

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

TUESDAY

10:00 A.M.

MAY 18, 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 10:02 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:

Chair Lucey explained changes had been made to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines that allowed those who were vaccinated to not wear masks; he said it was appreciated for unvaccinated individuals to continue to wear them.

**21-0360** **AGENDA ITEM 3** Presentation by Washoe County Director Amber Howell and Chief Justin Roper on Washoe County Human Services Agency and Department of Alternative Sentencing Supportive Programs. (All Commissioner Districts.)

Human Services Agency (HSA) Director Amber Howell said the County had seen growth in the region and, in the six years she had been with the County, significant changes had been made to how vulnerable populations were served. She conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: About Us; Program Synergy; CrossRoads; CrossRoads Primary Elements; CrossRoads Men's; River House; Hope House; Hope First Cottages; CrossRoads Outcomes; Our Place; Our Place Primary Elements; Our Place Programming Model; Our Place Services; Our Place; and Our Place Outcomes.

Ms. Howell indicated CrossRoads was primarily a program for men and it contained 108 beds, but only 22 beds for women. She said they noticed child welfare was an issue because parents were on the brink of losing their parental rights while waiting for substance abuse facilities to provide room for them. Grace Church asked how they could help with the battle against addiction. She responded there was a significant need for beds for women, so Grace Church provided the Hope House, followed by the Hope First

Cottages, allowing more women and children to be housed. She explained the CrossRoads program was not a rehabilitation or mental health facility, it was a housing program. She expressed the need for individuals to have a roof over their heads and food in their stomachs before they could focus on anything else, which was the intent of the CrossRoads program. Individuals were provided a loving environment which allowed them to focus on getting their children back or to live independently and sober. She explained the affordable housing crisis was creating a bottleneck effect for individuals, many of whom had to stay at CrossRoads longer than expected to secure housing.

Ms. Howell described the process for guests at Our Place, saying every guest had someone on staff who knew their story; case managers did not change even when guests transitioned into independent living. She expressed excitement that no families were on the waiting list for housing at Our Place. The Our Place campus had expanded to a total occupancy of 136 women, including 36 beds for women and 38 for families. She stated the program had proven to be effective and progress was being made daily.

In response to a question from Vice Chair Hartung, Ms. Howell stated 66 percent of individuals continued to stay at Our Place, but the other 34 percent were only there a short time because they were not ready to stay at the campus. She noted those individuals were provided a diversion case worker who connected them to services until they decided what they wanted to do. She mentioned sobriety was not a requirement to stay at Our Place, but the campus was drug and alcohol free, and individuals would be eliminated from the program if they had such items onsite. She indicated 15 individuals on the campus had substance abuse issues and were pipelining up to the CrossRoads campus. Vice Chair Hartung wondered whether more space was needed at the CrossRoads campus to help get people out of the system. Ms. Howell believed they had the capacity for men and women at CrossRoads, which helped solve the bottleneck that was caused when there was no place for sober people to go after completing the program; they could end up on the streets and all the work they did would be for nothing. She asserted affordable housing was the most significant issue.

Vice Chair Hartung wondered whether any employers had been approached about subsidizing housing for their employees. He said he worked at Harrah's Casino many years ago and received subsidized housing at the River's Edge Apartments. Ms. Howell replied they had not yet. A \$6 million grant was received from the Reno Housing Authority to assist with housing, and she felt the programs were working well and meeting the community needs for beds. However, she added, they were ready to explore additional options.

Commissioner Jung inquired about the average number of people discharged from the Sheriff's Office per day and wondered whether more case worker resources were needed. She said many people who entered programs due to domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental illness typically had to attempt rehabilitation 7 to 12 times before they quit whatever issue they had. Relapse was part of recovery, she said, and simply attending programs helped people. She wanted a future agenda item about how to help people that were ready to live on their own but did not make enough money to rent

their own places, opining there were creative alternatives to address the bottlenecking situation. She expressed concern about employers not being able to keep up with increasing wages. She was thankful for churches who had assisted, but more of the community needed to help. She wished employers still cherished their employees like the casinos did for so many years by feeding them and providing medical insurance.

Commissioner Jung expressed excitement about touring Our Place and sitting in a staffing meeting to hear ideas, as she was very passionate about social services. She thanked Ms. Howell for making Washoe County the model and said the grants and property for Our Place came from hard work and the trust instilled in Ms. Howell. When Hillary Clinton was in Washoe County to tour the facility, the Commissioner mentioned, she said she wanted CrossRoads to be a national model because of its outcomes and its goals of holding people accountable for their actions.

Commissioner Hill looked forward to discussing the next steps with Ms. Howell and her team. She brought up the Housing Specialist position that would be filled in the next fiscal year to help with the affordable housing crisis. She said affordable housing was brought up daily in the news, not only for the most vulnerable people but also for people who were working yet still could not afford housing costs. She mentioned she heard women could not leave due to the lack of group housing for mental health care residents. She thought American Rescue Plan Act funding would provide a great opportunity for the County to invest in these types of programs, and she applauded Ms. Howell for considering long-term programs in the community.

