might be beneficial to have a single Information Technology person for all of the courts. She requested additional staff information on the subject from the Manager's Office.

Commissioner Jung questioned whether teleconferencing could be used for the Victim Impact Panel in order to reduce traveling costs. Judge Tiras replied there was no teleconferencing set up for the Incline Justice Court. Commissioner Jung expressed frustration about the disparate resources among the various courts. Judge Tiras clarified the Victim Impact Panel involved defendants viewing a tape that was provided at no cost to the County by an outside service provider. He said the Constable's Office monitored viewing of the tape. Commissioner Jung inquired as to how the program was

impacted by budget reductions. Judge Tiras indicated there were plans to generate additional revenue by charging an administrative fee to defendants who were required to view the tape.

In response to several questions by Commissioner Humke, Judge Tiras indicated there were no opportunities to reduce non-discretionary expenses such as phones and office supplies. He said the Court had a very simple phone system with no voicemail, and the office was a very lean operation. He clarified his position was classified as 0.85 percent rather than a full-time equivalent because he previously had an active law practice and was occasionally required to bring in a pro tem judge for matters in which he recused himself. He said the fee for a pro tem judge was \$100 per half day. Judge Tiras was not sure about the rules for moving a conflict case to the Reno or Sparks Justice Court. He explained the pooled positions listed on the organization chart were part of the budget for the Incline Justice Court, but were used by the Constable as part of the transport program.

Commissioner Humke inquired whether additional revenue opportunities involved fees under the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) for the Nevada Supreme Court. He said a large portion of AOC fees went to the State rather than the County. Judge Tiras stated the AOC fees were associated with fines for particular offenses, but the increased revenues would come from administrative fees that would be borne by the party and would stay with the Incline Justice Court.

### **DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

District Attorney Richard Gammick distributed an updated organizational chart showing 210 full-time equivalents (FTE's), rather than the 212 FTE's shown on a previous chart. He conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He provided an overview of the numerous State mandated functions of the District Attorney's Office. He discussed the Early Case Resolution (ECR) program, which saved over \$20 million in witness fees and jail bed days since 1997, but was discontinued February 19, 2008 due to an order of the Nevada Supreme Court concerning indigent defendants. He pointed out a new order was recently issued that extended several of the dates in the Indigent Defense Order. Mr. Gammick gave two budget scenarios based on whether or not the ECR Program was restored. He estimated an above base cost of \$2.5 million if ECR was not restored. He outlined three options for reducing the budget and listed the impacts of each option. He stated option three, which involved returning Family Support functions to the State, had been determined by the State to be nonviable. Mr. Gammick proposed working with the County's labor associations to see if they would agree to reduce salaries in order to prevent lay-offs. He emphasized there were several court and statutory dictates that made it impossible for the District Attorney's Office to reduce levels of service. He listed the strategic priorities set for the District Attorney's Office by the County and by his department. Mr. Gammick displayed a chart showing the annual budget versus expenditure history of his Office. He stated approximately \$900,000 had been returned to the County at the end of the 2006/07 fiscal year. He said it had been suggested that various functions within his Office could be split

up, but he strongly recommended against such an action. He pointed out 91 percent of the expenditures in his Office were for personnel.

Chairman Larkin inquired as to whether a change in the law was required to allow recovery of costs related to services for veterans. He suggested the cost burden should fall to employers who would not rehire a veteran or would not give preference to a veteran. Mr. Gammick said he would look into it and provide information at a later date.

Chairman Larkin commented the date set in the Indigent Defense Order for attorney performance standards had been relaxed from April 1 to July 1, 2008. He asked if there was any game plan to educate the Supreme Court about the benefits of ECR over the next 90 days. Mr. Gammick indicated there would be two members of the District Attorney's Association serving on the Indigent Defense Commission. He anticipated there would be some opportunity to file minority reports and to appear before the Court at two scheduled hearings. He said language changes were being proposed to allow the Public Defender's Office to observe its standards while restoring ECR. Chairman Larkin asked what division the five attorneys would be eliminated from under Option One. Mr. Gammick stated he expected some retirements in the next few months but was not yet ready to make specific decisions. He noted the reduction would affect both the Civil and Criminal Divisions. Chairman Larkin questioned whether the impacts listed for Option One were ranked by priority. Mr. Gammick said they were ranked in a very general way. Among misdemeanors, he explained the animal control cases currently required the most amount of time with the least amount of results and were therefore at the top of the list.

With respect to Option Three, Commissioner Humke questioned whether it was possible to go to the Governor to discuss returning Family Support functions to the State. Mr. Gammick said he believed local control was better and the latest information he had was that the State would not allow such a change to happen.

