

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

WEDNESDAY

1:00 P.M.

NOVEMBER 18, 2020

**CONCURRENT MEETING**

PRESENT:

**Bob Lucey, Chair**  
**Marsha Berkbigler, Vice Chair**  
**Kitty Jung, Commissioner**  
**Vaughn Hartung, Commissioner**  
**Jeanne Herman, Commissioner**

**Janis Galassini, County Clerk**  
**Eric Brown, County Manager**  
**David Watts-Vial, Assistant District Attorney**

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 1:06 p.m. with the Reno City Council and the Sparks City Council in concurrent session via the Zoom application as specified on the agenda. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, Reno City Clerk Ashley Turney called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

**20-0828      AGENDA ITEM 4 Public Comment.**

Reno City Clerk Ashley Turney stated all public comments received before 4:00 p.m. the prior day were submitted to the various board members and would be included as part of the corresponding items. Anything received after 4:00 p.m. would be included in the closing public comment item. She noted general public comments were received from Michael Pitkin, Theresa Bohannan, Brian Thornton, Barbie Csore, and John Marshall; these were placed on file with the Clerk.

There was a technical error when attempting to play Gordon Gossage's voicemail. Reno City Mayor Hillary Schieve suggested playing the voicemail at the end of the meeting, and Ms. Turney said the voicemail would be placed in the queue with 118 other voicemails that would be played during Agenda Item 11.

**20-0829      AGENDA ITEM 5 Approval of the Agenda. November 18, 2020.**

The City of Reno voted to approve the agenda.

On motion by Vice Chair Berkbigler, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5 be approved.

The City of Sparks voted to approve the agenda.

There was no public comment on this item.

Chair Lucey stated everyone would have the opportunity to speak on every issue, and to do so he established that member comments would be limited to two minutes.

**20-0830**      **AGENDA ITEM 6** Presentation and discussion of residential evictions in the Washoe County region - Amy Jones, Executive Director, Reno Housing Authority.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Amy Jones, Executive Director of the Reno Housing Authority (RHA), began by thanking the Cities of Reno and Sparks for providing additional funding to help families avoid eviction. She mentioned they received money from four different funding sources: \$5 million from the Nevada Housing Division, \$1.5 million from the City of Reno, \$2 million from the City of Sparks, and a second allocation of community development block grant (CDBG) funds from Sparks. She explained the funding from Reno and the CDBG funding had been exhausted. After administration fees were removed, just over \$8 million remained for emergency rental assistance.

To qualify for the program, Ms. Jones stated, families or individuals needed to have experienced a loss of income related to COVID-19 (C19), and they also needed to owe their landlords money. Initially, she indicated, there were strict requirements on the documentation needed, and funding was originally given to the RHA, the Nevada Rural Housing Authority, and Clark County Health and Human Services. Each of these agencies experienced difficulty with the strict requirements, so an attestation form was created to streamline the process. Another change involved a prior requirement to recertify family eligibility every three months; now the RHA utilized a form asking whether there was still a need. She indicated money could be moved faster because of these changes.

Ms. Jones remarked she had seen payments made to cover the entire period from April to December, which were extremely beneficial to families who were out of work. Some families only needed a couple of months of help while others continued to make small payments to their landlords. She noted 3,072 applications had been received and 557 payments to the community had been approved. 899 applications were awaiting return of the attestation form or other information, and 323 files were completed but awaiting eligibility review or payment. The average payment was \$5,913. She reminded the boards that the money had to be spent by December 30. If all outstanding files were approved, she added, the payments would exceed what was currently available, but it was assumed not every file would be approved due to eligibility or a lack of response.

Ms. Jones stated the majority of landlords had been trying to work with their residents and the RHA. While there had been a recent increase in 7-day notices, she indicated many landlords rescinded them when they were told the RHA was planning to assist those residents. Some instances where families were locked out of their homes were also resolved this way. She acknowledged this was a difficult situation for landlords too.

She mentioned requests that came through the courts via a mediator would be fast-tracked. She shared a story about a family who the program helped to avoid eviction.

Ms. Jones praised the RHA staff for making the program successful and thanked the boards for allowing them to provide the emergency assistance, noting it was outside of their traditional programming.

Reno City Councilmember Naomi Duerr asked whether all evictions were centered within the RHA. Ms. Jones said they were not and the RHA only saw potential evictions if those residents submitted applications. She reiterated anyone participating via court mediation would have their case fast-tracked. Councilmember Duerr said it was her understanding the federal prohibition against evictions would protect residents once the state prohibition was lifted. Ms. Jones clarified the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) implemented a halt on evictions when the state moratorium was lifted, but that could not be enforced until the individual completed a declaration and submitted it to the landlord. Without that, landlords could still move forward with evictions.

Sparks City Councilmember Kristopher Dahir inquired about the approach that would be taken once the CDC's moratorium was lifted in January. Ms. Jones replied that was a concern and she hoped the funds already provided by the RHA would reduce any impacts. Without knowing about the fate of the CDC's moratorium or the possibility of additional funding, she was not able to give a clearer answer. Councilmember Dahir wondered whether the jurisdictions could do anything to help or whether the concern revolved solely around the availability of money. Ms. Jones predicted the CDC moratorium on evictions would be lifted on January 1 and, though landlords did not want to evict people, she recognized they had been without rent for a long time. She said money was needed to keep people in their homes, and the source of that money would play a huge role in that.

Sparks City Councilmember Charlene Bybee asked how the information about needing to complete a CDC declaration was being disseminated to the public. She thought it was important for all residents to be aware of this. Ms. Jones said the information was available on the website and she could provide a link if the jurisdictions wanted to include it on theirs. Washoe Legal Services and Nevada Legal Services had promoted the information by offering workshops, and the information was also available on the CDC's website.

**20-0831**      **AGENDA ITEM 7.1** Presentation and discussion for the Built for Zero, Re-Enrollment and the Next Chapter – Eric Brown, County Manager and Dana Searcy, Special Projects Manager, Washoe County. (For Possible Action).

**AGENDA ITEM 7.2** Presentation and discussion of the Karma Box Project's efforts in support of Built for Zero - Grant Denton, Executive Director, Karma Box Project.

Washoe County Manager Eric Brown noted Senior Management Analyst Dana Searcy had been assigned to lead the County's initiative in the homeless arena, working with Human Services Director Amber Howell on the Our Place campus as well as with Assistant County Manager Kate Thomas and various County agencies. He indicated she had interviewed more than 40 agencies associated with homelessness over the prior year and had an excellent understanding of the issues in the region. He said Grant Denton, Executive Director of the Karma Box Project, would also speak about his efforts along the Truckee River.

Mr. Brown remarked the Built For Zero (BFZ) initiative was a nationwide effort to stamp out homelessness using a data-driven approach that identified the homeless populations and how best to stabilize them into permanent housing. The County joined with the Cities of Sparks and Reno earlier in the year by signing on as a BFZ community. He mentioned one purpose of this presentation was to ask the jurisdictions to commit to enlisting with BFZ for another year.

Mr. Brown said the BFZ approach was built around understanding the populations being served as opposed to just getting people to move off the river. He contested success would result from using case management to get people behavioral health or substance abuse services and help them find affordable housing, and BFZ did this in a coordinated manner. He envisioned a scenario where the region had a network of resources across the jurisdictions to identify available beds that could provide the appropriate wraparound services.