Chair Lucey remarked it had been wonderful to work with Ms. Howell on this project for the past five years, which he said would not have been possible without regional partners, the Cities of Reno and Sparks, the government, as well as community members, leaders, and businesses. He asserted it was not just a homeless shelter and programming; it impacted every aspect of what the County government did from the judicial system and public safety to businesses. Washoe County was taking the first steps in making a change, which was due to the hard work of Ms. Howell and her entire staff. He mentioned Chief Joe Ingraham and former Assistant County Manager Kevin Schiller traveled to New York and saw a different approach of how to help people instead of cycling them back through the jail system. He expressed gratitude about being a part of the Board that made those substantive changes, investing time and money in the program. He thanked Ms. Howell for her hard work.

Vice Chair Hartung wondered whether the HSA was working with employers to assist guests with employment. Ms. Howell indicated Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation staff was located on the other side of the Our Place campus but had offered to set up on campus to provide individuals with links to employment. She stated there were companies that would hire graduates from CrossRoads as part of an individual's case plan which determined their skills and strengths to obtain gainful employment.

Vice Chair Hartung told a story of being provided free meals while working

at Circus Circus, which he believed kept him off the streets when he made only \$52 per shift yet paid \$550 per month for rent. He wanted an offline conversation about working with businesses in town, especially casinos who had excess food, to help keep employees fed. He said he was a lucky man to have been the recipient of generous employers.

When an analysis was performed, Ms. Howell explained, the data collected showed that 55 percent of Our Place guests had income. She pointed out there were two populations, one that could afford to live independently but were not able to for some reason, and one that did not have employment and needed to get back into the workplace. She emphasized the importance of learning individuals' life stories and engaging with them to build relationships. She spoke about reunifying individuals with families in other states; some individuals needed a higher level of care in a group setting but, without those relationships, no one would know what they were struggling with or be able to provide options to help them. She stressed those issues were the most important reasons to have case workers onsite.

Justin Roper, Chief Alternative Sentencing Officer, expressed appreciation for Ms. Howell's invitation to collaborate, which he thought made the County and the Department of Alternative Sentencing (DAS) successful. He explained all misdemeanor crimes where the perpetrator was sentenced to suspended sentence or house arrest were sent to the DAS for monitoring. According to data from across the nation, success in probation required three things. The first was accountability, in which the DAS had excelled throughout history. The second was rehabilitation, which included determining why people committed crimes and continued to be in the cycle. He said they had to find ways to address substance abuse issues, and some individuals lacked social skills due to poor upbringing and environment. The third requirement was habilitation, which was the one area they struggled with, though they were making headway. The collaboration with HSA and CrossRoads provided ways to get people off the street, into housing, and into a more stable environment. By putting the three things together, he said, they were seeing greater outcomes from misdemeanor probations, and recidivism was reduced, which was the goal of the DAS.

Six years prior, Chief Roper indicated, Chief Ingraham had recognized the same people were being processed through the system over and over, and he started researching other programs across the country; he discovered the 24/7 program in Montana where individuals were breath-tested daily. Chief Roper said the judges approved of the program immediately and started to assign individuals to the new Sober 24 Program. They quickly discovered drugs were more of an issue in Washoe County than alcohol, which required a shift in testing to include urine drug testing. Once individuals discovered they could purchase products to prevent positive drug test results, a drug testing lab was purchased for the Sober 24 program in 2019 with the assistance of the Board of County Commissioners. He indicated the lab had a 98 percent accuracy rate and positive results increased from 6 percent to 30 percent. He mentioned a plant-based drug called Kratom, which people used instead of opioids, was expensive to test for, but they discovered there was an issue with the drug in Washoe County and quickly had it under control.

Chief Roper continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Department of Alternative Sentencing & Sober 24; Department of Alternative Sentencing Overview; DAS & Sober 24 Primary Elements; DAS & Sober 24 Services; Probation Outcomes (2 slides); and Agencies Utilizing Sober 24.

Chair Lucey thanked Chief Roper for the presentation and agreed that, without enforcement, it was difficult to ensure individuals stayed on track. He believed those individuals needed the support of staff, not just self-monitoring. Even though staff were in uniforms and could seem intimidating, he thought, they were the most humble and welcoming individuals in the DAS. He asserted so many great things had come out of the department in the past 15 years. The collective efforts between the DAS and the HSA made this an effective program country-wide, and people came to observe the program. He knew the program would continue to evolve and expand due to people experiencing different situations. He asserted one of the best things this Board did was play a huge role in the creation of the Business Improvement District (BID) and the Downtown Reno Partnership. He explained one function of the BID was to work through businesses to provide entry-level positions for people in these programs. He believed the partnership was making a difference within the community and changing lives. It could seem costly for the different programs, but it was cheaper than doing nothing for the individuals sitting in jail. He thanked Ms. Howell and Chief Roper for their great work.

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

**21-0361**     **AGENDA ITEM 4** Presentation of Excellence in Public Service Certificates honoring Washoe County employees who have completed essential employee development courses.