Commissioner Humke commented, if the District Attorney's Office discontinued its representation of the District Health Department as listed under Option One, it might reopen the interlocal agreement and allow operation to return to the Board of County Commissioners. He asked what was involved with representation of the District Courts. Mr. Gammick said the District Attorney's Office provided representation if the Attorney General's Office would not do so. Melanie Foster, Assistant District Attorney, stated civil representation of the District Court staff required about 0.25 FTE's, but that did not include representation if they were sued. Commissioner Humke confirmed with Mr. Gammick that the District Attorney's Office recommended an administrative hearing officer system for animal control cases. Commissioner Humke said he read the ordinance proposed by the Nuisance Committee and did not believe the Board of County Commissioners would allow an unelected hearing officer to be in a position to lien property when property owners failed to abate a nuisance.

## **LAW LIBRARY**

Law Library Director Sandy Marz conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. She discussed what was involved with fulfilling the Law Library's mission to provide access to the law. She provided a few examples of questions frequently asked by patrons, and discussed why it was necessary to have resources available in a law library. She pointed out some of the Law Library's 2007-08 accomplishments. She reviewed 2006-07 Law Library revenues, amounting to about 10 percent of the budget. Ms. Marz presented three budget reduction scenarios and their associated impacts. She requested a budget reduction of less than 15 percent and discussed her priorities for restoring the budget if funds became available.

In response to a question by Commissioner Jung, Bruce Beasley, Chairman of the Law Library Board of Trustees, explained only 90 days of Supreme Court decisions were available on the State's website because it cost money to index and make them searchable.

Commissioner Jung asked if there was a correlation between the economic climate and the use of the Law Library. Ms. Marz replied there was increased use during poor economic times, particularly for bankruptcy and landlord/tenant issues. Commissioner Jung requested data about that, as well as data about Law Library usage on specific days and times.

Chairman Larkin inquired about use by the general public versus judges and attorneys. Ms. Marz noted about 68 percent of the use was by the public. She agreed to provide more specific information to the Board.

Commissioner Weber suggested the use of volunteers. Ms. Marz cautioned that it required a fair amount of training to make sure no legal advice was being given and to teach volunteers how to use the materials.

In response to a question by Commissioner Humke, Ms. Marz confirmed that the Nevada Supreme Court was the main source of interlibrary loans. She stated it generally took about four days to get a volume on loan. Commissioner Humke asked whether reductions had the greatest impact on courts, attorneys or the general public. Mr. Beasley said decreased hours of operation would have a bigger impact on the public. He stated cutting subscriptions and collections impacted everyone, but probably had a bigger impact on the public. Commissioner Humke wondered whether there was a cost to the Law Library for the Lawyer in the Library program. Mr. Beasley indicated there was no cost to the County for the program except for the small fraction of heat and electricity used during the presentations. Commissioner Humke commented that Lawyer in the Library was a very positive program.

## **PUBLIC GUARDIAN**

Susan DeBoer, Public Guardian, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. She provided an overview of the Public Guardian's mission and statutory responsibility, as well as the criteria for establishing a guardianship. She referred briefly to an organizational chart. She discussed the number of referrals and referral sources, challenges faced by the department, case management data and guardianship fees. She gave specific case snapshots. Ms. DeBoer explained the 10 percent budget reduction would be accomplished by eliminating leased warehouse space, reducing or eliminating various contracted professional and clerical services, and reducing overtime. She outlined the anticipated impact of the reductions, as well as her priorities for reinstatement of budget items should funds become available.

Chairman Larkin encouraged Ms. DeBoer to report back to the Board as the year progressed about any additional fatigue and stress on staff due to the increased workload.

Commissioner Jung asked what would happen to the wards' personal property when the leased warehouse space was eliminated. Ms. DeBoer said the personal property would continue to be managed by the Public Guardian, but property would most likely be distributed to family members or placed in storage using funds from each ward's estate. Commissioner Jung questioned whether there was a correlation between the state of the economy and the need for Public Guardian services. Ms. DeBoer said the number of referrals was on the rise. She agreed to provide additional information to Commissioner Jung.

Commissioner Humke complimented Ms. DeBoer on some of the long-term goals of the Public Guardian's Office, including: convene a regional conference on elder abuse, define a case weighting tool that considers the acuity of each case, and establish a system of reasonable management and disposition of the wards' personal property. In response to a question by Commissioner Humke, Ms. DeBoer said her office was not having difficulty getting fees awarded by the court for Public Guardian services. She noted the fees for the Public Guardian's Office were much less than those of private professional guardians and other public guardians, and she would be evaluating fee increases over the next year. She pointed out the fees were not usually collected until the termination of the guardianship.