Mr. Brown introduced Ms. Searcy, who conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was placed on the record. She reviewed slides with the following titles: Built For Zero; How do Built for Zero communities work differently; Organizations Represented; Work We've Completed; Current Work; Benefits of Foundational Work; and Community Dashboard Monthly Reporting Data (2 slides).

Ms. Searcy remarked the key differences in BFZ communities revolved around an integrated command team coordinating local efforts to ensure all voices were heard. She said the focus should not be on the success of individual programs but on the entire system. She added the BFZ initiative was not a guaranteed solution and the dedication of staff and elected officials would be necessary to build consensus within the community in working toward a common goal. She noted more than 35 organizations pledged their support, and each was either actively involved in the work or received

frequent updates and provided direction. She remarked so much foundational work had been accomplished since joining with BFZ in April, and she thanked the team for its dedication.

Ms. Searcy commented the foundational work consisted of determining the names, locations, and needs of people experiencing homelessness, the barriers they were facing that could be mitigated with services, and the number of beds available to achieve this. She indicated the team coordinated these efforts by bringing together agencies to more efficiently move individuals who needed support into those services. Regarding the Monthly Community Dashboard slides, she explained the significant increase in the numbers in September was because only data from the Homeless Information Management System (HMIS) was used for July and August while September and October also incorporated data from Good Grid. Additionally, the graphs did not capture data about unsheltered individuals not receiving services, or those who received services from agencies that did not use the HMIS or Good Grid for reporting. She anticipated the numbers would continue to rise as more data was collected, but she hoped the numbers would then go down as the program began to have an impact. As the quality of the data improved, she felt, they would be better equipped to estimate how many people moved into and out of homelessness each month.

Mr. Denton continued the presentation by reviewing slides with the following titles: Karma Box Project's efforts; Partnership with Grant Denton; and River Stewards Project (3 slides).

Mr. Denton pointed out there would be an issue with resource scarcity if every unsheltered person decided they wanted to get off the streets. He believed the answer involved working with the population and their living situations, which was the focus of the River Stewards Project (RSP) and BFZ. She stressed the importance of the by-name list because it helped solve their problems more effectively. The RSP used a cultural development approach, which he described as a set of living relationships working toward a common goal. To achieve this, garbage was collected from camps along the river by four volunteers living in those camps. While trash collection was a byproduct of this project, he stated, it was more important to provide a platform for this population to give back to the community, which brought awareness to their worth and self-efficacy. In addition, working alongside the population taught them the behaviors that other members of the camps would hopefully mirror; they were becoming cognizant of how their actions impacted the world around them. He indicated these volunteers often asked what they could do to improve their lives and get off the river. He clarified the river stewards did not consider themselves outreach people but rather positive influences or life coaches; the population they helped were friends, not clients.

Mr. Denton mentioned local restaurants were helping the group by providing meals for them once a week, which he felt helped facilitate integration back into the community. He described the emotional response some people felt when they could choose what to eat from a menu. He cited many organizations who provided food, jackets, and cleanup assistance, as well as one organization who made a special container to prevent

trash from blowing away in the wind. He said one of the most important parts of this program was that it was a stigma reduction model because these individuals were actively doing things and transforming themselves from liabilities into assets. He summarized helping this group not only resulted in cleaning the river, it also emboldened individuals to want to get out of their situation because they were aware of their capabilities.

Ms. Searcy continued the presentation by reviewing the four Regional Efforts Addressing Homelessness slides. She noted one comment she often heard in the early phases of the BFZ initiative was that many organizations were implementing their own good ideas but there was no cooperation; any one entity moving in its own direction would result in the system not working as efficiently as it could. Having a centralized team to bring these ideas together, she stated, would create measurable change in the number of people experiencing homelessness in the community. She admitted most of BFZ's work to date was focused on foundational work. However, BFZ was preparing to move into the next phase by planning for the next few years, both in terms of BFZ's work and the work accomplished as a community. She proposed that BFZ become the central planning group to ensure all efforts and strategies aligned with each other.

Mr. Brown concluded the presentation by reviewing the final two Built for Zero Commitment slides. Mr. Brown lauded Mr. Denton, calling him a wonderful community resource. The Manager said he did not need approval of the document included in the boards' materials, but rather agreement across the three jurisdictions to continue to work through the BFZ collaborative to achieve their homelessness reduction goals in the region. He felt BFZ provided an opportunity to better define the responsibilities of each jurisdiction and stakeholder, and he supported the idea of the County taking on a larger role regarding homelessness while recognizing that each jurisdiction had a role to play.

Mr. Brown pointed out there were grant and private investment resources available if donors could be approached in an organized fashion. When he began with the County a year before, he frequently heard that people wanted to become involved but there was not enough coordination. BFZ would help figure out what money and resources could be used to address a problem. He stressed the value of sharing data in a productive fashion so they could establish the numbers and needs of these vulnerable populations. Lastly, he emphasized the need to harness a broad array of stakeholders as he felt local government alone could not solve the problem. He reiterated his desire for all three jurisdictions to continue to support BFZ's efforts.

Sparks City Councilmember Kristopher Dahir agreed progress would not move forward without collaboration, and he thought the community would also need to come together to achieve success. He noted he worked with the homeless for a long time in Las Vegas and praised Mr. Denton's efforts. He commented caseworkers would be essential for success.

Reno City Councilmember Naomi Duerr wondered when the BFZ program might be fully functional if all three boards provided their support, and what could be done in the interim. Ms. Searcy replied discussions about certain projects, like the Governor's

Bowl, the emergency shelter, the RSP, and Our Place, needed to continue and could not wait until the data was perfect. Nobody could currently say with certainty exactly how many new people entered homelessness in a given month, so a balance between moving forward with some projects and inching forward with the data needed to be found. Prompted by Councilmember Duerr's inquiry about a specific timeline, Ms. Searcy said the numbers provided in the presentation were real numbers, and an initiative would be launched later in the week to determine the number of beds and what criteria would need to be met to fill those beds efficiently. She estimated that, with continued support, the program would be fully ready in about six months.

Reno City Councilmember Neoma Jardon sought clarity on expectation of a motion, as it was not included in the package. Chair Lucey responded this item was a presentation and a discussion, and the individual bodies would need to vote on this at their independent meetings. Councilmember Jardon thanked the presenters for making homelessness a priority.

Commissioner Hartung asked Ms. Searcy to define 'chronic' as it appeared in her bar graph slides to describe adults. She answered it referred to chronic homelessness, which was a term defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Commissioner Hartung asked whether the number of individuals addicted to drugs and alcohol was known, to which Ms. Searcy indicated it was not. The Commissioner felt programs were needed to help those individuals achieve sobriety. He brought up a prior discussion about an internship program using caseworkers from the University of Nevada, Reno and Truckee Meadows Community College, acknowledging the need for more caseworkers. He felt those problematic behaviors would only be perpetuated without programming.

Ms. Searcy indicated the first step was determining how many people were out there and how many beds were available. The second step was figuring out the criteria assigned to each bed and what demographic they would be set aside for, along with addressing the need for drug and alcohol programs. Through analysis and data, they would begin matching people up with the proper bed. At that point they would be able to report to each board any inefficiencies in the plan.

Chair Lucey reiterated these items would come back to each board for individual action.

There was no public comment or action taken on this item.

**20-0832**      **AGENDA ITEM 8** Presentation and discussion of the Homeless Outreach Proactive Engagement (HOPE) program conducted through the City of Sparks Police Department - Sparks Police Department.