County Manager Eric Brown recognized the following employee:

**Essentials of SAP for Financial Staff**

Brandon Smith, Manager, Second Judicial District Court

County Manager Eric Brown said Washoe County encouraged professional development for employees, and the Human Resources Department administered a series of programs for employee development and performance.

Chair Lucey thought these courses were beneficial to employees and a great opportunity for professional growth. He said many individuals started with the County early in their careers and stayed for many years; this allowed them to continue their education and develop skills to further their job placement. He congratulated Mr. Smith for his hard work.

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

**21-0362**      **AGENDA ITEM 5** Public Comment.

Mr. Bryan Allegretto spoke about the sphere of influence (SOI) in the Mesa Park community, saying they received no services and did not pay taxes, but they could not vote for City Council members or change any rules. He expressed frustration about the City of Reno not allowing residents to acquire building permits to make changes or additions to their homes. He mentioned an agenda item had been placed on the Reno City Council's June 9 agenda, including a petition signed by 100 homeowners to be removed from the SOI.

Ms. Elise Weatherly spoke about people not listening, Judge Egan Walker, Marvin Neal, and her removal from the Highland Ranch Homeowners Association.

Ms. Cindy Sassenrath asked for Washoe County to fully open with no facemask requirement as approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for people who were fully vaccinated. She opined it did not prevent people who wanted to wear masks from doing so. She spoke about the need for people to get their rights back and businesses to reopen at full capacity. She was opposed to vaccine passports.

Ms. Kathy Doyle spoke about forcing people to put something in their bodies they did not want. She felt medical information should be kept private and being required to release that information was an infringement of civil liberties. She expressed opposition to a vaccine passport.

Mr. Rick Snow thanked Deputy District Attorney Nathan Edwards for his help a few years ago. He spoke about trying to get an appointment with County Manager Eric Brown, though he was scheduled for a meeting with Assistant County Manager Dave Solaro. He expressed frustration about a parcel in his neighborhood with 31 trees on it, five of which were dead; the property also contained a broken shed and fence. He asserted the entire neighborhood would burn if that property caught on fire. He requested a meeting with Mr. Brown to deal with these issues.

Ms. Anne Sweder spoke about the change in the CDC guidelines on May 13, allowing vaccinated people to not wear masks outdoors and in most indoor settings. She thought that change was interesting in light of the eight fully vaccinated New York Yankee players who contracted COVID-19 (C19) while mask mandates were still in effect. She expressed concern about people not being allowed to make decisions that were best for themselves. She requested the public health emergency be ended, the county to be opened 100 percent with no restrictions, and no requirement for a vaccination passport.

Ms. Tammy Holt-Still provided documents, which were distributed to the Board and placed on file with the Clerk. She mentioned the Board approved \$116,000 for a nature preserve on Swan Lake on April 24, 2018. She displayed pictures of Swan Lake with docks that were supposed to be rehabilitated with the funds, and she wondered where the money went. She spoke about a request she made in 2019 for a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) for the elevation of Prado Ranch and other areas. She asserted

there was no CLOMR, but the development was approved anyway. She noted the documents distributed to the Board contained a letter to the Regional Transportation Commission requesting information about Lemmon Drive.

Ms. Diane Craig expressed frustration about the county still being in a public health emergency. She asked for businesses to open with no restrictions and expressed opposition to a vaccination passport. She thought being asked to provide information about vaccinations was a violation of people's privacy.

Ms. Janet Butcher said no one had the right to ask her whether she was vaccinated or not. She asserted her life did not stop when C19 hit; she had traveled and continued to do what she did before the virus but did not get C19, nor did anyone she had been around. She wanted the public health emergency stopped.

Ms. Nicol Herris expressed concern about people being pitted against each other in many different situations. She believed it was time for Washoe County to take the leadership role and start taking stances on controversial topics. She urged the Board to oppose any type of vaccine passport and asserted people did not have voter passports even though voting was a more important issue. She spoke about the CDC telling people what to do, sex education in schools, and renouncing being white. She asserted Washoe County was the second largest county in Nevada and people were disapproving what the County was doing.

Ms. Rita Pepi agreed with commenters that masks, the public health emergency, and vaccination passports were not good ideas. She asserted the experimental drug that people said worked for C19 did not work. She noted she had been in the medical field for 48 years and knew how diseases were contracted and passed along. She wanted restrictions lifted in the county.

Mr. Chris Thatcher expressed frustration about the county not fully opening businesses. He asserted the Board was praised earlier in the meeting for its leadership with homeless people who broke laws, and he wondered why the Commissioners did not stand up for the rights of the people in other cases.

Ms. Deena Lane read from *The Bible*. She asked the Board to end the public health emergency and reopen the county without restrictions.

Ms. Cindy Martinez opined the screening process to enter Chambers was a violation of her rights of privacy. She mentioned several thousand people recently attended a gathering in Battle Mountain, and she said the leadership in Lander County had accomplished so much; she thought it was sad that the county she lived in could not protect the constitutional rights of its residents. She demanded an end to the public health emergency.

Ms. Elizabeth Lenz detailed her background, which included her work for the largest public consulting firm in the nation. She urged the Commissioners to take the

time to understand the data about the public health crisis. She asserted thousands of people she worked with confirmed they did not want vaccine passports as they would economically damage public safety within state agencies related to travel. She urged the Board to end the public health emergency.