## **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR**

Public Administrator Don Cavallo conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He talked about the services provided by the Public Administrator, issues facing his department and areas of the community served. He provided an organizational chart and reviewed budget information from three previous fiscal years. He indicated his budget would be reduced by laying off one Account Clerk, eliminating standby, overtime and callback pay, reducing professional services for outside probate attorneys and accountants, and eliminating or reducing

various expenses such as travel, cell phones and supplies. Mr. Cavallo explained his office was required by statute to hire probate attorneys in the community, who would be paid from the assets of the estate whenever possible. He stated the reductions could have a negative impact on the generation of revenue and there would be no staff available over the weekend to secure decedents' property. He ranked his priorities for restoring budget items should funds become available.

Chairman Larkin asked whether the department's two account clerks had been approached about sharing one full-time position. Mr. Cavallo pointed out the two positions were classified at different skill levels and he did not believe their tasks could be shared.

**\*10:50 a.m.** Commissioner Galloway arrived at the meeting.

In response to a question by Commissioner Humke, Mr. Cavallo explained weekend standby personnel were available to receive calls from the Coroner's Office. A limited amount of work was typically done at a decedent's home to secure any broken doors or windows, although possessions were not fully inventoried on the weekends. Commissioner Humke asked about the fee structure. Mr. Cavallo indicated there was a two-level fee system in place. He said there was an increased fee schedule that had been approved by the Board of County Commissioners, but it could not be used because the probate commissioner and judge determined it to be excessive. The Public Administrator therefore used the old fee schedule. Commissioner Humke suggested a public policy discussion might be brought before the Board.

Commissioner Humke pointed out the Public Administrator primarily handled small estates in which the trust departments of banking institutions had no interest. He questioned whether such institutions might be potential sources for grants and donations. Mr. Cavallo indicated he would look into that. He was not certain how many referrals were actually coming from private financial institutions. He noted many institutions named in a will would no longer nominate a third party to handle probate due to liability issues.

Mr. Cavallo stated the second level of the fee structure was established by the Legislature as a percentage of the total value of an estate. He stated there had been no appetite in the Legislature to increase the percentage and it was not always possible to get compensation for the amount of work paid for by the County. For example, he shared the story of an estate with only one small home that sold for only \$85,000, but had costs associated with the removal of 28 dumpsters of garbage by Sheriff's inmate crews.

In response to a question by Commissioner Humke, Mr. Cavallo stated the number of intestate successions was not increasing, but seemed to remain fairly level.

### **ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING**

**11:06 a.m.** Commissioner Humke temporarily left the meeting.

Joe Ingraham, Chief of the Department of Alternative Sentencing, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He talked about the department's mission, organization, duties, caseload demographics and statistics, long-term goals and accomplishments. He outlined plans to reduce the budget by increasing supervision fees for probationers and reallocating lease funds. He listed priorities for restoring expenditures if funds were to become available.

Chairman Larkin asked whether the institution of a cost recovery fee schedule had been discussed. Chief Ingraham said there had been discussion of a \$40 monthly assessment fee along with fees for each drug and alcohol test. He stated it had been difficult to collect fees for each drug and alcohol test, so a one-time fee of \$60 was now assessed. He indicated approximately \$34,570 had been recovered to date and placed back into the General Fund. Chairman Larkin suggested an enterprise fund might be established in future budgets.

### **LIBRARY**

**11:12 a.m.** Chairman Larkin temporarily left the meeting.

Interim Library Director Arnie Maurins conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He discussed library services and target populations. He presented an organizational chart and pointed out there were currently 28 vacancies being held open within the library system. He estimated the library's economic value at \$36 million or a 260.4 percent "return on investment" based on the cost to purchase resources versus borrowing them through the library system.

**11:23 a.m.** Chairman Larkin returned to the meeting.

Mr. Maurins outlined the budget reduction plan, the impacts of extended staff vacancies and other cutbacks, and priorities for restored funding.

Commissioner Weber asked about the closest library branch to Mendive, which would most likely be closed in the summer. Mr. Maurins said the Sparks branch was closest, followed by the Spanish Springs branch. He stated a mobile library stop in the area was also being evaluated.

**11:25 a.m.** Chairman Larkin temporarily left the meeting.

Commissioner Weber inquired as to the use of volunteers to help staff the library and possibly maintain some hours of operation. Mr. Maurins said that was being discussed as an option.