Chris Crawforth, Chief of the Sparks Police Department (SPD), introduced Sergeant John Vasquez who lead the HOPE Team. The Chief mentioned he received weekly comments from community partners about the lives they had changed with this program. He explained this program was part of the Built For Zero (BFZ) puzzle, and officers commented to him daily about helping people return to the lives they previously had.

Sgt. Vasquez conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk, and reviewed slides with the following titles: Timeline; Origins; photos (3 slides); H.O.P.E.; Meet the Team; The H.O.P.E. Approach; Dedicated; Different Patrol Uniforms; Not all those who wander are lost; Unique Patrol Vehicles; photos (4 slides); Specialized Training; Connecting Services; Our Place; photo; Health Plan of Nevada; Well Care; Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada; Networking Resources; The Hope Team has members...; Statistics; and Thank You for Listening.

Sgt. Vasquez indicated the SPD began patrolling the Truckee River in 2016, both to make that area a safe place and to protect the waterway. In 2018, they shifted to a part-time approach, making contact with and offering services to people. Based on feedback provided by city leaders who saw the work they were doing, the HOPE Team was created and began in July on a full-time basis. The team consisted of Sgt. Vasquez and two officers who were strictly dedicated to homeless outreach. He remarked they largely mirrored what other organizations on the west coast, particularly those in San Bernardino and Seattle, were already doing. The 92-page police response booklet shown in the presentation was put together by the Police Executive Research Forum in 2018 and it illustrated many of these efforts. He said he offered anyone who rode along with the HOPE Team a chance to read the booklet so they could learn more about the resources that could be offered throughout the community. The Police Chief magazine was another resource used in the creation of the HOPE Team, and Sgt. Vasquez described the success of the City of Redmond, Washington's Resource and Bike Unit.

Sgt. Vasquez then played two videos, one from 2017 about the City of Seattle's efforts and another about the San Bernardino's HOPE Team, illustrating the strategies used in those areas. He remarked the SPD spoke with the San Bernardino's Sheriff's Office extensively when they started up their HOPE Team.

Sgt. Vasquez explained the SPD's HOPE Team strived to offer services and assist those experiencing homelessness using a boots-on-the-ground approach; sometimes it took anywhere from 7 to 15 contacts before a person would accept services. He remarked that the three officers on the HOPE Team were not appointed, they volunteered because they wanted to help. The members of this team were dedicated solely to homelessness issues, which resulted in a better response for those experiencing a crisis as well as a

reduction in calls for normal patrol officers. He indicated violent calls were the only homeless-related calls not held specifically for the HOPE Team.

Sgt. Vasquez shared that the HOPE Team's research showed the benefit of a different uniform because many homeless individuals did not have a positive reaction to typical police uniforms. Utilizing vehicles with different markings also proved beneficial. He indicated they would spend four hours with a single person to help get them the services they needed. He explained the specialized training HOPE Team officers received began back in 2016, and it enabled them to build rapport because many individuals would not allow the team to bring services to them without trusting them first. He stated the HOPE Team was able to get services to 80 people through Health Plan of Nevada since late September. He listed some of the resources that were available, though he added they would try to network with any agency to provide certain resources in the community. He noted the numbers listed on the Statistics slide were from late July.

Chief Crawforth commented the HOPE Team worked closely with regional partners, noting Washoe County Sheriff Darin Balaam dedicated two deputies and a sergeant to start in January and University of Nevada, Reno Police Chief Todd Renwick expressed interest in joining. He praised Sgt. Vasquez and the HOPE Team for their work.

Sparks City Mayor Ed Lawson encouraged all elected officials to participate in a ride-along with the HOPE Team.

Reno City Mayor Hillary Schieve commended the officers for the program. She felt the compassionate approach was the right way to handle this, adding it was impossible to know the reason why someone was homeless. She felt the care and compassion utilized by the HOPE Team was the best approach, further suggesting all three jurisdictions should employ the same regionally. She acknowledged the danger in living along the river, asserting that moving people away from it was often to protect them from floods and fires. She thought the regional approach needed to be dedicated to river outreach so people were able to obtain what they needed. She praised the SPD, Mayor Lawson, and the Sparks City Council for making this a priority.

Reno City Councilmember Devon Reese indicated he and Mayor Schieve were supposed to accompany the HOPE Team, but that would be delayed due to COVID-19 issues. He expressed appreciation for the invitation and said they would reschedule when it was safe.

Reno City Councilmember Neoma Jardon commended the City of Sparks, saying she heard people from many different sectors speak highly of the program. She thought this was one of the City's focal points and it had a positive impact. She felt this program could be emulated along the entirety of the river in collaboration with the County and the City of Reno.

Reno City Councilmember Naomi Duerr wondered about the differences between the HOPE Team and the City of Reno's Mobile Outreach Safety Team (MOST).

Chief Crawforth replied they were different, but both were pieces of the overall solution. Councilmember Duerr expressed interest in going on a ride-along. She pointed out some differences, such as the branding of the vehicles and the fact that this was the only thing the HOPE Team did. She thought the MOST could learn from these differences to expand their program.

Reno Councilmember Delgado also expressed interest in participating in a ride-along. He asked why this program was limited just to the river since there were encampments throughout the entire region. Chief Crawforth responded the HOPE Team worked throughout Sparks and not just along the river. He mentioned some people did not want to access the services that were offered, so they left the river; the HOPE Team tried to follow them to ensure they had the option to access those services. He added they helped people in the Bureau of Land Management land off Pyramid Way. Councilmember Delgado thought all jurisdictions could employ these strategies throughout the entire region and not solely in the river area.

Mayor Schieve inquired about which services were offered and which had been the most helpful. Sgt. Vasquez replied some individuals received mental health services and veterans were provided assistance in finding housing and obtaining funding. Health Plan of Nevada offered housing and cell phones to individuals, as well as helping them attend all their medical appointments. The HOPE Team also arranged with The Humane Society for pets to become current in their immunizations so their owners could be admitted to shelters. He added Volunteers of America (VOA) also helped the HOPE Team.

Mayor Schieve asked about the difficulty in locating housing. Sgt. Vasquez indicated it was very difficult, pointing out Our Place was nearly at capacity. The HOPE Team typically reached out to VOA, Health Plan of Nevada, and the MOST to try to find additional housing opportunities. He told a story about a cashier who worked at a local casino but lived in her car because she could not afford rent; they helped her relocate to Our Place. Mayor Schieve thought it was important to address those individuals who were homeless but still had jobs, saying those with some income could be assisted with vouchers. Transitional housing was crucial for those individuals with no income who needed more broad-based services. Unfortunately, she remarked, transitional housing was a piece of the market that was missing. Chief Crawforth added that a private donor provided significant money for other things that were not otherwise covered.

Commissioner Hartung congratulated Chief Crawforth on his promotion. He endorsed Councilmember Delgado's idea of expanding the reach beyond the river area. He believed all three entities could work as one jurisdiction along the corridor, which would eliminate shifting homeless individuals around from one jurisdiction to another. This joint team would find assistance for these individuals, identify any mental illnesses, and get those with jobs into housing. He felt some could even be trained in work that would result in higher-paying jobs, citing apprenticeship programs as a possibility.

Chair Lucey thought this type of outreach was pivotal in addressing homelessness, whether along the river corridor or throughout the entire region. He thought all three entities needed to elevate services to ensure every individual received the response they needed. He thought the process of identifying data and communicating with homeless individuals was moving in the right direction.