Ms. Melanie Sutton opined the County Commissioners had not been the leaders they were elected to be. Referring to a handout she received when she came into Chambers explaining that people were no longer required to wear masks, she wondered what had changed since the previous meeting. She displayed photos of a gathering in Battle Mountain which were placed on file with the Clerk. She spoke to people at the gathering who helped get Vice Chair Hartung elected, but they would not do that in the next election.

Ms. Kaylynn Sutton displayed photos of a rally in Battle Mountain, which were placed on file with the Clerk. She expressed concern that masks made people sick. Face shields were more useful than masks, she stated, but they did not protect people either. She mentioned her mom's friend was unable to come to meetings because she would not show anyone her medical records unless they were a doctor.

Ms. Katherine Snedigar spoke about intervening in people's health and mentioned citizens had been punished for not following doctor's orders. She opined there was no evidence that this virus was contagious. She mentioned the County had no authority to close businesses and hoped business owners would sue the Commissioners personally. She expressed frustration about the effect of this on children; the Washoe County School District bragged that 87 percent of children graduated, but she opined only 8 percent knew core skills. She believed children wearing masks affected their brains.

Mr. Tony Pickrell alleged the pandemic was a setup by China to get rid of President Donald Trump, and he also spoke about mail-in voter fraud. He expressed frustration that he lost his job because he refused to wear a mask while driving a bus and noted thousands of people like him lost their jobs. He wanted the people to protest in front of the building every day.

Ms. Annemarie Grant, via the Zoom app, spoke about Washoe County Sheriff's Officer Jason Wood, who was on administrative leave after being arrested for driving under the influence. She brought up other incidents involving Officer Wood and noted he was guilty of deaths in the community, though evidence was held until it was too late for him to be held accountable. She spoke of a killing by a Sparks Police Officer the previous year and said the family was still waiting for the report and the video to be released. She thought there needed to be more transparency. She played an audio recording of her brother.

Mentioning the homeless item discussed earlier, Mr. Daniel Purdy wondered via Zoom whether any of the Commissioners walked through downtown Reno. He asserted homeless individuals were getting drunk and falling in the street with no one to help them; the Downtown Ambassadors did nothing but walk by a person lying face down in the street. He thought all drugs should be legal, reducing the issues with bad drugs

and addiction. He felt assistance was provided more to homeless women and children than homeless men.

Mr. Conrad Drewes, via the Zoom app, stated he was a student at Incline High School. He voiced his support for C19 mask mandates and implementations of the vaccines, adding that the people speaking before him made comments that went against experts' knowledge of health, the Constitution, and basic statistics. He stated people who were satisfied with a scenario would not come to meetings to complain about it. Hypocritical claims of school indoctrination were voiced, he said, while the same group used their children as political mouthpieces. He thanked the Board for its leadership with the C19 crisis.

**21-0363**      **AGENDA ITEM 6** Announcements/Reports.

County Manager Eric Brown responded to a comment Commissioner Jung made earlier by saying they received the first verbal commitment to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and hoped to present it to the Board next month. He thought the creation of the Nevada Cares Campus and the collaboration between the County and the Cities of Reno and Sparks had been noticed by philanthropic organizations, and he hoped to have more good news next month.

Mr. Brown expressed pride that the Sierra Nevada Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America recognized the Washoe County Communications Department with the Silver Spike Award for internal communications during the pandemic. He acknowledged they also received the Bronze Spike Award for communications during the 2020 elections. He said Health District Public Information Officer Scott Oxarart was recognized as a communications champion for his efforts in informing the public of current situations. He announced Communications Director Nancy Leuenhagen received the lifetime achievement award.

Mr. Brown explained there was a push in outreach into communities of color and those that were disenfranchised. He thanked the Health District and the Communications Department for coordinating COVID-19 vaccine clinics which had administered 450 doses. He mentioned it was the most successful pod outside of the Reno-Sparks Livestock Events Center location. He noted the current test positivity rate was declining at 4.8 percent, and the community was headed in the right direction by encouraging people to take proper precautions.

Commissioner Jung expressed concern about a point made during public comment that land mass islands could not be annexed. She asked Deputy District Attorney Nathan Edwards to brief the Board about the next steps they should take. She asserted it did not matter whether areas belonged to the Cities of Reno and Sparks or the County, but they needed a clean map. She believed it was limiting personal property and private property rights, repeating the public speaker's point that he could not vote out or run against the people who could change his land use development. She asserted staff was failing to do its job by not communicating steps to clean up these disjointed islands of annexation,

and she wanted it clear for everyone.

Vice Chair Hartung remarked he had convinced the City of Sparks to roll back the sphere of influence (SOI) in the last master plan. He thought it would be nice to have a presentation and said the City of Reno had persistently held on to the SOI. He mentioned the County had the underlying land use, but the City of Reno had the overlying ability to dictate what could happen, which he thought was very wrong in this case. He believed people would not agree to be annexed but it could be forced. He asked for clarification from Mr. Edwards about zoning after annexation.