**11:27 a.m.** Chairman Larkin returned to the meeting.

Commissioner Jung was pleased to see the Library Board of Trustees pursuing a grant-funded study to look at the economic value of library services to the community. She observed that library usage typically increased when the economy was bad. She suggested it might be good policy to keep extended library hours during poor economic times and consider cutting hours back during better times. Commissioner Jung questioned the amount already spent on recruitment for a new library director. Mr. Maurins indicated nothing had been expended yet, but there was money in the Human Resources budget for a national recruitment, which was estimated at \$30,000 to \$32,000. He noted the Library Board of Trustees had control over what type of recruitment would take place.

**11:31 a.m.** Commissioner Humke returned to the meeting.

In response to a question by Commissioner Jung, Mr. Maurins explained the Mendive Library would be closed during the summer and then reevaluated in one year. He indicated reduced hours and/or service cutbacks at Duncan-Traner, Verdi and the Senior Center branches would also be reevaluated after one year. Commissioner Jung commended the libraries for tracking service demand and basing service reductions on the demand.

Commissioner Galloway remarked that it seemed counterintuitive to eliminate dollars for equipment repairs if new equipment could not be purchased. Mr. Maurins stated the repair budget had not been fully expended in the past, so \$5,000 would be cut from an overall repair budget of approximately \$34,000. Commissioner Galloway said there could be increased demand for data lines and demand should be monitored. Mr. Maurins clarified the reduced line item was for the installation of new data lines because many of the libraries did not have space for additional lines.

Chairman Larkin noted there had been discussion about closing the Mendive Library for some time because it was underutilized. He stated it was not a fully stocked library and had severe space limitations. He wondered about the possibility of relocating some of the materials to another school location. Mr. Maurins replied that was one possibility and it was also possible to leave some materials behind to support the school's curriculum.

### **JUVENILE SERVICES**

Division Director Mike Pomi explained the Juvenile Services Division was under the jurisdiction of the courts. He introduced Judge Frances Doherty. He conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He identified the four main branches of Juvenile Services and presented an organizational chart. He reviewed the Division's mission statement, as well as major accomplishments and caseload data for 2007. He discussed the services and caseload for each of the four branches, emphasizing the value of early intervention in decreasing detention costs. Mr. Pomi outlined the budget reduction plan in terms of cuts recommended by staff versus staff reductions not recommended because of the negative impact on the Division's

ability to monitor youth in the community. He talked about the impacts of budget reductions, presented a chart showing the monetary value of saving a high risk youth, and identified priorities for restoring the budget. He reviewed various grant funded programs for 2007. He provided documents about the value of early intervention with high-risk youth, which were placed on file with the Clerk.

Judge Doherty expressed her empathy for the budget challenges faced by the County Commission. She remarked on the urgency, passion and commitment of staff for saving lives in the community in the most efficient manner and with the best outcomes possible. She noted reductions in detention and commitments, as well as increased success for children in the program as evidence of the Division's efficiency.

In response to a question by Chairman Larkin, Mr. Pomi identified the five open positions on the Division's organizational chart. He indicated the current staff was adequate to meet the Division's goals, but it was unlikely they would be able to meet any increased demand for services. He pointed out leaving a probation officer's position open was likely to increase demand and a downturn in the economy generally increased probation caseloads. Chairman Larkin asked Mr. Pomi to report back to the Board about any increased fatigue or undue stress on staff.

Commissioner Galloway clarified there was one vacant position for a work program supervisor. He asked about the generation of revenue from the work program. Mr. Pomi explained there were contracts with many State agencies that generated revenue. He said the majority of the juveniles in the work program were not in detention. Commissioner Galloway noted the work program was a big money saver.

Commissioner Jung observed the Washoe County Juvenile Services Division was among the top 5 percent in the nation. She commended Mr. Pomi and his staff for their deep compassion and commitment.

### **PUBLIC DEFENDER**

Public Defender Jeremy Bosler conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He outlined the services provided by the Public Defender's Office. He provided a brief budget analysis and concluded a 5 percent reduction would require cutting four Family Court attorneys because family court representation was the only non-mandated service. He stated the reduction of \$369,961 would return approximately 360 cases back to the Family Court and result in costs to the County of \$360,000 or more for contract attorneys to provide representation. He identified other impacts of the budget reduction plan and briefly mentioned ADKT 411, a recent order issued by the Nevada Supreme Court concerning indigent representation by public defenders.

Chairman Larkin asked how many attorneys were in the Public Defender's Office, outside of the Family Court. Mr. Bosler indicated there were 27 attorneys. Chairman Larkin noted the District Attorney's Office had 38 attorneys in its criminal

division and the disparity had been noted by the State Supreme Court. He observed the County Commission could reduce the number of attorneys in the District Attorney's Office or increase the number in the Public Defender's Office. Chairman Larkin asked if there were any vacant attorney positions in the Family Court. Mr. Bosler indicated there were no vacancies. Alternate Public Defender Jennifer Lunt stated there were no vacancies for attorneys in her office.

