

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

JUNE 15, 2021

PRESENT:

Bob Lucey, Chair
Vaughn Hartung, Vice Chair
Alexis Hill, Commissioner
Kitty Jung, Commissioner
Jeanne Herman, Commissioner

Janis Galassini, County Clerk
Eric Brown, County Manager
Nathan Edwards, Deputy District Attorney

The Washoe County Board of Commissioners convened at 10:03 a.m. in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

21-0467 AGENDA ITEM 3 Public Comment.

Ms. Tracey Thomas displayed a document, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk. She noted Nevada Revised Statute 293.2699 addressed voting materials printed in languages other than English. She expressed concern because Washoe County failed to provide bilingual voting materials for citizens of Chinese heritage even though the Nevada Legislature defined them as a minority group qualified to receive those materials. She suggested the County examine the most recent census to confirm which minority groups met the threshold for bilingual voting materials.

Ms. Elise Weatherly spoke about friends she lost recently, Ms. Polly Klaas, songs she found informative, and pledging her allegiance to the United States.

Ms. Rita Pepi asked that the COVID-19 (C19) emergency be lifted, and she expressed her opposition to C19 passports. She believed the State needed to perform a voting audit. She spoke about resolutions approved in Elko and Lander Counties to make them constitutional counties. She displayed the resolution, a copy of which was placed on file with the Clerk, and reviewed some of the principal parts of the resolution language.

Ms. Melanie Sutton asked the Board to end the public health emergency. She referred to Ms. Pepi's comment and urged the Board to make Washoe County the third constitutional county in the state. She opined the Commissioners, with the exception of Commissioner Herman, were not working for the people who elected them. She spoke about the efficacy of wearing face masks and about doing research.

Mr. James M. Benthin said he was gratified to see people were given the option of not wearing a mask during the Board of County Commissioners meeting, noting the Washoe County School District (WCSD) required masks at their previous meeting. He urged the Commissioners to speak to the WCSD about their mask requirement. He agreed with public commenters who encouraged the Board to make Washoe County a constitutional county.

Ms. Katherine Snedigar provided documents for the Board, copies of which were placed on file with the Clerk. She expressed vexation because the letter she received in response to her request for documents was not signed by anyone. She said her reply was therefore addressed to “Nobody”, the County, Chair Lucey, and all others associated with this issue. She expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of the reply.

Ms. Janet Butcher mentioned the prior day had been Flag Day, though many people were unaware of the significance of the day. She asked the Board to end the public health emergency and stated she disapproved of vaccine passports. She spoke about people she knew who experienced various health issues after they were vaccinated. She said she had been a poll worker and, based on her observations, requested a forensic audit to ensure election integrity.

Ms. Nicol Herris reported she was in the process of arranging a meeting with County Manager Eric Brown. She asked the Commissioners to end the public health emergency. She expressed concern about election integrity, noting the County needed to establish trust with its citizens. She said she considered herself a community leader and felt responsible for creating a bridge between individuals with different ideas. She asked the Commissioners to propose ideas for bringing people in the community together.

21-0468 **AGENDA ITEM 4** Announcements/Reports.

Chair Lucey mentioned the Reno Rodeo was currently taking place at the Reno Livestock Events Center; it was one of the first major events in northern Nevada since the COVID-19 pandemic. He wished the rodeo organizers success and hoped everyone would have an opportunity to attend and enjoy the community event. He acknowledged the challenges the event would pose for County employees, including additional traffic and parking issues, and he thanked everyone for their understanding. He noted another successful event, the Reno River Festival, took place the prior weekend. He was encouraged to see the community enjoying the event season and experiencing what northern Nevada had to offer.

Commissioner Jung encouraged the community and the Commissioners to watch a two-part documentary on HBO called *The Crime of the Century*, which investigated the opioid crisis. She thought the film would help the community and the Board to demand more from the opioid manufacturers that fouled the community. She acknowledged the epidemic affected the entire country and the world, but her priority was to advocate for this region. She noted a large portion of the County’s unsheltered population could be attributed to addiction due to medical providers and dishonest

pharmaceutical companies. She thought watching the documentary would help the Board advocate for larger settlements. She believed accepting smaller settlements would be considered a cost of doing business rather than a deterrent.