Speaking about members of the public being questioned as to whether they were vaccinated, Vice Chair Hartung thought a notice should be posted on the door that people who were not vaccinated were required to wear a mask; there was no mask requirement for people who were vaccinated.

Vice Chair Hartung said he was still waiting to hear when the name of the Washoe County Health District would be changed to the Northwestern Nevada Health District. He asserted the mandates were not made by the Board of County Commissioners and a distinct organization was needed. He mentioned the Health Officer could continue with the mandates, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines were the ones that should be followed.

Commissioner Jung spoke about people taking social responsibility and having integrity related to being vaccinated. She mentioned some people in Chambers boasted the previous week about not being vaccinated, yet the same individuals claimed today to be vaccinated. She admitted to being fully vaccinated and noted people indicated they would not come around her because she was. She urged people to use integrity and stated she would go back to wearing a mask if the CDC said it was the right thing to do.

Commissioner Jung expressed concern about the level of education individuals were receiving in grades K-12 in Nevada. She thanked the Incline Village student for his wisdom and said he would be back for a proclamation later in the meeting. She opined people forgot many things from school and thought they should take classes to remember.

Chair Lucey mentioned a Western States Sheriffs' Association conference was being held in Washoe County, and sheriffs from Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado would be hosted at the Peppermill Resort. He indicated Sheriff Darin Balaam would open the event, which was a great honor.

Chair Lucey stated the grand opening of the Nevada Cares Campus occurred the prior day, and the County was hopeful it would be a much-needed resource in the community. He brought up the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and wanted more in-depth conversations about potential land on the Our Place campus.

## **PROCLAMATIONS**

**21-0364**      **7A** Proclaim April 26, 2021 as "We the People" Day in Washoe County.

Chair Lucey welcomed former Washoe County Manager Katy Simon Holland.

Commissioner Hill said she went through the ‘We the People’ program as a high school senior and went to nationals in Washington D.C, admitting it was one of most memorable things she did her high. She stated the program taught her about the Constitution and lessons about the government, adding she was a County Commissioner because of this program. She read and presented the Proclamation to Ms. Simon Holland, the Senior Strategic Advisor for the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) and former President of the Washoe County School Board.

Ms. Holland thanked the Commissioners and County Manager Eric Brown for their public service as she knew how hard it was to do what they did. She complemented them for their leadership. On behalf of EDawn and community business leaders, she thanked the County for its support in honoring these outstanding students at Reno and Incline High Schools. She thanked the teachers and family members, noting that, even though the kids had done a great job, it took a huge support system to make the program happen. She had the privilege of being a judge during previous competitions and was humbled by the knowledge these young people had about the Constitution, Federalist Papers, case law, and judicial decisions, which reflected the importance of democracy and democratic principles. The students were outstanding leaders and she said Commissioner Hill was evidence of the importance of the training. She mentioned these students went on to be senators, congressional leaders, lawyers, judges, and people who taught others about the importance of the Constitution. She congratulated Communications Director Nancy Leuenhagen on her lifetime achievement award and said she had the honor of hiring her from the Washoe County School District.

Chair Lucey introduced Mr. Andrew Yoxsimer as his former Civics teacher at Galena High School, saying he taught him about government and history.

Mr. Yoxsimer admitted via the Zoom app that he did not realize he had taught Chair Lucey, but he must have done his job since the Chair went into civics. He thanked the County for this Proclamation and said it was an honor to be the Principal at Incline High School with such outstanding staff and students. He thanked the ‘We the People’ team that did an amazing job. He explained the team typically consisted of up to 24 students, six units of four students. He noted there were only 10 students in the current year’s program so every student had to be on at least two units, each one requiring huge amount of preparation and research to gain a deep understanding of the Constitution. The coaches did an amazing job, resulting in one of their highest finishes ever in a very challenging year; the students also did an outstanding job. He thanked the County for the honor and lauded the Reno High School team on their performance.

Chair Lucey thanked Mr. Yoxximer and congratulated all the students who participated in the program. He noted Reno High School Principal Kris Hackbusch was unfortunately not able to attend the meeting, but he extended congratulations. He asserted they were in awe of all the work students had done to bring northern Nevada into a national light. He was happy to honor the students.

**21-0365**      **7B** Proclaim the month of May 2021 as Older Americans Month.

Commissioner Jung said Senior Services staff made things happen, and Senior Services Vice Chair Donna Clontz had been the most committed person to senior citizens. She read and presented the Proclamation to Ms. Clontz.

Commissioner Jung spoke about how valuable seniors were in the community with the wisdom they provided. She was proud of the County because they created innovative ideas to determine how to service individuals and communities who struggled with language barriers. She explained Human Services Agency staff was always ready to address needs and thought they were only provided a small amount of money to run the program. She asserted they did not have access to staff to recruit seniors but ensured that senior issues were addressed. She was proud to live in Washoe County and that so much was done to provide for the most vulnerable population in the community.

Ms. Clontz introduced Steve McBride, Senior Services Division Director, and Abby Willrich, the lead social worker for the Senior Services Program.