Mayor Lawson compared a regional homelessness unit to the regional gang unit, saying the program could begin the following day. There would be no concerns about boundaries since each police force had the ability to go into other jurisdictions. He looked forward to great things for the whole region, not just the City of Sparks.

There was no public comment or action taken on this item.

**20-0833**      **AGENDA ITEM 9** Presentation and discussion of the "Crisis Now" methodology of acute mental health crises intervention - R-I Associates.

Reno City Clerk Ashley Turney indicated there was no public comment on this item.

Reno City Mayor Hillary Schieve called Dr. Stephanie Woodard, Senior Advisor on Behavioral Health for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), an inspiration who understood the magnitude of mental health and addiction. The Mayor told a story about visiting Phoenix, Arizona to witness how they employed the Crisis Now model; Dr. Woodard, Senator Julie Ratti, Reno City Councilmember Oscar Delgado, and Grant Denton also joined them on that trip. She believed utilizing the jail system as mental health hospitals was unacceptable and using emergency rooms to treat mental health patients was not ideal.

Dr. Woodard conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk, and reviewed slides with the following titles: The Need for Crisis Care; Strong Foundation; The Solutions; Crisis System of Care; High-Tech Crisis Call Centers; 24/7 Mobile Crisis; Crisis Stabilization Programs; Essential Crisis Care Principles and Practices; Zero Suicide; Next Steps; Resources; and Questions.

Dr. Woodard began by describing the issue of crisis care facing the state, cities, and counties. She shared preliminary data that 763 people had committed suicide in Washoe County between 2015 and 2019; this translated to roughly three suicides a week. She explained COVID-19 (C19) resulted in a three to fourfold increase in adults experiencing significant amounts of distress. Each day approximately 30 individuals waited in emergency room (ER) beds for admission to inpatient behavior health care units. This resulted in a significant lag time for those necessary services and an exorbitant cost to the hospitals. Additionally, she noted, many people received the wrong care at the wrong place at the wrong time. Crisis Care, she noted, was about matching the right treatment to each individual at the right time and place, which required a robust continuum of care. She said they tended to concentrate on deep end services like patient psychiatry and emergency

rooms, as well as low-level outpatient services, but not on continuum of services based on the level of care. This resulted in unnecessary ER use and incarceration.

Dr. Woodard acknowledged there was controversy surrounding crisis triage centers, but the concept behind them was to provide an alternative option besides ERs for anyone struggling with a behavioral health issue. While this idea played out differently across the state, these centers demonstrated how much vision there was in addressing these issues within the communities. She noted Washoe County was home to Quest Counseling & Consulting, one of the certified community behavioral health clinics throughout the state. She mentioned one priority was to ensure individuals received the care they needed within the community they lived, but without unnecessary hospitalization or incarceration.

Dr. Woodard explained Assembly Bill 66 allowed freestanding psychiatric hospitals to receive an endorsement for crisis stabilization services, which provided a mechanism for non-emergency behavioral health transport. She stated Regional Behavioral Health Coordinator Dorothy Edwards was instrumental in completing the regional gaps and asset mapping project. This used the Crisis Now model to get a better idea of which assets the region had from which to build a comprehensive crisis of care system. She opined significant investment was needed at a community level to cultivate community wellness and resilience. The crisis system of care itself was necessary but insufficient, and a robust system of care including treatment, recovery, housing, and healthcare was needed to help people reach and maintain recovery.

Dr. Woodard indicated the area was fortunate to have Crisis Support Services of Nevada, one of nine national suicide prevention hotlines, who had provided this service for decades. They hoped to expand their reach, which currently consisted of answering calls from people in crisis and deploying mobile teams, to using the Open Beds platform to navigate individuals to resources in the community. Nationally, she noted, crisis call centers had a success rate of between 80 and 90 percent in helping people deescalate from crisis; this was sufficient for most callers. Services provided by mobile crisis teams were found to be 70 to 80 percent effective in abating immediate crises without necessitating transport to a crisis stabilization center or an ER.

Dr. Woodard said crisis stabilization programs were not considered inpatient psychiatry, and in some jurisdictions these programs ensured that nobody was turned away, resulting in low drop-off times. In other areas of the state, she remarked, law enforcement took a disproportionate amount of time transporting and waiting with patients until further assessments could be conducted. She opined these programs allowed law enforcement to return to community policing quicker. She noted the average stay for individuals in these programs was less than 23 hours, and patients requiring a higher level of care or a longer stay could be transported to inpatient psychiatry or crisis residential services. She said individuals suffering a crisis did not need to be sequestered in a room alone with a bed; they needed a high level of engagement with people who wanted to help with problem-solving. In addition, peers played a significant role in that engagement.

Dr. Woodard commented the zero-suicide initiative recognized that individuals experiencing suicidal ideation interfaced with healthcare systems, which required a high level of commitment from hospital administration to focus on evidence-based practices and transitions of care. The healthcare system as a whole would need to recognize that care did not end after discharge, and a warm handoff to additional services and subsequent follow-up was necessary. She indicated DHHS provided funding to build out a crisis system of care, using some grant funding through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to care for the uninsured. Some of this funding went to Reno Behavioral Health, offsetting some of the costs for compensated care, and additional funds would go to Children's Mobile Crisis to expand its outreach operations to a 24/7 model.

Dr. Woodard indicated the Crisis Now website listed on the resources slide was home to the bed calculator used by the DHHS to understand where communities stood with their resources and which resources were needed to implement a sufficient crisis of care system. The SAMHSA best practice toolkit provided recommendations for what should be included as providers developed their areas of focus.

Chair Lucey praised Mayor Schieve and the model she employed, noting the Washoe County Behavioral Health Board collaborated with Mayor Schieve's Mental Health Task Force (MHTF). He invited Senator Julia Ratti to speak. Senator Ratti clarified she was not speaking in her role as Senator but rather as a representative of the Washoe County Health District (WCHD) in her position as Chair of the Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board. She lauded Dr. Woodard and the work being done by the DHHS in investigating models from other communities to learn what was working. She thanked Mayor Schieve and the MHTF for focusing on the crisis stabilization piece of the model.

Senator Ratti indicated she worked with Ms. Edwards to build off the assets and gaps assessment, which she described as a mid-level investigation of what was already happening. She hoped to get more granular to identify which services were still needed. She expressed pride in the national suicide hotline, which she felt helped get the region most of the way to the goal. She stressed the importance of moving behavioral health crisis response out of the 911 system and into one set up to address behavioral health crisis needs. This was not a criticism of first responders, she stated, but rather an acknowledgement that the system was not set up to work with behavioral health crises. She reiterated 90 percent of those calls could be answered through a hotline if they were diverted away from law enforcement and fire agencies. She remarked Crisis Services of Nevada was collaborating with Reno/Washoe County dispatch, and a pilot program diverting calls from the 911 system would begin on December 1. Since about 10 percent of all 911 calls had a behavioral health element, the pilot program would give some indication as to how often behavioral health intervention was necessary.

Senator Ratti noted the WCHD's team worked with data received from the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority to understand the behavioral health calls they received. The WCHD would then work with fire agencies to learn more about their response. The data from all of these would go into the Crisis Now model, where the crisis

hotline and technology like Open Beds would demonstrate where resources were available. By populating the software with that information and working with service providers to update this information daily, Crisis Support Services of Nevada could see who was receiving services and who needed to be placed in beds. The gaps in these services were filled by mobile outreach teams, but one law supervisor and one case worker were not enough to meet the remaining outreach needs. She felt expansion was needed for these outreach teams, and dispatch needed to make better determinations as to whether law enforcement was needed for a call or if a behavioral health peer was more appropriate.