With regard to the inconvenience caused by the Reno Rodeo, Commissioner Jung encouraged Regional Transportation Commission representatives to offer free bus passes to staff. She believed the event presented an opportunity for employees to start using municipal services. She noted there was a shower in the parking garage for anyone who wanted to shower after biking, jogging, or walking to work. She encouraged everyone to learn how to use alternative forms of transportation. She wanted to incentivize staff because the County was the second largest employer in the area, and it could encourage social change in the community.

Commissioner Jung praised Chair Lucey's Reno Rodeo shirts and asked whether they were available for purchase from event vendors. Chair Lucey replied yes. Commissioner Jung noted the founder of the rodeo, Cotton Rosser, was from her hometown. Chair Lucey mentioned the Reno Rodeo was celebrating its 102nd anniversary.

Chair Lucey agreed with Commissioner Jung's comments about the opioid epidemic and its effect on the community. He said many individuals experiencing homelessness locally were affected by addiction, but many families were also dealing with this issue because of medically prescribed opioids. He thought the opioid crisis seemed to have no boundaries. He wanted staff to facilitate access to resources in the community. He suggested something similar to Washoe 311 which would provide quick access to resources, while maintaining the ability to remain anonymous. He thought it would be prudent to unify resources in northern Nevada.

PROCLAMATIONS

21-0469 **5A1** Proclaim July 2021 as Plastic Free July.

Commissioner Hill read the Proclamation and presented it to Robbin Palmer from the Zero Waste Committee. She noted she had used more plastic during the COVID-19 pandemic because of to-go food containers, so she looked forward to participating in the challenge. She thanked Ms. Palmer for the inspiration.

Ms. Palmer held up a plastic water bottle and said the plastic from that single-use container would last for several generations. She urged the Commissioners and the public to break free of plastic. She stated she would make "Plastic Free July" calendars available to the public and distribute them to the Board. A copy of the calendar was placed on file with the Clerk. She thanked the Board for the Proclamation.

Commissioner Hill noted Commissioner Jung had championed this effort during her entire career and had ensured County dollars were not spent on plastic bottles. She thanked Commissioner Jung for her work on the effort. She mentioned Artown would

be completely plastic free in July, and she hoped other events would be inspired by that decision.

On the call for public comment, Ms. Tina Davis was called but declined to speak.

Mr. Brian Beffort said he was a Washoe County resident and the Director of the Sierra Club in Nevada. He thanked Ms. Palmer and the volunteer Zero Waste team for their work on the Proclamation. He thought exploring choices made by individuals and institutions was important because those choices mattered and could make a difference. He thanked the Board for the time spent on this issue, and he encouraged everyone to think of ways to improve.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Jung, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5A1 be adopted.

DONATIONS

- 21-0470** **6A1** Recommendation to accept donations of [\$10,449.17] and in-kind donations [estimated at \$19,022.00] from various businesses, organizations and individuals for Regional Parks and Open Space programs and facilities; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the appropriate budget amendments. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)
- 21-0471** **6B1** Recommendation to: (1) acknowledge various items donated totaling an estimated market value of [\$600.00]; (2) accept donations from various donors to Washoe County Human Services Agency Child Protective Services Fund to support welfare activities in the amount of [\$2,289.96] retroactive for the period March 21, 2021 through May 20, 2021; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Human Services Agency. (All Commission Districts.)
- 21-0472** **6C1** Recommendation to accept a cash donation in the amount of [\$300.00] from Black Rock LLC in support of the Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department for their efforts during the Fly Ranch Burn on September 5, 2020 and if accepted, direct the Comptroller to make the appropriate budget amendments. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)
- 21-0473** **6D1** Recommendation to accept one-time appreciation gift donations [estimated value of \$17,683.70] from private citizens to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Jung read the donations. She said the Board had very strong supporters of parks and open space, and she was glad to see the community was also invested in them. She noted the donations for Agenda Item 6B1 came from people who decided to forgo their daily stipend when serving jury duty. She believed the children in

this community needed the most help, so she thanked those individuals for their donations. Agenda Item 6C1 supported the Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department; she thanked those volunteers, Commissioner Herman, and the Board for making the fire department a priority and ensuring there would be a response to fires in that area. She expressed appreciation for the generosity of County residents in support of these functional areas.