Mr. McBride said this year's Older Americans Month theme was 'communities of strength'. He remembered the Senior Services team got together just over a year ago to brainstorm because people still needed food. They started planning on March 17, 2020 for reopening, and each month they worked to figure out how keep all people's needs intact while planning for the unknown. He announced it was 14 months later and they were heading in the right direction. He noted how trying it had been on seniors and expressed appreciation for the ongoing support of the Board of County Commissioners. He promoted the Stuff-a-Bus donation drive to be held at Sam's Club on June 21 in partnership with KOLO-TV. Seniors benefited from this program year-round and he hoped they would have a good turnout to support local seniors. He announced congregate dining services were back in the senior centers, but home delivered meals had not lapsed at any time. He invited seniors to come back to the centers and dine with them. He noted the Daybreak Program had also reopened, and he expressed appreciation to the dedicated staff who had overcome adversity. He thanked all the volunteers who were dedicated to helping deliver meals and assisting where they could.

Ms. Willrich said it had been an incredible year and gave kudos to staff who were responsible for delivering food every day without a lapse in service. She spoke about partnerships developed with two tribes during the COVID-19 (C19) outbreaks to provide meals to those communities. She noted they received Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act money and were able to purchase an additional freezer.

Ms. Clontz thanked the Board of County Commissioners for always supporting the senior community. She appreciated the words made by a young man during public comment, particularly the understanding he had of science, health, and what would it took to keep people safe. She spoke about the Senior Advisory Board which met via the Zoom app in the summer months; there they came up with a program where senior volunteers called other seniors who were alone and needed someone to talk to. She indicated a survey was in process that asked seniors what they wanted to see inside buildings so social activities could resume when C19 restrictions were lifted. She expressed gratitude that Older Americans Month continued to happen so they could introduce activities to seniors. She asked people to support the Stuff-a-Bus event.

Chair Lucey said the work they did for seniors was tremendous. He opined they developed relationships by delivering meals, which were the only interaction some seniors had had for a year. He noted the drivers did more than deliver food, they delivered friendly smiles and reassured seniors that people still cared.

**21-0366**      **7C** Proclaim the month of May 2021 as International Internal Audit Awareness Month.

Commissioner Herman read the Proclamation and presented it to Internal Auditor Samantha Pierce.

Ms. Pierce thanked the Board for recognizing the importance of internal audits. She expressed thanks to Commissioners Herman Hill for sitting on the Audit Committee. She commented that her passion provided Washoe County with assurance, insight, and objectivity. She said additional information was available through the Washoe County Manager's Office website.

**21-0367**      **7D** Proclaim the week of May 16-23, 2021 as National Public Works Week.

Vice Chair Hartung spoke about public infrastructure and said people thought it only included water, sewer, and roads. He expressed frustration that infrastructure was significantly underfunded across the nation. He asserted infrastructure included stormwater and buildings, noting police and fire agencies would not be able to respond without professionals ensuring there were good facilities such as the Emergency Operations Center and the Medical Examiner's Office. He read and presented the Proclamation to Dwayne Smith, Director of Engineering and Capital Projects.

Vice Chair Hartung asked Mr. Smith to introduce the group accompanying him. Mr. Smith said this was a small portion of the people who worked in the public works section of the Community Services Department (CSD) who brought the value to the area and allowed residents to enjoy the quality of life they had. He introduced the following employees: Megan Sizelove, CSD Project Manager and Chair of the northern branch of the American Public Works Association (APWA); Tim Simpson, Water Resources Licensed Engineer, who had been with the utility since he started as an intern; Dylan Menes, Water Resources Senior Engineer, who brought a lot of experience from the Seattle area; and Ben

Hutchins, CSD Division Director of Finance and Administration. He stated all public works staff helped deliver projects, but it could not be done without the administration and finance staff.

On behalf of the northern Nevada branch of the APWA, Ms. Sizelove acknowledged the support they received from the Board of County Commissioners and recognized the staff members who were out there on a day-to-day basis doing everything they did for the community.

County Manager Eric Brown said many people were not aware that CSD played an integral role in transforming the Our Place buildings into what they were now; these workers would do the same using the same skills to transform the Nevada Cares Campus. He said the competency and willingness of these people was incredible.

**21-0368**      7E Proclaim the period of May - October 2021 as the Nevada Wildfire Awareness Campaign.

7F Proclaim the period of May - October 2021 as the Lake Tahoe Wildfire Awareness Campaign.

Proclamations 7E and 7F were heard together.

Chair Lucey noted Division Chief August Isernhagen from the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) was the wildland fuels expert. People who lived in this community, especially in the western United States, recognized the devastation of wildfires and the smoke that people experienced most every year. He explained it was more important today than ever, especially in northern Nevada, that people understood the nature of wildfire. The drought situations and wet winters brought an excess of fuels that would dry out. He asserted everyone needed to be more cognizant of outdoor activities in the wilderness. The Proclamations identified awareness campaigns that were not only for the TMFPD but also for the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District (NLTFPD) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) through the Living with Fire Cooperative Extension program. He read the Proclamation.