Senator Ratti explained the Mayor's MHTF worked hard on the crisis stabilization center and would make a presentation to the Behavioral Health Board in December. The Vice Chair of that board was also on the MHTF. By January, Senator Ratti hoped to have a rough road map of all assets, a database of needs and costs associated to supply those resources, and a recommendation by the Board of the next steps the community would need to take to build out the model. Like Built For Zero, part of the Crisis Now work was to identify the good things occurring and compiling them into one system of care.

Mayor Schieve underscored the added stress this put on first responders and law enforcement, noting police officers were not behavioral health specialists. She brought up remarks by Brandon Cassinelli, Embedded Resource Officer for the Reno Police Department, who said there were no places to take people experiencing episodes of bipolar disorder, depression, or schizophrenia. She felt the inability to address these issues was one reason why that population kept growing in size. She told a story about losing members of her family to C19 and their struggles dealing with depression, adding these occurrences could happen to anyone. She acknowledged crises did not adhere to a 9 to 5 schedule; bipolar issues and depression did not stop. She admitted Reno's Mobile Outreach Safety Team was limited in time and scope. The community needed to examine how first responders dealt with crises since many of them suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after a series of traumatic events.

Regarding the crisisnow.com website, Mayor Schieve asked whether there was a way to type in the name of a city and find out the cost savings that could be generated using the Crisis Now model. Dr. Woodard said RI International developed a template that used a rough population estimate to generate the number of mobile teams and crisis stabilization beds needed, as well as the cost offset for using those beds rather than ERs. She believed Washoe County's results were included as part of the assets and gaps map, but she would provide it to everyone to help understand potential financial impacts. Mayor Schieve believed the cost savings for this region was in the millions. Dr. Woodard added the actualized savings were not limited simply to dollars, but also a better use of time for law enforcement, who could leave after handing off the patient in crisis to a mobile crisis team. This also reduced the income loss and burden of care placed on ERs.

Mayor Schieve pointed out this also streamlined the healthcare of everyone else in the ER. She relayed Officer Cassinelli's estimation that law enforcement typically spent 2.5 hours getting someone admitted to the jail, compared to the Crisis Now model

which often resulted in drop-offs that took less than seven minutes. She stated behavioral health services were very difficult to access in Nevada, and it was difficult to know how police officers would react to people experiencing those crises. She thought this model worked on many levels.

Reno City Councilmember Naomi Duerr suggested implementing this model immediately.

Sparks City Councilmember Kristopher Dahir added failing to deal with crises when they happened resulted in additional crises. He asked how the State's anticipated cutbacks would impact this work. Despite the potential for the State to enact 12 percent budget cuts, Dr. Woodard responded, services such as mobile crisis teams and the call center were not funded directly by the State. The DHHS was a beneficiary of several grants that supported the Crisis Support Services of Nevada, and general funding from the DHHS was not expected to be cut. Additionally, they received mental health block grant funding. She said the DHHS would continue to advocate for funding. Grant funding was used to expand Children's Mobile Crisis to a 24-hour model, and she hoped that funding would continue because it was a crucial service. She indicated the MOST had a general fund allocation, though what happened during the next legislative session could change that. She believed the next step was ensuring the sustainability of the crisis stabilization center by working with Medicaid and other payors.

Mayor Schieve added that some Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act money was dedicated to addressing the behavioral health side of the pandemic. She believed small business owners might experience PTSD, and incidents of depression might also increase because of the number of citizens dealing with isolation. She felt this model would touch everyone in the community at some point. Dedicating CARES funding to hospitals, she felt, would be more effective. She mentioned the State provided a very costly building to help in the effort, something which would not have been possible if the community needed to fund it. She felt this would have long-term effects on the community's mental health.

Senator Ratti explained the funding for the MOST started as a State legislative appropriation, and it was renewed and expanded during the previous session. Through the efforts of the special session, she noted, the MOST was funded through State CARES Act dollars which were set to expire at the end of 2020. General Fund money and Healthy Nevada funds would be utilized through the end of the fiscal year, though it was unknown whether the general fund appropriation would make it through to the Governor's recommended budget. As a result, the MOST was the area she felt most concerned about because it was the only adult behavioral mobile outreach team in the community.

Sparks City Councilmember Paul Anderson commented he was familiar with the Crisis Now program through SAMHSA's work with veterans. He believed the behavioral health crisis was worse because of C19 since it impacted both the unhoused population as well as those with jobs and families. He knew money was tight, but he encouraged everyone to support this effort.

Commissioner Hartung expressed appreciation for a proactive approach, recognizing that some methodologies used in the past did not work well. Chair Lucey added he thought this was a fantastic project and he wanted to continue working with the State and the MHTF since they had the resources for immediate outreach.

Councilmember Duerr noted the City of Reno set aside \$3 million in CARES Act funds for mental health. She wondered what other jurisdictions were doing in this regard and what could be done to facilitate forward movement. Mayor Schieve pointed out this item was not agendized for action, but was meant to illustrate the model so everyone could understand all the different pieces of it.

Vice Chair Berkbigler concurred with the proactive approach and felt this was an issue that needed focus.

Chair Lucey thanked Dr. Woodard, Senator Ratti, and Mayor Schieve for their participation with the Crisis Now initiative.

There was no action taken on this item.

**20-0834**      **AGENDA ITEM 10** Presentation and discussion of the Clean and Safe program conducted by the City of Reno - Arlo Stockham, Acting Assistant City Manager and Cynthia Esparza, Senior Management Analyst, City of Reno.

Reno City Clerk Ashley Turney indicated there was no public comment on this item.

Senior Management Analyst Cynthia Esparza conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was provided to the Clerk, and reviewed slides with the following titles: Clean and Safe Program; Creation; Objectives; Protocols; photos; Operations; Cleanup Activities; Waste Collection (2 slides); Homeless Related Expenses; CARES Community Partnerships; and Thank you.

Ms. Esparza noted the River Crew was created to address the emerging issue of excessive debris along the river corridor. The formation of the Clean and Safe Team (CST) was a result of both an increase in the number of encampments and the issuance of a notice of a public health hazard by the Washoe County Health District. In addition to addressing public spaces, she indicated the CST worked with code enforcement to address private parcels as well. She stated the outreach component, consisting of work with the MOST, Volunteers of America, and shelters, was a critical piece of the program. Outreach also consisted of providing notification when certain areas would be addressed.

Ms. Esparza explained the concerns tracked by Reno Direct included observations from staff and members of the Reno City Council. She added the CST had not received any notices of public health violations during the pandemic. Coordination with the Carson Truckee Water Conservancy District came about because the CST wanted to

ensure the river was free of debris to prevent flooding there. She thanked everyone on the CST, pointing out the additional support members referenced during the presentation were necessary to help understand the diversity of encampments. She stressed that the C19 pandemic added another layer of difficulty to cleanup efforts. She noted several of the locations listed on the Operations Map slide experienced multiple instances of activity.