In response to a question by Commissioner Galloway, Mr. Bosler stated it would be very difficult for other attorneys to temporarily absorb the increased caseload that would be created by cutting positions and the increased caseloads would border on unethical and unconstitutional. He indicated the caseloads in his office were currently about 200 percent of what was recommended under national standards.

Commissioner Galloway said he was puzzled by the expectation that there should be parity between the District Attorney's and Public Defender's Offices with respect to the number of attorneys. He pointed out the District Attorney's Office prosecuted people who were not eligible for public defense.

**12:12 p.m.** Commissioner Jung temporarily left the meeting.

Commissioner Galloway wondered whether some of those represented by the Public Defender might not be eligible for services and suggested the possibility of an independent screening panel to look at eligibility. Mr. Bosler pointed out ADKT 411 set out a definition that was to be used across the state and that might help to screen out some cases. He noted the economic downturn was likely to increase the need for public defense.

**12:14 p.m.** Commissioner Jung returned to the meeting.

### **ALTERNATE PUBLIC DEFENDER**

Alternate Public Defender Jennifer Lunt summarized her PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. She reviewed the role of the Alternate Public Defender's Office, provided an organizational chart and identified the services provided. She discussed a reduction of 2.6 percent that would include services, supplies, and a 5 percent reduction in her salary. She indicated it would be necessary to cut one attorney position in order to meet the 5 percent reduction target for her office. She stated such a cut would lead to increased costs for appointed counsel that would exceed the amount of the reduction in her office. She discussed other impacts of the budget reduction. Ms. Lunt talked about the potential ramifications of compliance with Nevada Supreme Court order ADKT 411.

In response to a question by Chairman Larkin, Ms. Lunt indicated reestablishment of the attorney position would be her first priority if funds became available, followed by reinstatement of her salary. She identified a video link between her

office and the staff as the most important priority among services and supplies, and stated staff training was also very important.

### **RENO JUSTICE COURT**

**12:27 p.m.** Chairman Larkin temporarily left the meeting.

Chief Administrative Judge Barbara Finley indicated there was a three-pronged plan for budget reduction in the Reno Justice Court.

Court Administrator Darin Conforti conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He explained the limited jurisdiction of the Reno Justice Court, as well as its mission, vision and strategy. He outlined the budget reduction plan, which included increasing court fees to generate new revenue, restructuring court reporting services, and reducing some line items in the budget. He reviewed the anticipated impacts and sustainability of the budget plan. Mr. Conforti submitted supplemental information detailing court staffing, caseload, revenues, expenditures, improvements and future plans.

Commissioner Humke referred to the \$30,000 savings in court transcript costs listed on page 15 of the presentation. He asked whether transcripts could be sold to private counsel. Mr. Conforti said the Court currently bore the cost for transcripts in criminal trials. He indicated he would research the issue, but did not believe it was permissible to sell transcripts produced by an employee. He confirmed an in-house court reporter would handle both civil and criminal cases, as well as the technology. He stated the record search fees were charged for civil and criminal cases. Mr. Conforti commented that fees had been instituted in January 2008 and increased fees had not resulted in decreased demand. He explained additional fees were charged to offset the administrative time required to monitor the extension of partial payment plans for court-ordered fines or community service.

Commissioner Jung asked whether a contracted court reporter would be retained in case the employee was off. Mr. Conforti replied there was a need for more than one court reporter because multiple preliminary hearings could be going on at the same time. He indicated two staff positions would be ideal for long-term stability during more normal budget times.

Commissioner Galloway confirmed the use of a certified court reporter for preliminary criminal hearings was mandated by statute. He asked what the 5 percent targeted reduction was calculated against. Mr. Conforti explained it was calculated using the 2007-08 adopted budget. He stated he would have a better feel for what to expect from the fees next year when there were several months worth of data to look at.

Judge Finley stated the judges were fully supportive of Mr. Conforti's proposal. She thanked the other judges for being in attendance in the audience.