Chief Isernhagen spoke on behalf of the TMFPD and thanked the Living with Fire and Fire Adaptive Communities programs for their efforts to raise the awareness of County residents about steps needed to reduce the destruction caused by wildfires. He commented they looked forward to working with them and all the regional fire partners over the next several months on this important initiative.

UNR Living with Fire Manager Jamie Roice-Gomes asserted wildfire could threaten Nevada and Lake Tahoe communities and impact homes, property, and human lives. The key to minimizing wildfire impact was proactive communities that took steps to prepare and become fire adaptive. In response to wildfires, representatives of Nevada and Lake Tahoe's local, state, and federal firefighting agencies, wildfire prone communities, the Tahoe Resource Conservation District, and the UNR Cooperative Extension had

conducted an annual wildfire awareness campaign since 2006. Wildfire could threaten communities at any time of the year. This year's campaign was extended from one month to a six-month campaign, raising awareness and preparedness from May through October. She shared tips to ensure citizens were aware of how to prepare for wildfire, which included clearing combustible material at least five feet from structures and utilizing high moisture plants, rock, and concrete pavers. She highly recommended taking a home inventory, adding that apps were available where photos of personal items and important documents could be uploaded for safekeeping. An evacuation plan and go-bags were important to have in case an emergency evacuation was needed. She mentioned coordinating with neighbors to establish processes to reduce wildfire threat. She urged people to register with Washoe County Code Red to receive alerts. She encouraged people to prepare year-round for wildfire, and additional tips were available at [www.livingwithfire.com](http://www.livingwithfire.com). Webinars were available to the public on that website, and she promoted an upcoming webinar with the Washoe County Health District to talk about air quality; the National Weather Service would also speak on how to prepare for wildfire smoke and its impacts. She thanked Chief Isernhagen and Tia Rancort, Public Information Officer for the NLTFPD.

Ms. Rancort spoke on behalf of the NLTFPD, Fire Chief Ryan Summers, and the Lake Tahoe Basin, saying they appreciated the support. The campaign focused on the concepts of defensible space and becoming fire adaptive. She mentioned an active fire season was anticipated and she emphasized the importance of elevating awareness and educating citizens.

Chair Lucey stated so many communities were impacted by wildfire, and he urged residents to be fire prepared and knowledgeable of evacuation routes. He mentioned no one knew when or where the next major wildfire would be.

**12:51 p.m.**    **The Board recessed.**

**12:55 p.m.**    **The Board reconvened with all Commissioners present.**

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 Items 7A through 7F be adopted.

### **DONATIONS**

**21-0369**    **8A** Recommendation to accept donations to Washoe County Regional Animal Services in the amount of [\$14,808.00] retroactive for the period January 1, through March 31, 2021, to be used for the humane care and treatment of sick and/or injured, stray, abandoned or at-risk animals; express appreciation for these thoughtful contributions; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Animal Services. (All Commission Districts.)

Commissioner Jung stated these were cash donations from citizens visiting Regional Animal Services (RAS). She noted many people that visited RAS might have issues with a missing pet or an emergency, but these donations showed how much people loved animals.

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 Item 8A be accepted, expressed, and directed.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – 9A1 THROUGH 9B2**

**21-0370**      **9A1** Approval of minutes for the Board of County Commissioners' special meeting of April 8, 2021. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

**21-0371**      **9A2** Acknowledge the communications and reports received by the Clerk on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, including the following categories: Communications, Tax-Delinquent Property Sales, Monthly Statements/Reports, Budgets, and Additional Documents. Clerk. (All Commission Districts.)

**21-0372**      **9B1** Recommendation to accept grant funding [\$17,277.34 with no County match] for Fiscal Year 2021 from the USDA Forest Service, received under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (SRS Act) for the benefit of public schools and roads within Washoe County; and direct the Comptroller's Office to make the necessary budget amendments. Community Services. (All Commission Districts.)

**21-0373**      **9B2** Recommendation to award a bid to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder for ITB 3145-21 (Treatment Plant Chemicals for use in biosolids dewatering at the South Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility) to Solenis, LLC, [in the estimated annual amount of \$139,000]; and, if approved, authorize the Purchasing and Contracts Manager to execute a 1-year purchase order agreement with the option for two additional one-year extensions in the estimated annual amount of \$139,000. Community Services. (Commission District 2.)

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

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Vice Chair Hartung, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Consent Agenda Items 9A1 through 9B2 be approved.

**BLOCK VOTE – 10 and 11**

- 21-0374** **AGENDA ITEM 10** Recommendation to: (1) award a bid and approve the Agreement to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder for the Reno Justice Court Hearing Room Project to remodel existing space into a multipurpose hearing room and add a separate County/Court Resource Assistance Center for use by the public [staff recommends Sullivan Structures LLC, in the amount of \$259,610.00]; (2) approve bid alternate #1 (an amount to be added to the base bid for alternate materials and/or methods of construction) in the amount of \$67,545.00 for an open office area; (3) approve a separate contingency fund in the amount of \$27,247.00; and (4) approve the purchase of furniture, fixtures, and equipment in the amount of \$146,960.76 [for a total project amount of \$501,362.76]. This project will be funded through the Reno Justice Court. Community Services. (Commission District 3.)