Ms. Esparza defined large cleanups as those which required staff to work longer periods of time, citing a cleanup near the Grand Sierra Resort as an example. The number of individual sites listed on the Cleanup Activities slide included initial visits to sites prior to cleanup events. She noted the spike in waste collection in May was a result of halting cleanup efforts in mid-March and April due to C19. With regard to homeless related expenses, she indicated the contract provider was funded through general funds, and the money used to pay for CST staffing needs went toward the program assistant and the staff time required for weekly meetings. The money allocated to the Reno Police Department included money for the Homeless Outreach Team, which was comprised of one lieutenant, one sergeant, and four officers, as well as community action officers who took part in larger cleanup events. She noted the work with the Downtown Regional Partnership included extra sanitation and additional outreach in the river corridor. She highlighted that the CST's program assistant came from Volunteers of America with experience as a homeless case manager.

Acting Reno City Manager Arlo Stockham praised the team and stated he looked forward to enhancing collaboration and achieving more consistency in the region.

Reno City Councilmember Neoma Jardon asked whether the members of the CST were dedicated solely to homeless outreach efforts. Ms. Esparza confirmed they worked full-time with the program assistant on service requests that came in, and it was her understanding their sole focus was homelessness.

Chair Lucey thanked Mr. Stockham and Ms. Esparza.

There was no action taken on this item.

**20-0835**      **AGENDA ITEM 11.1** Staff Report (For Possible Action): Overview of the Nevada Cares Campus Plan - Arlo Stockham, Acting Assistant City Manager, City of Reno.

**AGENDA ITEM 11.2** Approval by Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County of Exhibit A (Fiscal Year 2020-21 Interlocal Cooperative Agreement for Shelter Operation and Other Homeless Services among the City of Reno, Washoe County, and the City of Sparks). (For Possible Action)

**AGENDA ITEM 11.3** Approval by Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County of Exhibit B (Amendment No. 1 to the Cost Share Agreement Attachment to the Interlocal Agreement for Incident Command and Coordinated Response to COVID-19). Amendment 1 addresses cost share responsibilities for

emergency homeless facilities (\$16,871,040) and a regional wastewater study (\$1,790,385). (For Possible Action)

**AGENDA ITEM 11.4** Approval by the City of Reno of Exhibit C (Purchase agreement for an approximately 5.15 acre portion of the Governor's Bowl Park property (APN 008-211-38) located at 1498 East Fourth Street, Reno, NV for an amount not to exceed \$1,750,000. (For Possible Action)

**AGENDA ITEM 11.5** Approval by the City of Reno of Exhibit D (three-party purchase agreement for the approximately ±9.39 acre Wells Cargo Property (APNs 008-211-43 and 008-211-46) located at 1175 East Fourth Street, Reno, NV) for an amount not to exceed \$6,150,000 for the Shelter portion and \$5,650,000 for the Housing portion. (For Possible Action)

Given the concern about potential losses of quorum, Reno City Clerk Ashley Turney announced the following individuals submitted emailed public comment in support of Agenda Item 11: Marlene Olsen; Tom Fennell; Richard Green; Lisa Lee; an anonymous author; Michael Pagni; Ken Krater; Tyler Stewart; and Mike Kazmierski. These emails were distributed to the various board members and placed on file with the Clerk.

Additionally, Ms. Turney relayed that voicemails in support of Agenda Item 11 were received from the following individuals: Jill Glands-Reich; Linda Goldman; Alex Stettinski; Jim Galloway; Christiana Triford; J. Dugan; Inga Kosta; Tova McGilvrey; Carol Brill; Adrienne Flightback; Tammy Taylor; Donald Barney; Margaret Friedrich; Rob Winkel; Don Welsh; Ann Silver; Howard Olsen; George Foster; David Hyman; Devon; Anya Caldia-Mason; Victoria Mason; Craig Etem; Harvey Finnell; Katie Reinhardt; Brett Lubbock; Heidi Chisolm; Frank Kelly; Sharon Ellidge; Ryan Corland; Taylor Hatford; Khalilah Cage; Kyle Rea; Jennifer Wilson; Andrew Torrin; Tiffany Currie; Joey Gilbert; Piper Stremmel; Tom Pennel; Mary Mentaberry; Beau Keenan; Travis Reed; Roger O'Donnell; Stacy Sampson; Daryl Bowden; Andrea Lorenzo; Michael Bozeman; Peter Scrimmel; Ryan Garaventa; Mark Gill-Martin; Marcia Grouden; Arlene Freeman; Jamie Plumb; Eric Edelstein; McKay Murdock; Par Tolles; Lindsey Crawsley; Britton; Katie Flemming; Melissa Davies; Laura; Nancy; Dr. Bradley Grousse; Molly Mentaberry; Eric Lerude; Don Goodman; Rick Reviglio; Joel Grace; Mary Ellis Hogan; Darlene Arnold; Jeff Partyka; Debbie Day; Glenn Carano; Patricia Morales; Bridget Murdoch; Troy Means; Jeff Gorelick; Gail Wilson; Andrea Villatora; Anita Benithon; Allison Gorelick; Joseph Stevenson; April Highcell; Brian Cassidy; Claudia Johnson; Nancy Remington; Jacqueline Hogan; Judith Frederick; Chris Shank; Dr. Dennis Yamamoto; Sandra Boldey; Karen Massey; Johanna Hollis; Trudy Nun; Dean Dow; Dr. Jeff Engold; Anna; Clint Cates; Sierra Urban; Aaron West; Kelly Wilson; Kathy Davis; Kyle Lee; Tom; Tyler Rancher; Cameron Kegee; Robert Brooks; Blake Smith; Troy Ogden; Steven Wolfe; Rebecca Reeves; Ed Angelini; Cherie Welsey; Jonathan Boleyn; Matt Danny; Morgan Maguire; Steven Ascuaga; and Blake Smith. Ms. Turney indicated these comments were received before

4:00 p.m. the prior day, and transcriptions of the messages were given to the board members and would be made a part of the record.

Acting Reno City Manager Arlo Stockham conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk, and reviewed slides with the following titles: Nevada Cares Campus; Acknowledgments; Homeless Sheltering Challenges; Homeless Sheltering Locations; Homeless Service Opportunity; Homeless Shelter Strategy; Nevada Cares Campus; Homeless Shelter Plan (3 slides); Sprung Structure Homeless Shelter Examples; Regional Cost Sharing Agreement (3 slides); and Action Items.

Mr. Stockham stated this item involved a unique and unprecedented opportunity. He acknowledged the difficulty of running emergency shelters during a pandemic, praising the work of those managers and Volunteers of America. He requested a vote of the board members to enable the project to move forward because, while it would not solve the homelessness problem, it would provide sufficient land for services on a consolidated site. He reminded the boards of the tight deadline due to the requirement for Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act money to be used within a certain timeframe. He stressed this item was not meant in any way to replace or contradict the work done with Built For Zero; it was an emergency action to deal with an emergency situation.

Mr. Stockham indicated the size of the Governor's Bowl site was reduced because of the proposed highway expansion, and some of the site's 5.1 acres was unusable because of steep slopes. He mentioned the Governor's Bowl area would be available for other wraparound services, with the potential for it to be used for camping. Assuming this item was approved, a discussion about what should be done with that property would be placed on the next Community Homelessness Advisory Board (CHAB) agenda. He noted sprung structures were commonly used for homeless shelters and several were currently being used by fire stations. These structures were heated and cooled and were often used as affordable ways to increase shelter space.