## **SPARKS JUSTICE COURT**

Justice of the Peace Kevin Higgins conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He reviewed the jurisdiction, increased number of case filings and amount of revenue for the Sparks Justice Court. He provided an organizational chart. He indicated the Court was not in a position to meet the requested 5 percent budget reduction without jeopardizing its ability to provide services that were mandated by law and eliminating services that brought in revenue. Judge Higgins discussed an interlocal agreement whereby the Sparks Justice Court to waive a third Justice of the Peace in exchange for the funding of two additional staff positions, funds to pay for necessary repairs and upgrades to the Court's leased facility, and funds for judge pro tempore coverage. He pointed out the agreement saved the County approximately \$194,000 in judicial salary, benefits and support staff costs. Judge Higgins anticipated an increase in Court revenues that would exceed the 5 percent targeted budget reduction.

**1:00 p.m.** Commissioner Galloway temporarily left the meeting.

## **DISTRICT COURT**

Chief Judge Connie Steinheimer introduced the following individuals: Judge David Hardy of the Family Court, Judge Deborah Schumacher of the Family Court, Court Administrator and Clerk of the Court Howard Conyers, Assistant Court Administrator Joey Orduna, and Assistant Court Administrator Hans Jessup.

**1:06 p.m.** Commissioner Weber temporarily left the meeting.

Judge Steinheimer reviewed the jurisdiction, mission statement, and organizational chart for the Second Judicial District Court.

**1:08 p.m.** Commissioner Weber returned to the meeting.

Judge Steinheimer discussed several projects and accomplishments for fiscal year 2007-08. She talked about the E-filing system. She reviewed funding sources amounting to approximately \$4.8 million in revenue and emphasized efforts being made to increase the collection of fees that benefited various County agencies.

**1:13 p.m.** Commissioner Weber temporarily left the meeting.

Judge Steinheimer presented Alternative One for the District Court's reduction plan and proposed the County deduct dedicated court funds received from grants and legislative action from the Court's total budget and base the 5 percent targeted reduction on the resulting amount. She further requested the District Court receive credit for collection of fees toward the reduction target. She outlined a plan for achieving the remaining \$288,000 reduction.

**1:17 p.m.** Commissioner Galloway returned to the meeting.

Judge Steinheimer presented Alternative Two for a reduction plan, proposing that the reduction targets be set at 2.5 percent for the portion of District Court's budget dedicated to public safety and 5 percent for the portion of its budget dedicated to other matters. She presented Alternative Three and outlined a plan for the 5 percent reduction originally requested by the County. Judge Steinheimer discussed the impacts of the reductions on public safety, quality of life for the community and Court operations.

Commissioner Jung thanked Judge Steinheimer for offering alternatives to the Commission and explaining the impact on the Court if other departments placed portions of their budget under the public safety sector to adjust targeted reductions to the 2.5 percent level.

Commissioner Galloway remarked there were semantics involved in defining what constituted public safety. He believed it was originally conceived as "who comes to call when you dial 911." He pointed out the reduction percentage would have to be increased to more than 2.5 percent for public safety departments if more departments were placed in that category. Judge Steinheimer pointed out it was not just a matter of who came when you called 911, but what else happened to the human being who was being arrested and processed through the jail. She explained there was no opportunity to reduce the amount of business conducted by the District Court, although some other departments were proposing to meet their targets by cutting non-mandated services.

**1:22 p.m.** Commissioner Humke declared a brief recess.

**1:50 p.m.** The budget hearing was reconvened with Commissioners Galloway and Jung present.

### **ENHANCED 911 EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM**

Chief Information Management Officer Cory Casazza conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He reviewed the mission and members of the Enhanced 911 (E911) Emergency Response Advisory Committee. He discussed responsibility for financial oversight of the E911 fund, as well as planning and strategy for the E911 system. He stated there were three public safety answering points located in Reno, Sparks and Incline Village. He outlined accomplishments during fiscal year 2007-08 and goals for 2008-09.

**1:54 p.m.** Chairman Larkin returned to the meeting.

Mr. Casazza summarized the base budget for fiscal year 2008-09.

In response to a question by Commissioner Galloway, Mr. Casazza indicated the telephone costs were fixed and did not go toward any expansion of the system.

## **MEDICAL EXAMINER/CORONER**

Dr. Ellen Clark, Washoe County Medical Examiner and Coroner, conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk.

**1:58 p.m.** Commissioner Humke returned to the meeting.

Dr. Clark explained the responsibilities and mandates of the Medical Examiner and Coroner's Office and presented an organizational chart. She provided caseload statistics and indicated their caseload was up by 28 percent, although cost per case was projected to be down by 27 percent. She summarized general budget information and presented a budget reduction plan that exceeded the department's 5 percent reduction target.

Chairman Larkin clarified with Dr. Clark that the 5 percent reduction target could be met by utilizing grant funding for equipment purchases, delaying some capital purchases, and freezing one position for half of the year.