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 10 be awarded and approved.

- 21-0375** **AGENDA ITEM 11** Recommendation to approve a reorganization of the County Manager's Office and associated position changes effective July 1, 2021 to include reinstating job classification Director of Finance (9407) and retitling to Chief Financial Officer; the reclassification of an Assistant County Manager (pay grade M100) position to a Chief Financial Officer (pay grade MZZ) position, as evaluated and approved by the Washoe County job evaluation process and authorize Human Resources and the Comptroller to make all necessary changes; realign the Chief Information Officer, Director of Human Resources/Labor Relations and Registrar of Voters to report directly to the County Manager with a net fiscal impact of [\$0] and align the Special Projects Manager and staff, including the Homeless Services group and Grants Management to report under Assistant County Manager, Kate Thomas. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.).

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 11 be approved, authorized, realigned, and aligned.

- 21-0376** **AGENDA ITEM 12** Discussion and direction to staff regarding legislation or legislative issues proposed by legislators, by Washoe County, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, or by other entities permitted by the Nevada State Legislature to submit bill draft requests, or such legislative

issues as may be deemed by the Chair or the Board to be of critical significance to Washoe County. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts).

Chair Lucey stated the Board was provided a report of the legislative issues they were following. He noted the session was in its final two weeks. Work to finish budgets was being done, so there were few changes in the past week. Bills needed to get through the two houses and floor votes needed to occur, although the focus was still on budgets. He reviewed bills of support, bills in opposition, and bills still being watched, adding there was nothing major to report.

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

**21-0377** **AGENDA ITEM 14** Public Hearing discussion and possible action on the Washoe County Tentative Budget, as well as possible changes to the adoption of the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2022; and approve Fiscal Year 2021 financial actions as outlined; and approve the changes to position control for Fiscal Year 2022 indicated on Attachment A. This item may be continued to May 25, 2021 at 10:00 AM. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

The Chair opened the public hearing by calling on anyone wishing to speak for or against adoption of said item. There being no response, the hearing was closed.

County Manager Eric Brown stated Assistant County Manager Christine Vuletich and Budget Manager Lori Cooke were in Chambers to provide the budget presentation.

Ms. Vuletich conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Budget Timeline; Fiscal Year 2022 – Maintain and Sustain Financial Stability; Washoe County FY 2022 Final Budget (All Funds); Washoe County FY 2022 Final Budget by Function; General Fund; and General Fund FY 2022 Final Budget (2 slides).

Ms. Cooke continued the PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: General Fund FY 2022 Final Budget – Sources; General Fund Major Revenues; Uses; New Positions; Reclassifications; Transfers Out; Highlighted Other Funds; Homeless Fund (New); Other Funds FY2022 Final Budget – New Positions and Reclassifications; FY 2022 Final Budget – Capital Improvements; Capital Improvement Fund – All Projects; Capital Improvements: Parks, Utilities, Roads, and Equipment Services Funds – All Projects; and Washoe County FY 2022 Final Budget (2 slides).

Chair Lucey thanked Ms. Vuletich and Ms. Cooke for getting the County through another challenging year.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Commissioner Hill said it was an honor to work on the budget with staff as they listened to the concerns about how to move forward and found ways to make that happen.

On motion by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Herman, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 14 be adopted and approved.

**21-0378**      **AGENDA ITEM 13** Discussion and possible action on the County Manager's recommended Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Fiscal Years 2022-2026 and direct the County Manager to submit the CIP to the State of Nevada and others by August 1, 2021 as required by NRS 354.5945 which requires all local governments annually to prepare a five-year capital improvement plan to be submitted to the State Department of Taxation and County Debt Management Commission by August 1st of each year. The CIP is a five-year plan for the County's capital improvements for park facilities, including trails, open space, and regional parks; libraries; roads under purview of the County; purchase of light and heavy fleet equipment; utilities infrastructure; capital outlay for major equipment; and County buildings and other facilities. The CIP is limited to capital projects with an estimated cost of \$100,000 or more for assets that have a life-span of more than one year, as part of the reporting requirements of the State and under Board of County Commissioner (BCC) policies. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

Chair Lucey indicated a presentation was not needed for this item.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Vice Chair Hartung, seconded by Commissioner Hill, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 13 be approved.

**21-0379**      **AGENDA ITEM 15** Public Comment.

Mr. Kenji Otto spoke about attending the most recent Washoe County School District Board meeting and he believed committees should be formed to recall the School Board Trustees. He apologized to Trustee Jeff Church for failing to exclude him from that group, saying he always looked out for children, parents, and the Constitution. He urged the Board to oppose Senate Bill 420. He mentioned a meeting of the Silver Knolls community related to a proposed firing range would be held on May 22 at 10:00 a.m. and said he wished the Commissioners and other high-ranking decision makers would attend.

**21-0380**      **AGENDA ITEM 16** Announcements/Reports.

There were no announcements or reports.

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**1:26 p.m.**      There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

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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:*  
*Doni Gassaway, Deputy County Clerk*