Mr. Stockham stated cost projections would be finalized in the near future so all entities could budget appropriately before CARES Act funding expired. He explained the cost per person served at Our Place was more expensive than that at the primary shelter because it was a nicer facility providing great services for women and families who qualified. He said the approvals of all four of Agenda Item 11's sub-items were inter-related, noting the shelter property alone could work without the Wells Cargo property but it would not be as effective as it could be. Should Agenda Items 11.2 and 11.3 be approved by all three entities, the City of Reno would be asked to approved Agenda Items 11.4 and 11.5.

Chair Lucey stated this was the type of opportunity elected officials looked forward to because they could make a difference in so many community members' lives. Reno City Mayor Hillary Schieve asked whether each body should vote individually or together, something on which Chair Lucey thought legal counsels should opine.

Mayor Schieve thought approval of this item would mark a monumental day for all three entities in helping the most vulnerable populations. She described prior solutions as Band-aids and the homeless community would continue to struggle if they could not receive the services they needed. She thanked many individuals and the CHAB for their vision in the region. Citing the 1,800 homeless person figure from the presentation, she pointed out the current shelter had only 95 beds and Our Place only added another 75. She thanked the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) for being cognizant of the need for transitional housing. People with severe mental health challenges could not be placed immediately into housing and transitional housing was necessary.

Chair Lucey stated he received direction from legal staff that each entity should take action individually since some were approving different items. Each motion needed a mover and a seconder.

Sparks City Mayor Ed Lawson envisioned the deep ramifications this action would have twenty years later. He thanked everyone for their hard work, opining these conversations began at CHAB meetings even though the action would take place at this meeting.

Chair Lucey pointed out the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) spent \$14 million to stand up the Our Place campus, at which 176 women had been sheltered. Of those women, 93 percent had experienced chronic homelessness, 60 percent self-identified with mental health issues, and 43 percent struggled with substance abuse. Additionally, 20 women had already moved out since August 15, with an additional 40 on track to move out within three months and 44 percent of the total population expected to move out within six months. He noted four women moved into the Crossroads program and another four went to the Temporary Assistance for Displaced Seniors program. Finding the proper services for these individuals, he reasoned, allowed people to better themselves. He commented 59 families had been served at the facility, 55 percent of whom had already moved into transitional or new housing. He stated the community supported services to prevent homelessness, and he thanked all the board members for making a difference in the community. He urged the BCC and the two Councils to move forward with this item.

Reno City Councilmember Neoma Jardon said it was unbelievable to finally reach this place, adding there were times she did not think it would happen. She thanked everyone for staying the course, adding individual gratitude to various stakeholders for their collaboration. She said these agreements would not be the only solution, but they would at least provide the property to facilitate one. She felt having 15 acres would allow for safe camps, dog runs, and other amenities and wraparound services which were previously not possible. She praised the CHAB for keeping its vision of helping people by name.

Reno City Councilmember Naomi Duerr echoed her appreciation. She said the land was well-located in the geographic center between Reno and Sparks, near both the County Administrative Complex and a major freeway, and on a bus route. She felt not being near many neighbors was important because not everyone wanted to be close to

certain services; some people expressed pushback on the approval of affordable housing out of fear for a decline in property values or the mixing of uses. She thought this was an opportunity to turn the COVID-19 pandemic into a positive development.

Reno City Councilmember Devon Reese said elected officials were mindful of their legacy, contending they would be judged as a society based on how the most vulnerable were treated. He thought this was a legacy moment for the community and the boards would always be glad that these measures were approved.

Reno City Councilmember Jenny Brekhuis remarked she was glad the items were being taken individually. She noted some of the documents for action were supplied after the agenda was posted, including one that was only made available earlier in the day. She inquired whether the Regional Homeless Services Cooperative Agreement had been signed already. Mr. Stockham responded the document had not been signed yet, so some portions of it would apply retroactively.

Regarding the operational contributions referenced in the presentation, Councilmember Brekhuis asked why Washoe County was the major financier for the men's shelter while the City of Reno was the lead on that facility. She further inquired about the source of those dollars and whether the County functioned only in a pass-through capacity for that funding. Washoe County Manager Eric Brown responded the County's delivery model for wraparound services at Our Place was different than that used by the City at the Community Assistance Center. He said it had nothing to do with who the lead entity was, but rather the two different models having different cost profiles.

Councilmember Brekhuis said she believed the Nevada Cares campus would have wraparound services, so she wondered why the County was not stepping up to be the lead agency there. Mr. Brown answered the County was extended financially with the services it provided at Our Place, having spent over \$1 million on Our Place campus expansions in addition to the \$3.8 million listed in the presentation. He contested the County was doing what it could during the pandemic, where costs and demand continued to shift. Councilmember Brekhuis empathized and said funding the Clean and Safe Team stretched the City's budget too.

Councilmember Jardon reiterated that government alone could not make this happen and building out the campus with everything these boards wanted would take a larger effort by the entire community. She questioned how long the closing period was anticipated to be after approval of these items, how long it would take for the shelter structure to be operational, and whether this action negated any existing litigation tied to the property. Mr. Stockham replied the scheduled close date was December 3, so each entity would need to send money for escrow in the next couple of weeks. The deadline could be extended, but that would impact both the CARES funding and the construction schedule, which was aggressively slated to take place over only eight weeks. He hoped to have the Sprung structure erected and occupied by the end of January, which could be delayed by bad weather or a lack of structure availability. Finally, he indicated this

transaction was not related to the litigation regarding the structures, and any other litigation would be rendered moot because they would shut down the temporary shelters.

Reno City Councilmember Oscar Delgado brought up that there was a perception a few months ago that the entities were not getting along. Clearly that was not the case, and he added his gratitude for helping support the most vulnerable in the community. He mentioned he toured the Our Place campus and praised the relationships staff was able to develop with the individuals seeking services. He expressed appreciation for everyone's hard work.

Reno City Councilmember Bonnie Weber thanked everyone for their hard work and said she could not wait to vote on these items.

Sparks City Councilmember Charlene Bybee said that, since C19 began, the jurisdictions spoke about the ability to be fluid and this was an example of hard work. She added her thanks to the entities' managers, since this project originally included only the Governor's Bowl property. She summarized that each presentation focused on one piece of the puzzle that would be needed to solve this regional problem. She did not want to see the problem spiral out of control like it had in larger cities. She contested all of these programs would not only lower the number of homeless individuals, it would also impact community members, businesses, and residents who wanted to visit the river.

Sparks City Councilmember Kristopher Dahir expressed excitement for the community, saying this was about the collaboration of everyone. He stated he observed Washoe County ramping up its efforts, praising its work with Our Place. He agreed no one agency could do this alone and approval of this item was crucial. He admitted there was much work left to do with the CHAB and everyone was needed at the discussion table. Citing the letters of support received as public comment, he mentioned the BCC and the City Councils would reach out to ask for help.

Sparks City Councilmember Don Abbott remarked each elected official loved their individual communities, but it was refreshing to see all the agencies come together. He concurred this was an important date and he thanked everyone for contributing.

Commissioner Jung said this action was unprecedented. She acknowledged this was an emergency situation and it was important to move quickly during the pandemic. She added this was an emergency in every city. She said these elected officials did not always agree on how to address a problem that was bigger than all of them. She admitted to being hesitant when first presented with the Our Place idea because it was a new, data-driven model. She reminded the board members that each individual was important to somebody else. She expressed gratitude to the mayors, the chair, and the managers for actively working to make this happen despite not everyone agreeing on one correct solution. She stressed the need to drop jurisdictions and take care of people who could not take care of themselves, for they had a right to pursue their own happiness. She felt now was not the time to fight about the details because chasing people across jurisdictions while

not providing toilets, garbage cans, or water was a recipe for disaster. She applauded Sparks' HOPE Team and expressed pride in everyone at the meeting.