With respect to consultation services provided to other counties, Commissioner Galloway asked whether they paid enough, particularly for travel expenses. Dr. Clark indicated all of the cases were transported by independent contractors (funeral homes) and the transport was paid for by the other counties. She said Washoe County was probably under-billing for other services, particularly the medical examiner fees. She anticipated some increased revenue through slight fee increases.

**2:07 p.m.** Commissioner Weber returned to the meeting.

Commissioner Galloway asked whether any site investigation was done in consultation for other counties. Dr. Clark stated site investigation was done based on what the doctor deemed to be necessary for the case based on information supplied by local on-site investigators. She said most of the travel was for court appearances and the outside counties were billed for that. She clarified the other agencies paid independently for any supplemental toxicology testing or other testing services. Commissioner Galloway suggested the Medical Examiner/Coroner's Office continue to work with management on the services provided outside of Washoe County.

## **REGIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING CENTER**

Regional Training Center Director Greg Befort conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He reviewed the mission, services and training programs provided, governing structure and strategic goals for the Training Center. He discussed accomplishments during fiscal year 2007-08 and goals for 2008-09. He provided a summary of revenues and expenditures for previous fiscal years, as well as the 2008-09 proposed budget.

In response to a question by Chairman Larkin, Mr. Befort indicated the Training Center was exempt from budget reductions because it was not part of the General Fund.

Commissioner Galloway asked whether there were cooperative opportunities where the County was spending money elsewhere and could utilize the Training Center. Mr. Befort said the Executive Board had done an excellent job of identifying training that could be brought to the Training Center and was constantly looking at those issues. Commissioner Galloway asked if there were times when unused rooms or equipment were available. Mr. Befort said excess capacity was used to generate revenue by bringing in non-partner agencies such as the California Highway Patrol. Based on the original intent and funding sources for the Training Center, he indicated staff was very careful about not doing anything outside of public safety training. Commissioner Galloway asked for further clarification about miscellaneous revenues. Mr. Befort explained the partnering agencies were billed for consumables and training supplies. For example, the Reno Fire Department was billed for water use.

### **SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Sheriff Michael Haley introduced the following individuals who were present in the audience to represent a broad spectrum of regional law enforcement: Jim Deal, Assistant Federal Security Director for Law Enforcement for the Transportation Security Administration; Greg Westfall, Resident Agent-in-Charge of the region for the Drug Enforcement Agency; Dean Hill, senior member of the American Society of Industrial Security with 35,000 members across the world and an organization that manages all security for the casinos in the local region; Brad Albro, Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal for the U.S. Marshal's Service; Frank R. Romano, Resident Agent-in-Charge of the U.S. Secret Service; the Reno Police Department; Tony Alvarez, Nevada Highway Patrol; Mike West, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Edward Rinne, UNR PD; several Honorary Deputy Sheriffs who were all concerned about today's discussion; Lisa Haney, Assistant Sheriff for Detention; Marshall Emerson, Assistant Sheriff for Operations; and Undersheriff Todd Vinger.

Sheriff Haley conducted a PowerPoint presentation, which was placed on file with the Clerk. He stated these were uncertain times and perhaps economic tipping points for public safety had been reached. He informed the public that the budgetary decisions made today would affect safety services and calls for service would be delayed. He listed the number of cases currently being handled by each of the Sheriff's investigators. He pointed out that funding public safety was a duty and responsibility of public officials, even in tough economic times, and numerous surveys showed the community placed a high priority on public safety. Sheriff Haley indicated he was currently operating with 36 vacant staff positions and, even at fully authorized staffing levels, the Sheriff's Office was critically short when compared with recognized Department of Justice standards. He pointed out the Sheriff was mandated to provide services for all of Washoe County when any other law enforcement agency was unable or unwilling to do so.

Sheriff Haley discussed accomplishments during fiscal year 2007-08. He talked about the ability of his office to meet expectations for budget reduction, listed reductions that would meet the proposed budget targets, and indicated his office would be beyond its ceiling for holding positions open while still maintaining constitutionally mandated functions. He listed the programs and operations that would be impacted by the proposed reductions and emphasized that he was not recommending the reductions to the Board. He suggested consideration of public safety funding initiatives, booking fees or other fee increases to offset impacts placed on the Sheriff's Office by outside agencies. Sheriff Haley listed above base requests totaling \$685,520 and stated his office could not fully meet the expectations of its mission statement without appropriate funding.

Chairman Larkin indicated public safety was the Commission's highest priority. He asked whether the six additional positions that would be vacant were commissioned officers or retiring personnel. Sheriff Haley clarified he was offering a pool of positions and that he would balance critical needs within the pool. Chairman Larkin requested some elaboration on the suggestion for a public safety funding initiative. Sheriff Haley stated the jail currently housed a great number of misdemeanor offenders at a cost of approximately \$113 per day. He proposed approaching the Legislature for a change that would allow alternatives other than jail time for those guilty of a misdemeanor.