Chair Lucey thanked everyone who graciously donated to County departments. Those donations helped fill in gaps that were sometimes difficult to budget and made it easier for the various departments to provide services to the community.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Commissioner Jung, seconded by Vice Chair Hartung, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Items 6A1 through 6D1 be accepted.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 7A1 AND 7A2

21-0474 **7A1** Acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Clerk on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, including the following categories: Communications, Monthly Statements/Reports, Annual Statements/Reports, Budgets, and Additional Documents. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

21-0475 **7A2** Acknowledge and approve assignment of the correct Ordinance Number of 1670 for Bill No. 1857 adopted on June 8, 2021 for an ordinance amending the boundaries of Washoe County, Nevada District No. 24 (Groundwater Remediation). Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

There was no response to the call for public comment on the Consent Agenda Items listed above.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 7A1 and 7A2 be approved.

21-0476 **AGENDA ITEM 8** Recommendation to certify charges, levy and direct the Treasurer to collect \$360,515.28 in special assessments for fiscal year 2021/2022 as requested by the State Engineer of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, for Black Rock Desert Groundwater Basin (\$68.91), Honey Lake Valley Groundwater Basin (\$8,895.57), Hualapai Flat Water District (\$3,242.48), San Emidio Desert District (\$4,217.82), Warm Springs Valley Groundwater Basin (\$5,783.08), Washoe Valley Groundwater Basin (\$3,307.42), Warm Springs/Winnemucca Creek Basin (\$4,000.00), Cold Springs Valley Groundwater Basin (\$8,000.00), Lake Tahoe Groundwater Basin

(\$16,000.00), Lemmon Valley Water District (\$27,000.00), Pleasant Valley Groundwater Basin (\$6,000.00), Spanish Springs Valley Groundwater Basin (\$45,000.00), Tracy Segment Groundwater Basin (\$2,000.00), Truckee Canyon Segment Groundwater Basin (\$12,000.00) and Truckee Meadows/Sun Valley Groundwater Basin (\$215,000.00). The Board of Commissioners authorizes the Treasurer to remove uncollectible assessments and/or correct assessments on the tax roll as requested by the Division of Water Resources; direct the Clerk to execute the State of Nevada Division of Water Resources certification letters and send them back to the Division pursuant to NRS 533.285; and direct the Comptroller to pay to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources the requested funds. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Lucey said Water Resources Specialist Daniel Randles and Chief Deputy Treasurer Brenda Mathers were available in Chambers to answer questions.

Mr. Randles thanked Ms. Mathers for working with him on this item. He noted Deputy Administrator Micheline Fairbank was also available to answer questions. Chair Lucey said the item was straightforward and the Commissioners had the necessary information. He thanked Mr. Randles for making himself available and working directly with Ms. Mathers on this issue.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 8 be certified, levied, directed, and authorized.

21-0477 **AGENDA ITEM 9** Recommendation To Adopt And Execute An Ordinance Authorizing The Issuance By The County Of Its Negotiable “Washoe County, Nevada, General Obligation (Limited Tax) Flood Control Refunding Bonds (Additionally Secured By Pledged Revenues, Series 2021,” In The Maximum Aggregate Principal Amount Of \$14,105,000 For The Purpose Of Refunding Certain Outstanding Bonds Secured By The Infrastructure Sales Tax For Flood Control; Providing The Form, Terms And Conditions Of The Bonds And Providing Other Matters Relating Thereto: And Providing For Adoption As If An Emergency Exists. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

County Manager Eric Brown read the Ordinance. Janis Galassini, County Clerk, said it would be Ordinance No. 1671, Bill No. 1860.

Assistant County Manager Christine Vuletich explained this item was a bond refunding for the 2006 flood control bonds. The bonds were issued with a variable interest rate which required a rate reset every one to five years. She said there were 14 years remaining on the bonds with a maturity date of December 1, 2035. The refunding would

not extend the term of the bonds, it would simply take advantage of the existing low interest rates by refinancing to a low fixed rate. She mentioned John Peterson, Vice President of JNA Consulting Group, LLC, was present in Chambers to answer questions.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Ordinance No. 1671, Bill No. 1860, be adopted, approved, and published in accordance with NRS 244.100.

21-0478 **AGENDA ITEM 10** Public Comment.

Ms. Elise Weatherly spoke about reducing the use of plastic, listening to God, homeowners associations breaking Nevada law, opioids, and possible harmful chemicals in Roundup.

21-0479 **AGENDA ITEM 11** Announcements/Reports.

There were no announcements or reports.

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10:59 p.m. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

BOB LUCEY, Chair
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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

*Minutes Prepared by:
Carolina Stickley, Deputy County Clerk*