Vice Chair Berkbigler said she was completely in favor of doing everything possible to protect the homeless, and she supported the purchase of the Governor's Bowl property so there was a place to move the homeless male population. She asked where the County would get the money to pay for the 69 percent share of operating fees, adding she was less concerned with where they would get the money for the purchase fees; she felt the County did not have that money in its budget. She pointed out the County invested a significant amount of money in Our Place and was now expected to invest another significant amount in the Nevada Cares facility. She thought the citizens wanted to know where the money would come from since the BCC had not yet discussed this.

Vice Chair Berkbigler said one thought was to increase the goods and services tax, though that would result in a considerable cost increase to citizens, particularly those with expensive cars and farmers with multiple vehicles. She expressed concern about asking residents in Incline Village, Verdi, and Gerlach to pay for maintenance of a facility that the County did not manage. She wondered why the County would not be the controlling entity for this property. She felt it was unfair to have County citizens pay for this without having input as to how it would be paid. She underscored the importance of the homeless situation, listing several programs she had supported. Still, there were questions she thought needed answers.

Manager Brown responded the majority of the costs in the cost-sharing agreement were covered by traditional funding means and were additionally a part of an interlocal agreement. He mentioned CARES Act funding was making up some of the difference in 2020. He acknowledged they did not know if they could continue to count on CARES Act funding, and costs could grow as homeless populations continued to increase. He further admitted Our Place was virtually full the month it opened, and plans were underway to add more buildings. He agreed the County would need to identify long-term funding, perhaps from within the County budget or grant programs. Vice Chair Berkbigler insisted it remained a concern for her.

Commissioner Hartung expressed gratitude to a number of individuals and agencies for their hard work.

Despite concerns about funding, Chair Lucey stated, this project reflected everyone's commitment to providing this service to the community as laid out in Nevada Revised Statutes. After listing some of the more successful programs, he stated homelessness knew no city boundaries. This region provided the additional challenges of weather, food scarcity, and employment, and those challenges would continue to get worse as the community grew. He thought it was in the best interest of the community to move forward with this, which would result in the individuals along the river receiving help, the community being cleaner, and people returning to work. He added his thanks to various people and agencies.

**4:52 p.m. Commissioner Herman left the meeting at some point between approval of the agenda and these comments.**

Chair Lucey moved to approve Agenda Items 11.1 through 11.5 as a block vote, seconded by Commissioner Hartung. Assistant District Attorney David Watts-Vial pointed out two of the items were for Reno City Council approval only and did not require action from the BCC. Chair Lucey amended his motion to approve Agenda Items 11.1 through 11.3. The seconder agreed.

For the Board of County Commissioners, on motion by Chair Lucey, seconded by Commissioner Hartung, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Herman absent, it was ordered that Agenda Items 11.1 through 11.3 be approved. Any Interlocal Agreements pertinent to Agenda Items 11.1 through 11.3 are attached hereto and made a part of the minutes thereof.

Vice Chair Berkbigler noted she voted aye because it was an important issue, but she still had reservations about long-term operating costs.

After a brief discussion on voting procedure, the Sparks City Council voted to approve Agenda Items 11.1 through 11.3.

After a brief discussion on voting procedure, the Reno City Council moved to approve Agenda Items 11.1 through 11.5, allowing Councilmember Brekhus to ask questions before a vote was taken.

Councilmember Jardon read the definition of empathy and said this was a monumental step in terms of understanding and sharing the feelings of others.

Councilmember Brekhus said she supported Agenda Item 11.1. Regarding Agenda Item 11.2, she recognized Manager Brown's comments about the County not taking the lead on the men's shelter despite paying the majority of the monies. She said the Clean and Safe Team taxed the City of Reno financially. She stated she could not support this agreement because Washoe County was the larger entity who she felt should take the lead. She agreed with Vice Chair Berkbigler's point about not having identified a funding source for the ongoing operational costs. She added she could support Agenda Item 11.3. She noted she did not support the Governor's Bowl item when it came up at a Reno City Council meeting, and she could not support it now. She felt expanding this property into a super shelter was not the correct approach; she preferred a service approach, adding that transitional housing was needed immediately. She expressed concern about the City of Reno's ability to manage this as she thought their past performance with the Record Street shelter was not great.

With regard to Agenda Item 11.5, Councilmember Brekhus said she was informed by people who provided meal services that they had been fenced out of the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) property, and were also told by the Wells Cargo property owner that they were on his property. Within a week, the property owner

sued TMWA and the City of Reno. Additionally, she had heard that the sale of the Wells Cargo property was an outcome of the settlement of that lawsuit. It was her understanding that CARES Act funding was not available for settlement costs. She asked whether this agreement was the outcome of a settlement. She further noted the Wells Cargo property had never been mentioned at a CHAB meeting as being part of this super shelter facility.

Mr. Stockham confirmed this transaction was not part of a settlement agreement.

Mayor Schieve wondered how someone could not support this initiative when the current shelter had only 95 beds. She mentioned each elected official struggled with the small capacity of the shelter. She agreed transitional housing was desperately needed, but this was an opportunity to provide that in a comprehensive way. Failure to approve this, she reasoned, would cause people to be left behind. She said she appreciated Councilmember Brekus' perspective but thought these populations were not going anywhere. She thanked everyone involved with this meeting, indicating the project would change how services were provided.

The Reno City Council voted to approve Agenda Items 11.1 through 11.5.

**20-0836**      **AGENDA ITEM 12** General Business - Commissioner, Council Member and Manager announcements, reports and updates to include requests for information or topics for future agendas. (No discussion will take place on this item.)

Sparks City Mayor Ed Lawson requested an item on a future concurrent agenda to discuss the creation of an appeals board for the District Health Department, since decisions made there could not currently be appealed.

Sparks City Councilmember Kristopher Dahir thanked everyone for an amazing meeting, adding he wished to have more of them. He concurred with the request for an appeal board for the Health Department. Reno City Mayor Hillary Schieve thanked Mayor Lawson for his leadership and she agreed with the need for that discussion.

**5:15 p.m.**      **Reno City Councilmember Jenny Brekus left the meeting.**

**20-0837**      **AGENDA ITEM 13** Public Comment.

Reno City Clerk Ashley Turney noted letters in support of Agenda Item 11 were received after the 4:00 p.m. deadline the previous day, though they had been provided to board members before their vote on that item. People who submitted letters of support for the Nevada Cares facility included: Governor Brian Sandoval; Charles Albright; Mark Holcomb; Dr. Rick Sproule, Jim Welborn; Jeremy Jones; David Fiore; John Creelman; Evy Tschannen; Tanja Hayes; Jeff Church; Ann Petersen; and Janet Phillips. Additionally, voicemails in support of the facility were received from Charles Albright and Dr. Charles Manscroft. These were submitted to the board members and placed on file with the Clerk.

Chair Lucey thanked Ms. Turney and the City of Reno for hosting the meeting.

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**5:18 p.m.** There being no further business to discuss, on motion by Commissioner Hartung, seconded by Chair Lucey, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote with Commissioner Herman absent, the meeting was adjourned.

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**BOB LUCEY**, Chair  
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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**JANIS GALASSINI**, County Clerk and  
Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners

*Minutes Prepared by:  
Derek Sonderfan, Deputy County Clerk*