Commissioner Galloway questioned what would happen if jail capacity was exceeded or if there was not sufficient staff to open the new wing of the jail. Sheriff Haley indicated there had been great efforts in the region to keep people out of jail. He said, as was the case in 1986-87, a consent decree from a federal judge could require the County to hire deputies and increase staffing ratios. He pointed out there were employee contracts that limited how many inmates one deputy could oversee and there could be grievances if staffing fell below those levels. In response to a question by Commissioner Galloway, he said he could not say whether a federal judge would mandate early release or hiring of additional staff without further research.

Commissioner Humke wondered whether it was possible to bargain for a transition to civilian detention staff. Sheriff Haley stated there had been two attempts to do that. He explained there were mandates that required county-wide surge capacity and the mandate could not be met without the trained deputies that staffed the jail. He emphasized the duties of the Sheriff's Office required response to the entire County, not just the unincorporated portions of it. He indicated the cost of staffing jail facilities with civilian staff in Clark County was not any lower.

With respect to fee increases, Commissioner Humke asked how many agencies other than Washoe County were served by the Crime Lab. Sheriff Haley stated the Crime Lab served 15 of the 17 counties, as well as the Cities of Reno and Sparks and some State agencies. He indicated an increased fee schedule was already in the works, although some agencies were under previously negotiated agreements that did not cover costs. He pointed out some of the agreements were based on exchange of services such as

lab services for dispatch services, and there was no mitochondrial DNA testing when the agreements were written.

Commissioner Humke questioned whether the discussion of misdemeanor alternatives referred to fees or some type of work camp. Sheriff Haley indicated both had viabilities. He said there was currently no deterrent for the City of Reno to load the jail with downtown sweeps and suggested a booking fee would change that. Commissioner Humke asked whether the booking fee would be borne by the agency. Sheriff Haley said that it would, although he pointed out the Legislature previously indicated it did not want a debtor's jail. Commissioner Humke asked whether defendants paid for work release or home confinement services. Sheriff Haley indicated those that were on a community work program were not in jail but reported as if they were and did not pay a fee. Individuals placed on monitoring devices paid fees from \$8 to \$12 per day, although indigents might pay nothing.

Commissioner Jung agreed that inequities with other agencies should be pursued. She indicated the Cities of Reno and Sparks were generally more concerned with public works type issues when they pointed fingers at the County. She did not believe the Cities fully realized how some of the older agreements worked that were very expensive to the County. She indicated it was important for the public to know about the Sheriff's staffing ratios of 1.33 deputies per population of 1,000.

Commissioner Weber remarked that the Commission should put public safety first and look to other departments for additional budget cuts.

Commissioner Galloway said he had been asked why greater cuts couldn't be made in the jail with fewer cuts in patrol. Sheriff Haley said the liability and statutes governing both areas were equal in their authority.

### **FISCAL YEAR 2008/09 BUDGET UPDATE**

County Manager Katy Singlaub indicated the final budget hearing was scheduled for May 19, 2008, although the absolute deadline for sending the budget to the State Department of Taxation was June 1, 2008. She said staff would file a tentative budget with the State and prepare a recommended budget for the Board to modify further.

Finance Director John Sherman stated the next scheduled budget update to the Board was scheduled to take place on April 8, 2008. He said Finance was putting together a summary of proposals for targeted reductions to act as a working document for the Board.

Chairman Larkin asked about the plan for the next meeting with respect to departments that had not met their targeted reductions. Mr. Sherman said Finance was working with those departments and could provide a summary of those discussions.

**3:08 p.m.** Commissioner Humke left the meeting.

Commissioner Weber suggested the Board establish specific timelines or circumstances that would trigger or allow programs and services to be reinstated. Chairman Larkin asked Mr. Sherman to report on that at the April 8th meeting for discussion by the Board. He also requested the agenda item be styled in a manner that allowed the Board to make recommendations. Ms. Singlaub proposed that agendas be styled for action on the budget as a standing item at each of the April 2008 meetings.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no response to the call for public comment.

\* \* \* \* \*

**3:10 p.m.** There being no further hearings or business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

\* \* \* \* \*

The foregoing minutes represent the understanding of the Washoe County Clerk's Office of the discussions held during this meeting.

---

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

*Minutes Prepared by  
Stacy Gonzales, Jan Frazzetta and Lisa McNeill  
Deputy County Clerks*